

The Project Gutenberg eBook of Lafayette

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: Lafayette

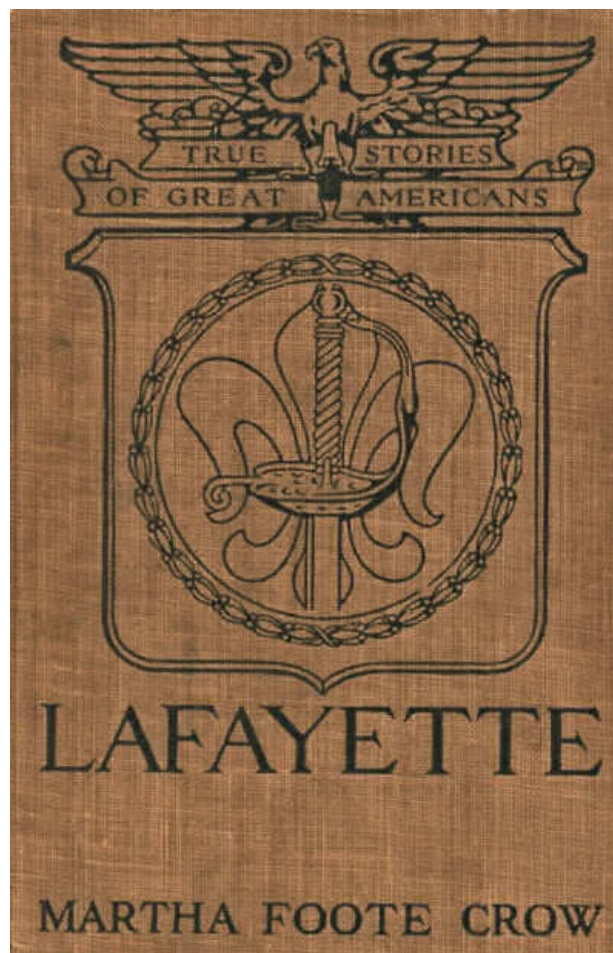
Author: Martha Foote Crow

Release date: January 11, 2009 [eBook #27777]

Language: English

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK LAFAYETTE ***

E-text prepared by Juliet Sutherland, Jen Haines,
and the Project Gutenberg Online Distributed Proofreading Team
(<http://www.pgdp.net>)



TRUE STORIES OF GREAT AMERICANS

LAFAYETTE



THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

NEW YORK · BOSTON · CHICAGO · DALLAS
ATLANTA · SAN FRANCISCO

MACMILLAN & CO., LIMITED

LONDON · BOMBAY · CALCUTTA MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN CO. OF CANADA, LTD.

TORONTO



From an authentic portrait.

Portrait of Lafayette.

This shows Lafayette as a youthful general.

LAFAYETTE

BY

MARTHA FOOTE CROW

And what gave he to us?
He gave his starry youth,
His quick, audacious sword,
His name, his crested plume.
And what gave we?
We gave—a nation's heart!

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1918

All rights reserved

COPYRIGHT, 1916,

By THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.

Set up and electrotyped. Published May, 1916.
Reprinted October, 1917.

Norwood Press
J.S. Cushing Co.—Berwick & Smith Co.
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

CONTENTS

	Page
<u>CHAPTER I</u>	
A BOY OF THE FRENCH NOBILITY	1
<u>CHAPTER II</u>	
COLLEGE AND COURT	10
<u>CHAPTER III</u>	

A BOY'S IDEALS	21
<u>CHAPTER IV</u>	
THE GREAT INSPIRATION	27
<u>CHAPTER V</u>	
FIRST DAYS IN AMERICA	42
<u>CHAPTER VI</u>	
LAFAYETTE AT THE BRANDYWINE	52
<u>CHAPTER VII</u>	
A SUCCESSFUL FAILURE	62
<u>CHAPTER VIII</u>	
LAFAYETTE AT MONMOUTH	73
<u>CHAPTER IX</u>	
THE RETURN TO FRANCE	86
<u>CHAPTER X</u>	
LAFAYETTE IN VIRGINIA	100
<u>CHAPTER XI</u>	
THE TWO REDOUBTS	111
<u>CHAPTER XII</u>	
THE SURRENDER OF YORKTOWN	119
<u>CHAPTER XIII</u>	
LIONIZED BY TWO WORLDS	128
<u>CHAPTER XIV</u>	
GATHERING CLOUDS	137
<u>CHAPTER XV</u>	
LAFAYETTE IN PRISON	144
<u>CHAPTER XVI</u>	
AN ATTEMPTED RESCUE	154
<u>CHAPTER XVII</u>	
A WELCOME RELEASE	171
<u>CHAPTER XVIII</u>	
A TRIUMPHAL TOUR	179
<u>CHAPTER XIX</u>	
LAST DAYS OF LAFAYETTE	193

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

THE COUNCIL AT HOPEWELL	78
THE SURRENDER OF CORNWALLIS	126
FRANCIS KINLOCH HUGER	160
A CARRIAGE IN WHICH LAFAYETTE RODE	186
THE CHILDREN'S STATUE OF LAFAYETTE	196

LAFAYETTE

CHAPTER I

A BOY OF THE FRENCH NOBILITY

AMONG the rugged Auvergne Mountains, in the southern part of France, stands a castle that is severe and almost grim in its aspect. Two bare round towers flank the building on the right and on the left. Rows of lofty French windows are built across the upper part of the front, and the small, ungenerous doorway below has a line of portholes on either side that suggest a thought of warlike days gone by.

This castle, built in the fourteenth century, is called the Château de Chaviniac de Lafayette. Though it was burned to the ground in 1701, it was rebuilt as nearly like the earlier structure as possible; hence it represents, as it stands, the chivalrous days of the crusading period and so forms a fitting birthplace for a hero. In this half-military château was born one of the most valiant champions of liberty that any country has ever produced—the Marquis de Lafayette.

The climate of the Haute-Loire—the highlands of Auvergne—is harsh; it has been called the French Siberia. There are upland moors like deserts across which sweep fierce winds, where the golden broom and the purple heather—flowers of the barren heights—are all that will flourish. There are, indeed, secluded valleys filled with muskmallows and bracken, but these are often visited by wild tempests, and sudden floods may make the whole region dreary and dangerous.

In Lafayette's time the violence of the elements was not the only thing to be dreaded. When the children wandered too near the edge of the forest, they might catch sight of a wild boar nozzling about for mushrooms under the dead oak leaves; and if it had been a severe winter, it was quite within possibility that wolves or hyenas might come from their hiding places in the rocky recesses of the mountains and lurk hungrily near the villages.

The family living in the old château was one whose records could be traced to the year one thousand, when a certain man by the name of Motier acquired an estate called Villa Faya, and thereafter he became known as Motier de la Fayette. In 1240 Pons Motier married the noble Alix Brun de Champetières; and from their line descended the famous Lafayettes known to all Americans. Other Auvergne estates were added to the Chaviniac acres as the years went by, some with old castles high up in the mountains behind Chaviniac, and all these were inherited by the father of America's famous champion.

Lafayette's father was a notable warrior, as *his* father had been—and his—and his—away back to the days of the Crusades. Pons Motier de la Fayette fought at Acre; Jean Motier de la Fayette fell at Poitiers. There were marshals who bore the banner in many a combat of olden times when the life of the country was at stake. It was a Lafayette who won the battle at Beaugé in 1421, when the English Duke of Clarence was defeated and his country was compelled to resign hope of a complete conquest of France. Among other men who bore the name, there were military governors of towns and cities, aids to kings in war, captains and seneschals. Many of them spent their lives in camps and on battlefields. One of them saw thirty years of active service; another found that after thirty-eight years of military life he had been present at no less than sixty-five sieges besides taking part in many pitched battles. Lafayette's grandfather was wounded in three battles; and his uncle, Jacques Roch Motier, was killed in battle at the age of twenty-three.

During the summer before Lafayette's birth, his father, the young chevalier and colonel, not then twenty-five, had been living quietly in the Château Chaviniac. But a great conflict was going on—the Seven Years' War was being waged. He heard the call of his country and he felt it his duty to respond.

There was a sad parting from his beautiful young wife; then he dashed down the steep, rocky roadway from the château to the village, and so galloped away—over the plains, through fords and defiles, toward the German border—never to return.

Lafayette's ancestors on his mother's side were equally distinguished for military spirit. His mother was the daughter of the Comte de la Rivière, lieutenant general and captain of the second company of the King's Musketeers.

But this "hero of two worlds" inherited something more than military spirit. The ancestors from which he descended formed a line of true gentlefolk. For hundreds of years they had been renowned throughout the region of their Auvergne estates for lofty character and a kindly attitude toward their humble peasant neighbors. It was only natural that this most famous representative of the line should become a valiant champion of justice and freedom.

[Pg 5]

This great man was destined to have as many adventures as any boy of to-day could wish for. To recount them all would require not one book, but a dozen. Think of a lad of nineteen being a general in our Revolutionary War, and the trusted friend and helper of Washington! Lafayette was present at the surrender of Cornwallis, boyishly happy at the achievements of the American soldiery, and taking especial pride in his own American regiment. This period was followed by a worthy career in France, but for five years—from his thirty-fifth year to his fortieth—he was unjustly imprisoned in a grim old Austrian fortress. At the age of sixty-seven he made a wonderful tour through our country, being received with ceremonies and rejoicings wherever he went; for every one remembered with deep gratitude what this charming, courteous, elderly man had done for us in his youth. He lived to the ripe age of seventy-seven, surrounded by children and grandchildren, and interested in the work of the world up to the very last.

The birth of Lafayette is recorded in the yellow and timeworn parish register of Chaviniac. This ancient document states that on September 6, 1757, was born that "very high and very puissant gentleman Monseigneur Marie-Joseph-Paul-Yves-Roch-Gilbert Dumotier de Lafayette, the lawful son of the very high and the very puissant Monseigneur Michel-Louis-Christophe-Roch-Gilbert Dumotier, Marquis de Lafayette, Baron de Wissac, Seigneur de Saint-Romain and other places, and of the very high and very puissant lady Madame Marie-Louise-Julie de la Rivière."

[Pg 6]

But it was only on official documents that Lafayette's full name, terrifying in its length, was used. Reduced to republican simplicity, the Marquis de Lafayette's name was Gilbert Motier, although he was always proud of the military title, "General," bestowed on him by our country. To tell the truth, imposing names meant little to this friend of liberty, who was a true republican at heart and who, during the French Revolution, voluntarily resigned all the titles of nobility he had inherited.

During his earliest childhood Lafayette was somewhat delicate. The child first opened his eyes in a sorrowful home at the old Château Chaviniac, for word had come, only a month before, that Lafayette's father had been killed at the battle of Minden, leaving the young mother a widow. The boy, however, grew in strength with the years. Naturally, all was done that could be done to keep him in health. At any rate, either through those mountain winds, or in spite of them, he developed a constitution so vigorous as to withstand the many strains he was to undergo in the course of his long and adventurous life.

[Pg 7]

The supreme characteristic of the man showed early in the boy when, at only eight years of age, he became possessed of an unselfish impulse to go out and perform a feat which for one so young would have been heroic. It was reported in the castle that a dangerous hyena was prowling about in the vicinity of the estate, terrifying everybody. The boy's sympathy was roused, and, from the moment he first heard of it, his greatest longing was to meet the cruel creature and have it out with him.

It is not recorded that the eight-year-old boy ever met that wild animal face to face, and it is well for the world that he did not. He was preserved to stand up against other and more significant spoilers of the world's welfare.

His education was begun under the care of his mother, assisted by his grandmother, a woman of unusually strong character; these, together with two aunts, formed a group whose memory was tenderly revered by Lafayette to the end of his life.

[Pg 8]

The boy Lafayette cared a great deal for hunting. Writing back to a cousin at home after he had been sent to Paris to school, he told her that what he would most like to hear about when she wrote to him would be the great events of the hunting season. His cousin, it appears, had written him an account of a hunt in the neighborhood, but she had not written enough about it to satisfy his desire. Why did she not give details? he asked. He reproachfully added that if he had been writing to her of a new-fashioned cap, he would have taken compass in hand and described it with mathematical accuracy. This she should have done concerning the great hunt if she had really wished to give him pleasure!

This fortunate boy could select any career he liked; courtier, lawyer, politician, writer, soldier—whatever he chose. Never came opportunity more richly laden to the doorway of any youth.

He chose to be a soldier. The double-barred doors of iron, the lofty, protected windows, the military pictures on the walls of his home—all spoke to the Chaviniac child of warfare and conflict. There was the portrait of his father in cuirass and helmet. There were far-away ancestors in glistening armor and laced jackets. There was also the military portrait of that Gilbert Motier de Lafayette who was marshal in the time of Charles VII, and whose motto "Cur non" (Why not?) was chosen by Lafayette for his own when he started on his first voyage. The instinct for warfare, for the organization of armies, for struggle and conquest, were strong in him, and were fostered and nourished by every impression of his boyhood's home.

[Pg 9]

[Pg
10]

CHAPTER II

COLLEGE AND COURT

IN the year 1768 the boy Lafayette, then eleven years old, left his mountain home and went to Paris, where he was placed by his mother in the Collège du Plessis, a school for boys of the nobility.

The arrangements for the student in a French college at that time were simple. A room scarcely wider than a cell was assigned to each boy. It was locked at night; but holes were cut in the door so that the fresh air might come in. This, at least, was the theory. Practically, however, the little cell must have been very stuffy, for the windows in the halls were shut tight in order that the health of the pupils might not be injured by currents of damp air from outside.

Special attention was given to diet, care being taken that the boys should not eat any uncooked fruit lest it should injure them. Parents might come to visit their children, but they were not allowed to pass beyond the threshold—a familiar chat on home matters might interfere with the studious mood of the scholars.

[Pg
11]

What were the studies of this young aristocrat?

First and foremost, heraldry. From earliest days his tutors had instilled into him the idea that the study of the coats of arms of reigning and noble families, together with all that they stood for, was first in importance.

Then the young student must dance, write, and draw. He must be able to converse wittily and with apt repartee. Fencing and vaulting were considered essential, as well as riding with grace and skill and knowing all about the management of the horse.

As far as books were concerned, the Latin masters—Cæsar, Sallust, Virgil, Terence, Cicero—were carefully studied. The boys were obliged to translate from Latin into French and from French into Latin. Occasionally this training proved useful. It is related that one of the French soldiers who came to New England and who could not speak English resorted to Latin and found to his joy that the inhabitant of Connecticut, from whom he wished to purchase supplies for his regiment, could be communicated with by that obsolete medium; and what would Lafayette have done when imprisoned in an Austrian dungeon if he had not been able to converse with his official jailers in the Latin tongue!

[Pg
12]

In historical studies the greatest attention was given to wars and treaties and acquisitions of territory. The royal families of his native country and of neighboring kingdoms were made familiar. History was taught as if it were a record of battles only. Swords and coats of mail decorated the mantelpieces in the school and the latest methods of warfare were studied.

In addition to all these military matters, a great deal of attention must have been given to acquiring the power of clear and forcible expression in the French language. While Lafayette can never be included among the great orators of the world, he possessed a wonderfully pellucid and concise diction. He was a voluminous writer. If all the letters he sent across the ocean from America could be recovered from the bottom of the Atlantic, there would be enough to make several large volumes. Sometimes he dispatched as many as thirty letters at one time. He sent them by way of Spain, by way of Holland, or by any other roundabout route that offered promise of final delivery. But privateersmen frequently captured the boats that carried them, and very often the letter-bags were dropped overboard. Still another circumstance deprived the world of many of his writings. When revolutionists took possession of the Lafayette home in Chaviniac, they sought in every nook and cranny to find evidence that they would have been glad to use against these representatives of the nobility. Madame de Lafayette had carefully stuffed all the letters she could find into the maw of the immense old range in the castle kitchen. Other treasures were buried in the garden, there to rot before they could be found again.

[Pg
13]

Of the extant writings of Lafayette there are six volumes in French, made up of letters and miscellaneous papers, many of them on weighty subjects, while numerous letters of Lafayette are to be found among the correspondence of George Washington, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and other statesmen and generals of Revolutionary days.

Of the English language Lafayette's knowledge was mainly gained during the six long weeks of his first voyage to America. And what he acquired he at once put into practice. He learned the language from books, and from good books. As a result his English, both spoken and written, had a special polish.

At the Collège du Plessis Lafayette was an industrious student. All his life he regarded time as a gift of which the best use was to be made, and, according to his own expression, he was "not at liberty to lose it himself, and still less to be the occasion of the loss of it to others." Therefore he would not, unless it was absolutely unavoidable, be unpunctual to engagements, or keep people waiting his pleasure. As a boy in college he never had to be urged to study; neither was he in any way an unmanageable boy. In spite of the intensity of his nature, he never deserved to be chastised.

[Pg
14]

It should be understood that corporal chastisement was the rule in the schools of that time. In the year 1789 one simple-hearted old school-master solemnly reported that during the fifty years of

his experience as teacher he administered nine hundred thousand canings, twenty thousand beatings, one hundred thousand slaps, and twenty thousand switchings. Among smaller items he mentions ten thousand fillips and a million and a quarter raps and hits. He hurled a Bible, a catechism, or a singing-book at some hapless child twelve thousand times, and caused seven hundred to kneel on peas as a punishment. Then he punished eight hundred thousand for not learning their lessons and seventy-six thousand for not learning their Bible verses. So much for one teacher a half century before Lafayette's day! And people still talk and write about "the good old times"!

[Pg
15]

The surroundings of Lafayette during his youth must have been of a kind to develop strength of character. He was to be one of the historical personages against whom scandalmongers have not been able to unearth a mass of detraction. His close companions during army days testified that they never heard him swear or use gross language of any kind. As Edward Everett in his great eulogy said, from Lafayette's home, his ancestry, his education, his aristocratic marriage, and his college life, he "escaped unhurt."

Lafayette's mother took up her residence in Paris in order to be near her son. She allowed herself to be presented at court that she might be in touch with what was going on and give her boy all the aid possible. She saw to it that her uncle should place him in the army lists that he might secure the advantage of early promotion.

After a while the tall boy was entered in the regiment of the Black Musketeers, and it became a favorite occupation of his to watch the picturesque reviews of those highly trained soldiers. This entertainment was for holidays, however, and did not interfere with his studies.

[Pg
16]

It was not for very many years that Lafayette was to profit by his highborn mother's devoted care and foresight. In 1770, when her son was only thirteen years old, she died in Paris. In a painting on the walls of the château to-day the face of that aristocratic lady shines out in its delicate beauty. A pointed bodice of cardinal-colored velvet folds the slender form and loose sleeves cover the arms. In the romantic fashion of the pre-revolutionary period, the arm is held out in a dramatic gesture, and one tiny, jeweled hand clasps the shepherd's crook, the consecrated symbol of the story-book lady of that period.

About the time of her death, one of her uncles passed away, leaving to the young student at the Collège du Plessis a large and valuable estate. This placed Lafayette in a very advantageous position so far as worldly matters were concerned. His fortune being now princely, his record at college without blemish, his rank unexceptionable among the titles of nobility, he was quickly mentioned as an eligible partner in marriage for a young daughter of one of the most influential families in France,—a family that lived, said one American observer, in the splendor and magnificence of a viceroy, which was little inferior to that of a king. This daughter was named, in the grand fashion of the French nobility, Marie-Adrienne-Françoise de Noailles. In her family she was called simply Adrienne.

[Pg
17]

Adrienne de Noailles was not old enough to give promise of the greatness of character of which she later showed herself possessed; but, as it proved, Lafayette found that in her he had a companion who was indeed to be his good genius. She became the object of the unwavering devotion of his whole life; and she responded with an affection that was without limit; she gave a quick and perfect understanding to all his projects and his ideals; she followed his career with an utterly unselfish zeal; and when heavy sorrows came, her courage and her cleverness were Lafayette's resource. Her name should appear among those of the world's heroines.

At the time of the proposed alliance, Lafayette was fourteen; the suggested fiancée was scarcely twelve. Her mother, the Duchess d'Ayen, a woman of great efficiency and of lofty character, knew that the Marquis de Lafayette was almost alone in the world, with no one to guide him in his further education or to lend aid in advancing his career. Moreover, she held that to have so large a fortune was rather a disadvantage than otherwise, since it might be a help or a hindrance, according to the wisdom of the owner, and she rightly saw that the allurements of the Paris of 1770 to an unprotected youth of fortune would be almost irresistible. She therefore refused to allow a daughter of hers to accept the proposal. For several months she withheld her consent, but at last she relented, on consideration that the young people should wait for two years before the marriage should take place. This admirable mother, who had carefully educated and trained her daughters, now took the further education of Lafayette into her care; she soon became very fond of him and cherished him as tenderly as if he had been her own son.

[Pg
18]

The marriage took place in Paris on the 11th of April, 1774. It was an affair of great splendor. There were many grand banquets; there were visits of ceremony, with new and elaborate toilettes for each visit; there were numberless beautiful presents, the families represented and their many connections vying with each other in the richness and fineness of their gifts. Diamonds and jewels in settings of quaint design were among them, and besides all these there were the ancestral jewels of Julie de la Rivière, the mother of Lafayette, to be received by the new bride, and by her handed down to her descendants.

[Pg
19]

The arrangement was that the wedded pair should make their home with the mother of the bride, the young husband paying eight thousand livres a year as his share of the expense. The sumptuous home was the family mansion of the Noailles family; it was situated in the rue St. Honoré, not far from the palace of the Tuileries, at the corner where the rue d'Alger has now been cut through. The Hôtel de Noailles it was called, and it was so large that to an observer of to-day it would appear more like a splendid hotel than like a private residence. When, a few years

after Lafayette's wedding, John Adams was representing the United States in Paris, and was entertained in this palatial home, he was so amazed that he could not find words in English or in French to describe the elegance and the richness of the residence. In it were suites of rooms for several families, for troops of guests, and for vast retinues of servants. The building measured from six hundred to seven hundred feet from end to end. There were splendid halls and galleries and arcades. Toward the street the façade was plain but the interior was decorated with astonishing richness. The inner rooms faced on a garden so large that a small hunt could be carried on within it, with fox, horses, and hounds, all in full cry. Magnificent trees waved their branches above the great garden, and rabbits burrowed below.

[Pg
20]

Here was a delightful place for a few people to pursue beautiful lives. John Adams made a note of the fact that the Noailles family held so many offices under the king that they received no less than eighteen million livres (more than three and a half million dollars) income each year. It must be remembered that the streets of Paris about this time were crowded with a rabble of beggars. But of this the dwellers in such magical palaces and parks saw but little and thought less.

Conditions such as these give a hint of the causes that led to the French Revolution and explain in some degree why thoughts of liberty, fraternity, and equality were haunting the minds of the youth of France, and, to some of the more open-minded among them, suggesting dreams of noble exploit.

[Pg
21]

CHAPTER III

A BOY'S IDEALS

BY this time Lafayette was a tall, slender young fellow, of commanding height, and with a look of piercing and imperative sincerity in his clear, hazel eyes. His hair was red—some one in the family used to call him "the big boy with red hair"; but hero worshipers need have no misgivings about this characteristic, nor feel that they must apologize for it as a defect. Lafayette said of himself that he was an awkward boy. It may be that the youth who was rapidly growing to a height of "five feet eleven" may have felt, as most boys do at that age, as if he were all hands and feet. But that Lafayette was really awkward—it is unthinkable! Not one single lady of all the beauties in France and America, who handed it down to her descendants that she "once danced with Lafayette," ever mentioned the fact that her partner lacked any element of grace, while many speak of the ease of manner and address of the distinguished man. One friend of Lafayette's early days reports that he was too tall to make a distinguished appearance on horseback or to dance with special grace; but this was said in a period when the dancing-master's art was the ideal of social conduct. Those who did not know Lafayette very well at this time thought him cold and serious and stiff. Perhaps he was shy; yet beneath that calm exterior seethed a volcano of emotion of which no casual onlooker dreamed.

[Pg
22]

Lafayette was fortunate in having a cousin, the Count de Ségur, who understood him and who realized that under that surface of gravity was hidden, as he said, "a spirit the most active, a character the most firm, a soul the most burning with passionate fervor."

After his marriage Lafayette continued his studies at the Collège du Plessis, and later he spent a year at the military academy at Versailles, that his education as an officer might be complete.

In the summer his inclinations led him to make various journeys to the fortified city of Metz, where the regiment "de Noailles" was in garrison under the charge of the Prince de Poix who was a brother-in-law of Adrienne, Lafayette's wife. On his way back from one of these visits he stayed at Chaillot for a time and there was inoculated for smallpox. This preventive method was a medical novelty at that time. To submit to the experiment showed a great freedom from prejudice on the part of the youth. The Duchess d'Ayen had once suffered from the ravages of this disease, so she could safely stay with the now adored son-in-law through this disagreeable period of seclusion.

[Pg
23]

Soon after this the youthful Marquis de Lafayette and his shy girl bride were presented at court. The benevolent king, Louis XVI, was then reigning. The queen, Marie Antoinette, was the head of a social life that was elaborately formal and splendid. Marie Antoinette herself was young and light-hearted, and was at this time without fears from misadventure at the hands of the state or from any personal enemies. The king had thousands of servants and attendants in his military and personal households. A court scene was a display of knots of ribbon, lace ruffles, yellow and pink and sky-blue satin coats, shoes with glittering buckles, red-painted heels, and jeweled trimmings. Fountains threw their spray aloft, and thousands of candles flung radiance broadcast. Said Chateaubriand, "No one has seen anything who has not seen the pomp of Versailles." And no one dreamed that the end was nearing, or realized that no nation can live when the great mass of the people are made to toil, suffer, and die, in order that a favored few may have luxuries and amusement.

[Pg
24]

Into this Vanity Fair the young Marquis de Lafayette was now plunged. The grand world flowed to the feet of the Marquis and Marchioness de Lafayette. More than that, the queen at once took the tall, distinguished-looking young chevalier into the circle of her special friends. The circle included some who were to follow Lafayette in his adventure to the New World in aid of American

independence, and some who were to follow in another long procession equally adventurous and as likely to be fatal—the Revolution in their own country. During the Terror some of them, including their beautiful and well-meaning queen, were to lose their lives. Of any such danger as this, these young nobles, in the present state of seemingly joyous and abundant prosperity, were farthest from dreaming.

On the whole, however, court life did not have much charm for Lafayette. It was a part of the duty of the Marquis and Marchioness de Lafayette to take part in the plays and merrymakings that centered about a queen who loved amusement only too well. But Lafayette could not throw his whole heart into the frivolity of the social sphere in which he was now moving. There were features of life at court that he could not tolerate. His knee would not crook; he already knew, as Everett said, that he was not born "to loiter in an antechamber."

[Pg
25]

It was liberty itself—the revolt against tyranny in every realm of life—that interested him from the first. Lafayette was against whatever stood for tyranny, against whatever appeared to be an institution that could foster despotism. He believed that the well-being of society would be advanced by giving the utmost freedom to all, high and low, educated and uneducated. He saw a world in chains only waiting for some hero to come along and strike off the fetters.

Where did Lafayette, a born aristocrat, get these ideas? Certainly not from the peasants as they knelt beside the road when he, their prospective liege lord, rode by. He was brought up to believe that it was the sacred privilege of the ruling class to throw largesse to the poor, who stood aside, waiting and expectant, to receive the gifts.

It is hard to say where Lafayette imbibed his love of freedom. One might as well ask where that "wild yeast in the air" comes from that used to make the bread rise without "emptins." There was a "wild yeast in the air" in the France of 1760 and 1770, and all the young people of that country, whether highborn or lowborn, were feeling the ferment.

[Pg
26]

If Lafayette had pursued the course that his circumstances urged, he would soon have crystallized into a narrow, subservient character, without purpose or ideals. By all the standards of his time, he would be thought to be throwing away his life if he should take steps to alienate himself from the glittering, laughing, sympathetic friends who stood about him at court. All advancement for him appeared to be in line with the influences there. But if he had done this, if he had followed the star of court preferment, he would have remained only one of many highly polished nonentities—and would have lost his head at last. By throwing away his life, by choosing the way of self-sacrifice, he won the whole world; by throwing away his world, the natural world of compliance and ease about him, he won a world, nay, two worlds. He became what Mirabeau named him, the "hero of two worlds."

[Pg
27]

CHAPTER IV

THE GREAT INSPIRATION

IN the summer of 1775 Lafayette was stationed at the French garrison of Metz, where the Prince de Poix commanded the regiment "de Noailles." While he was there the Duke of Gloucester, brother of George III, king of England, came to that city and was present at a dinner given in his honor at the house of the governor of the garrison, the Count de Broglie. This count was a person of great sympathy and discernment. He had been observing the tall, red-haired boy of quiet, assured manner and few words, who represented so distinguished a family and gave so great promise for a future career. Eighteen years before he had seen this boy's father fall in battle, so he had a special interest in him. He now included young Lafayette among the guests at the dinner.

It appears that the Duke of Gloucester had just received letters from England telling about the revolt of the American colonies against the British government—about their prejudice in the little matter of a tax on tea, and about the strong measures to be taken by the English ministry to crush the rebellion. As the Duke of Gloucester was not on very good terms with his brother, King George, he told the story with somewhat vindictive glee.

[Pg
28]

This was probably the first that Lafayette had heard of American independence. Instantly his sympathy was touched to the quick. All the warlike and chivalric sentiments that he had inherited, all that had been carefully instilled by family tradition and by education, rose at once to the highest intensity. To the long and eager conversations that followed the news brought by the guest of the evening, Lafayette eagerly listened, and afterwards requested the duke to explain the situation more fully. His curiosity was deeply excited, his heart was at once enlisted. The idea of a people fighting against oppression stirred his imagination. From what he learned from the duke, the cause appealed to his sense of justice; it seemed the noblest that could be offered to the judgment of man. Before he left the table he had determined in his own mind to go to America and offer himself to the people who were struggling for freedom and independence.

[Pg
29]

From that moment his purpose was fixed. To realize his design he must go at once to Paris. Arriving there, he confided his plan to his two friends, the Viscount de Noailles and the Count de Ségur, inviting them to share his project. Noailles had just turned nineteen, and Ségur was

twenty-two; Lafayette was eighteen. But the youngest differed from the others in one respect; he had already come into his fortune, and controlled an income of about two thousand livres, an amount that in purchasing power represented a fortune such as few young men in any country or at any time have commanded. The others could contribute nothing to Lafayette's plans but cordial sympathy. They did indeed go so far as to consult their parents, expressing their desire to join in Lafayette's chivalrous adventure, but their parents promptly and emphatically refused consent.

The surprise of the Noailles family can be imagined when they heard that the quiet, reserved youth had suddenly decided to cross the sea and take up the fragile cause of a few colonists revolting against a great monarchy. It was not long before all came to admit that the soul of the big boy had in it a goodness and a valor that nothing could daunt.

Many, however, who heard about the project Lafayette entertained felt a new admiration for the spirited boy. One of these smartly said that if Madame de Lafayette's father, the Duc d'Ayen, could have the heart to thwart such a son-in-law, he ought never to hope to marry off his remaining daughters! It made no difference to this lordly family that the tidings of the American revolt were echoing through Europe and awakening emotions that those monarchies had never experienced before; nor did they notice that the young nobility of France were feeling the thrill of a call to serve in a new cause. They were blind to those signs of the times; and no one dared to speak of them to the Duke d'Ayen, for he, with the other ruling members of the family, violently opposed Lafayette's plan.

While these things were going on, word came that those audacious colonists had carried their project so far as to issue a Declaration of Independence of the British government and to set up for themselves as a nation. The Noailles family were amazed, but they could not change their point of view.

Not being able to unravel all the threads of destiny that were enmeshing him, Lafayette was working in the dark, only knowing that he wanted to go, and that he could not bring himself to give up the project. He knew also that he must depend solely upon himself. Then there came into his mind the motto that he had since boyhood seen upon the shield of one of his famous ancestors in the castle at Chaviniac—"Cur non," Why not? He adopted this motto for his own and placed it as a device upon his coat of arms, that it might be an encouragement to himself as well as an answer to the objections of others.

Lafayette consulted his commander and relative, the Count de Broglie. He on his part did all he could to dissuade the lad; he pointed out that the scheme was Utopian; he showed up its great hazards; he said that there was no advantage to be had in going to the aid of those insignificant rebels—that there was no glory to be gained. Lafayette listened respectfully and said that he hoped his relative would not betray his confidence; for, as soon as he could arrange it, go to America he would! The Count de Broglie promised not to reveal his secret, but he added:

"I have seen your uncle die in the wars of Italy; I witnessed your father's death at the battle of Minden; and I will not be accessory to the ruin of the only remaining branch of the family."

These things made no impression upon the determination of the young hero, and the Count de Broglie was in despair. When he finally found, however, that the boy's determination was fixed, he entered into his plans with almost paternal tenderness. Though he would give him no aid, he introduced him to the Baron de Kalb who was also seeking an opportunity to go to America, and he thought his age and experience would be of value to the young adventurer.

This Baron de Kalb was an officer in the French army with the rank of lieutenant colonel. He was a man of fifty-five, who had served in the Seven Years' War and who had been employed by the French government ten years before to go secretly to the American colonies in order to discover how they stood on the question of their relations with England.

At that time there was a representative of the colonies in Paris to whom all who felt an interest in American liberty had recourse. This man was Silas Deane. To him Lafayette secretly went.

"When I presented to Mr. Deane my boyish face," said Lafayette later in life, "I dwelt more (for I was scarcely nineteen years of age) upon my ardor in the cause than on my experience."

Naturally, for he had had no experience whatever. But he could speak of the effect that his going would have upon France, since because of his family and connections notice would surely be taken of his action. This might influence other young men and might win favor for the colonies in their struggle. Silas Deane was quick to see this and to draw up an agreement which he asked Lafayette to sign. It was as follows:

"The wish that the Marquis de Lafayette has shown to serve in the army of the United States of North America and the interest that he takes in the justice of their cause, making him wish for opportunities to distinguish himself in the war, and to make himself useful to them as much as in him lies; but not being able to obtain the consent of his family to serve in a foreign country and to cross the ocean, except on the condition that he should go as a general officer, I have believed that I could not serve my country and my superiors better than by granting to him, in the name of the very honorable Congress, the rank of Major-General, which I beg the States to confirm and ratify and to send forward his commission to enable him to take and hold rank counting from to-day, with the general officers of the same grade. His high birth, his connections, the great dignities held by his family at this court, his disinterestedness, and, above all, his zeal for the freedom of our colonies, have alone been able to induce me to make this promise of the said rank of Major-General, in the

[Pg
30]

[Pg
31]

[Pg
32]

[Pg
33]

[Pg

name of the United States. In witness of which I have signed these presents, done at Paris, this seventh of October, seventeen hundred and seventy-six."

[34]

To this startling document the undaunted boy affixed the following:

"To the above conditions I agree, and promise to start when and how Mr. Deane shall judge it proper, to serve the said States with all possible zeal, with no allowance nor private salary, reserving to myself only the right to return to Europe whenever my family or my king shall recall me; done at Paris this seventh day of October, 1776.

(signed) "THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE."

About this time Dr. Benjamin Franklin was added to the group of American envoys. He was an instant success in the Parisian world. With his baggy coat, his coonskin cap, and his one-eyed spectacles, Franklin was the admired of all the grand ladies of the court, while his ability to "bottle lightning" was a favorite topic for discussion. The queen favored Franklin and the American cause; the king also; but neither dared to say so openly lest the spies of England, France's hereditary enemy, should find it out. Lafayette was obliged to preserve the utmost secrecy in making his arrangements and to secure the interviews in such a way that no one would suspect what he was planning.

[Pg
35]

Unfortunately, bad news began to come from America. The disasters of Long Island and White Plains had befallen, and the English army was being reënforced by regiments of Hessians. This news destroyed what credit the colonies had in France. No one now had any hope for their endeavors, and no one could be found who would consider fitting out a vessel for Lafayette and his friends.

The American envoys thought it no more than right to tell this to the eager Lafayette and to try to dissuade him from his project to go to America. To this end they sent him word to come for another secret conference. He did so, and the envoys explained to him the discouraging situation.

One of the points wherein this young Lafayette approached nearest to greatness was in the way he could face some black disaster, and, with an absolutely quenchless spirit and the most adroit cleverness, turn the disaster into an advantage. This happened when Lafayette went to see these envoys. He received the news with a brow of unruffled calm. He thanked Mr. Deane for his kindness in trying to save him from disaster. Then he added: "Until now, Sir, you have only seen my ardor in your cause; I may now prove to be really useful. I shall myself purchase a ship to carry out your officers. We must show our confidence in the future of the cause, and it is especially in the hour of danger that I wish to share your fortunes."

[Pg
36]

This reply cast another light upon the circumstances. The American envoys regarded the enthusiasm of the young nobleman with approbation; the plan was pressed forward, preparations were made to find a vessel, to buy it, and fit it out. All this had to be done secretly, as the eagerness of Lafayette called for haste.

Meantime, a plan had been made for Lafayette to go on a visit to England with his relative, the Prince de Poix. It would be better not to interfere with the arrangement already made, it was thought; though Lafayette was impatient to carry out his plan for embarking, he wisely agreed to visit England first. In this plan Mr. Deane and Dr. Franklin concurred.

Lafayette made the journey with the Prince de Poix, and for three weeks had a busy time, being richly entertained and observing English life. He was in a rather delicate situation, for he was now a guest among a people with whom in one respect he could not sympathize and toward whom he entertained a hostile feeling. But in all he did he carefully drew the line between the honor of the guest and the attitude of the diplomatist. Though he went to a dance at the house of Lord Germain, minister of the English colonies, and at that of Lord Rawdon, who had but just come from New York, and though he made the acquaintance of the Clinton whom he was soon to meet on opposing sides of the battle line at Monmouth, he chivalrously denied himself the pleasure and profit of inspecting the fortifications and seaports where ships were being fitted out to fight the American rebels. More than that; he openly avowed his feelings about the hazardous and plucky attempt of the colonies to free themselves from England; and he frankly expressed his joy when news of their success at Trenton was received. This very spirit of independence in the young French noble made him all the more a favorite among the English who, together with their king, did not in the least dream that the foolish rebels across the sea could accomplish anything by their fantastic revolt.

[Pg
37]

Among other acquaintances made in England at this time was one Fitzpatrick, whose life was to be strangely mingled with Lafayette's in later days. Fighting on opposite sides of the conflict in America, they were yet to meet cordially between battles, and Lafayette was to send letters in Fitzpatrick's care to his wife in France—letters in which he took pains to inclose no matters relating to the war, since that would have been unsportsmanlike; still later, owing to a tragic concurrence of events, this even-minded and generous Englishman was to make persistent appeals to the English government to take measures to free Lafayette from a hateful imprisonment in an Austrian stronghold, gallant appeals, made, alas, in vain!

[Pg
38]

As soon as Lafayette could conveniently withdraw from his English hosts he did so, and hurried back to Paris, where he kept himself as much out of sight as possible until the final preparations for the voyage were completed. At last all was ready and Lafayette reached Bordeaux where the

boat was waiting. Here swift messengers overtook him to say that his plans were known at Versailles. Lafayette set sail, but he went only as far as Los Pasajos, a small port on the north coast of Spain. Here letters of importance awaited the young enthusiast, impassioned appeals from his family and commands from his king. The sovereign forbade his subject to proceed to the American continent under pain of punishment for disobedience; instead, he must repair to Marseilles and there await further orders.

[Pg
39]

Lafayette knew what this meant. His father-in-law was about to go to Italy and would pass Marseilles on the way. Lafayette was to be made to go with him on an expedition where he knew he would be monotonously employed, with no prospect of exercising his energies in any congenial project. He was not without many proofs as to what might happen to him if he disobeyed these orders and risked the displeasure of the king. The Bastille was still standing and the royal power was absolute!

Letters from his wife also made a strong appeal. A little child now brightened their home; yet the young husband and father must have reflected that his own father had left a young and beautiful wife; that the young soldier had torn himself away from his home and bride in Chaviniac, following the lure of arms, and had, but a few weeks before his own son's birth, rushed off to the battlefield where he ran the risk of returning no more. Why should not the son take the same risk and leave all for a great cause? To be sure, the father lost in the venture, but perhaps the son would not. It was in the Lafayette blood to seek for hazard and adventure. Cur non? Why not?

[Pg
40]

He was convinced that he would do no harm to any one but himself by following out his purpose, and he decided not to risk further interference from family or ministry. To get away safely he adopted a ruse. He started out as if to go to Marseilles; but costuming himself as a courier, he proceeded instead toward Los Pasajos, where his ship and friends were awaiting him. The masquerade was successful until he reached St. Jean de Luz where a hairbreadth escape was in store for him. Here certain officers were watching for Lafayette. The clever daughter of an innkeeper recognized him as the young nobleman who had passed some days before on the way to Bordeaux. A sign from Lafayette was enough to keep her from making known her discovery, and he slept, unrecognized, on the straw in the stable, while one of his fellow-adventurers played the part of passenger. This is why it has been said that but for the clever wit of an innkeeper's daughter, Lafayette might have languished for the next few years in the Bastille instead of spending them gloriously in aiding us to gain our independence.

Lafayette reached Los Pasajos in safety. From the picturesque cliffs back of the harbor he saw his ship, *La Victoire*—name of good omen!—lying at anchor. There was the happy meeting of friends who were to share his adventures and successes in the New World, and on the 20th of April, 1777, they sailed forth on their voyage.

[Pg
41]

Two letters followed the enthusiastic fugitive. One was from Silas Deane, who testified to the American Congress that a young French nobleman of exalted family connections and great wealth had started for America in order to serve in the American army. He affirmed that those who censured his act as imprudent still applauded his spirit; and he assured Congress that any respect shown Lafayette in America would be appreciated by his powerful relations, by the court, and by the whole French nation.

The other letter was a royal mandate calling upon the American Congress to refuse all employment whatsoever to the young Marquis de Lafayette. The first letter traveled fast; the second missive was subjected to intentional delays and did not reach its destination until Lafayette had been made an officer in the American army.

[Pg
42]

CHAPTER V

FIRST DAYS IN AMERICA

"HERE one day follows another, and what is worse, they are all alike. Nothing but sky and nothing but water; and to-morrow it will be just the same."

So wrote the restless Lafayette when he had been four weeks on the ship. The time had thus far been spent, after a sharp affliction of seasickness, in studying books on military science, and on the natural features of the country he was approaching.

In time land-birds were seen, and he sat down to write to Adrienne a fifteen-hundred-word letter which should be sent back by the first returning ship.

"It is from very far that I am writing to you, dear heart," he began, "and to this cruel separation is added the still more dreadful uncertainty of the time when I shall hear from you again. I hope, however, that it is not far distant, for, of all the many causes that make me long to get ashore again, there is nothing that increases my impatience like this."

[Pg
43]

The thought of his little daughter Henriette comes forward again and again. "Henriette is so delightful that she has made me in love with all little girls," he wrote.

Never did a more gallant company set sail than these young noblemen of France who were

following a course across the sea only a little more northerly than that which Columbus first traced, and with something of the same high hazard that inspired the great discoverer. Their names should be remembered by a people that profited by their bravery. Besides the Baron de Kalb, with his fifty-five years, and the Viscount de Maury (who rode out of Bordeaux as a grand gentleman while the disguised Lafayette went before as courier), there was Major de Gimat, first aid-de-camp to Lafayette and always his special favorite, who gave up his horse to his young commander, thereby saving his life at the battle of Brandywine, and who was wounded in an attack on a redoubt at Yorktown. Then there was Captain de la Colombe who, after the close of the war in America, pursued closely the fortunes of Lafayette, following him even into prison. There was Colonel de Valfort who, in later years, became an Instructor of Napoleon; and Major de Buysson who was at the battle of Camden and brought word of the eleven wounds that were needed to cause the death of the intrepid Baron de Kalb. The list included still other names of members of noble families in France.

[Pg
44]

Something was indeed happening to the youth of France in 1750 and 1760. A restless ardor, a love of adventure, a love of glory, together with the bewitchment of that beautiful word "liberty," were among the motives that inspired their actions. They went into the military service at fourteen or even earlier, and were colonels of regiments at twenty-two or twenty-four. They were "sick for breathing and exploit."

An amusing story is told of one of these adventurous boys. He got into a quarrel with a school-mate about the real positions of the Athenians and Persians at the battle of Plataea. He even made a small wager on it and then set out to find whether he had been right or not. He actually went on foot to Marseilles and from there sailed as cabin-boy to Greece, Alexandria, and Constantinople. There a French ambassador caught the young investigator and sent him home! Before he was twenty-four, however, he was in America, covering himself with glory at Germantown and at Red Bank. This was the kind of youths they were; and many thrilling stories could be told about the lives of these gallant young Frenchmen.

[Pg
45]

And how young they were! More than a hundred of the French officers who came to America to serve in the Revolution were in the early twenties. There were a few seasoned old warriors, of course, but the majority of them were young. Such were the companions-in-arms of Lafayette, himself still in his teens.

Lafayette's voyage was not without adventure. He had a heavy ship with but two inferior cannon and a few guns—he could not have escaped from the smallest privateer. But should they be attacked, he resolved to blow up the ship rather than surrender. When they had gone some forty leagues, they met a small ship. The captain turned pale; but the crew were now much attached to Lafayette and had great confidence in him, and the officers were numerous. They made a show of resistance; but it proved to be only a friendly American ship.

As they proceeded on their way, Lafayette noticed that the captain was not keeping the boat due west. He commanded that the point aimed for should be Charleston, South Carolina. The man was evidently turning southward toward the West Indies, this being the sea-crossing lane at that time. Lafayette soon found out that the captain had smuggled aboard a cargo which he intended to sell in a southern port. Only by promising to pay the captain the large sum he would have made by that bargain did Lafayette succeed in getting him to sail directly to the coast of the colonies.

[Pg
46]

After a seven weeks' voyage the coast was near. Unfortunately, it swarmed with hostile English vessels, but after sailing for several days along the shore, Lafayette met with an extraordinary piece of good fortune. A sudden gale of wind blew away the frigates for a short time, and his vessel passed without encountering either friend or foe.

They were now near Charleston; but in order to reach the harbor they were obliged to go ashore in the ship's yawl to inquire their way and if possible to find a pilot. Lafayette took with him in the small boat the Baron de Kalb, Mr. Price, an American, the Chevalier de Buysson, and some of the other officers, together with seven men to row. Night came on as they were making toward a light they saw on shore. At last a voice called out to them. They answered, telling who they were and asking for a night's shelter. They were cordially invited to come ashore and into a house, where they were received with great hospitality by the owner. They found themselves in the summer residence of Major Benjamin Huger (pronounced as if spelled Eugée), member of a notable Carolina family having French Huguenot antecedents, who, when he learned the purpose of the visitors, did everything in his power to make them comfortable and to further them on their way.

[Pg
47]

It was one of the curious coincidences that make up so large a part of the story of Lafayette's life that the first family to meet him on his arrival in this country had in its circle a small child who, when he grew up, was to take upon himself the dangerous task of rescuing Lafayette from the prison in which he was unjustly immured. That story will be told in its proper place.

Lafayette was soon in Charleston, making preparations for the long journey to Philadelphia, where Congress was in session at that time. He was charmed with everything he found.

The Chevalier de Buysson has left us a description of the uncomfortable journey to Philadelphia. The procession was as follows: first came one of Lafayette's companions in hussar uniform; next, Lafayette's carriage—a clumsy contrivance which was a sort of covered sofa on four springs; at the side one of his servants rode as a squire. The Baron de Kalb occupied the carriage with

[Pg

Lafayette. Two colonels, Lafayette's counselors, rode in a second carriage; the third was for the aids, the fourth for the luggage, and the rear was brought up by a negro on horseback. By the time they had traveled four days, the bad roads had reduced the carriages to splinters, the horses gave out, and buying others took all the ready money. After that the party traveled on foot, often sleeping in the woods. They were almost dead with hunger; they were exhausted with the heat; several were suffering from fever. After thirty days of this discouraging travel, they at last reached Philadelphia.

No campaign in Europe, declared de Buysson, could have been more difficult than this journey; but, he said, they were encouraged by the bright prospects of the reception they would surely have when they reached Philadelphia. All were animated by the same spirit, he said, and added, "The enthusiasm of Lafayette would have incited all the rest of us if any one had been less courageous than he."

But the reception of these wayworn strangers at the seat of government proved to be rather dubious. It appeared that at this time Congress was being bothered by many applications from foreigners who demanded high rank in the American army. The Committee of Foreign Affairs, being practical men of business, looked askance at men who traveled three thousand miles to help an unknown people; they did not wholly believe in the disinterested motives of the strangers; and they allowed Lafayette and his French officers to trail from office to office, presenting their credentials to inattentive ears.

[Pg
49]

Finally that sense of power which always buoyed Lafayette's spirit in critical moments came to his rescue. He determined to gain a hearing. He wrote to Congress a letter in which he said:

"After the sacrifices that I have made in this cause, I have the right to ask two favors at your hands; one is that I may serve without pay, at my own expense; and the other is that I may be allowed to serve at first as a volunteer."

Congress was clear-sighted enough to recognize in this letter a spirit quite different from that which had seemed to actuate some of the foreign aspirants for glory. And by this time they had received an informing letter from Silas Deane; so they hastened to pass a resolution (on July 31, 1777) accepting Lafayette's services and "in consideration of his zeal, illustrious family, and connections," they bestowed on him the rank of Major General in the Army of the United States.

[Pg
50]

The second letter with its royal command from Louis XVI might now follow, but it could have no effect. Lafayette was definitely committed to the American cause to which, as he said in his answer to Congress, the feelings of his heart had engaged him; a cause whose import concerned the honor, virtue, and universal happiness of mankind, as well as being one that drew from him the warmest affection for a nation who, by its resistance of tyranny, exhibited to the universe so fine an example of justice and courage.

Lafayette's letter to Congress asked that he might be placed as near to General Washington as possible and serve under his command.

A day or two after this a military dinner was given in Philadelphia which was attended by General Washington. Lafayette also was invited. That was Lafayette's first introduction to Washington. Lafayette had admired Washington almost from the time he first heard his name. To the young Frenchman, the occasion was momentous. He now saw before him a man whose face was somewhat grave and serious yet not stern. On the contrary, it was softened by a most gracious and amiable smile. He observed that the General was affable in manner and that he conversed with his officers familiarly and gayly. General Washington, with his customary prudence, looked closely at the nineteen-year-old volunteer, and wondered whether the stuff was to be found in that slight figure and intent gaze that would make a helper of value to the colonies, one whose judgment and loyalty could be relied upon. It must be that his decision was favorable to the youth, for after the dinner he drew him aside and conversed with him in the friendliest way. He spoke with him of his plans and aspirations, showed that he appreciated Lafayette's sacrifices, and that he realized the greatness of the effort he had made in order to bring aid to the colonies. Then Washington invited him to become one of his military family, which offer Lafayette accepted with the same frankness with which it was made.

[Pg
51]

Perhaps Lafayette was in a mood to be pleased, for in spite of the assailing mosquitoes at night and the many difficulties he had to overcome, everything he saw in America gave him great satisfaction.

[Pg
52]

CHAPTER VI

LAFAYETTE AT THE BRANDYWINE

WHEN Lafayette joined the army at Washington's headquarters, a few miles north of Philadelphia, he was very much surprised by what he saw. Instead of the ample proportions and regular system of European encampments, with the glitter and finish of their appointments; instead of feather-trimmed hats and violet-colored facings, with marching and countermarching in the precision and grace of a minuet, he saw a small army of eleven thousand men, poorly clad,

with nothing that could by the utmost courtesy be called a uniform, and woefully lacking in knowledge of military tactics.

But Lafayette had on his rose-colored spectacles. The pitiful condition of the American soldiers awakened nothing but sympathy in his heart—never any contempt. In spite of their disadvantages, he perceived that they had in them the making of fine soldiers, and that they were being led by zealous officers.

[Pg
53]

Lafayette, now a major general in the American army, attended the councils of war and stood by Washington when he reviewed the troops. When the General took occasion to speak rather apologetically of the deficiencies in his little army, suggesting that Lafayette must feel the difference between these untrained soldiers and those he was accustomed to see, Lafayette had the self-possession and tact to answer that he had come to America to learn, not to teach. This answer charmed Washington and endeared the young French officer to the whole army.

Washington, having heard that an English fleet was coming up Chesapeake Bay, moved south to meet the portentous army that he knew would promptly be debarked. On their way south the American troops had to pass through the city of Philadelphia. In view of the dark forebodings that the approach of the English was causing in the minds of the people, Washington was desirous that the soldiers should make as fine an appearance as possible in passing through the city, and made special regulations for that day. The army was to march in one column through the city; the order of divisions was stated; each officer without exception was to keep his post with a certain space between, no more and no less; each brigadier was to appoint patrols to arrest stragglers from the camp and all others of the army who did not obey this order; the drums and fifes of each brigade were to be collected in the center of it, and a tune for the quickstep was to be played; but it must be played with such moderation that the men could keep step to it with ease.

[Pg
54]

An army that needed admonitions like these could still awaken enthusiasm from spectators. The austere commander in chief looked very handsome as he passed; the slim, eager-eyed French major general rode at his side; every window shone with curious and admiring eyes and the sidewalks were crowded with applauding citizens. The men could not help catching the spirit of the occasion; each soldier stuck a sprig of green in his hat to make up as far as possible for the lack of fine uniforms and military brilliancy.

They were on their way to the place which was to be the scene of the battle of Brandywine, one of the most disastrous defeats of the Revolution. At the head of Chesapeake Bay the English had landed a large and finely equipped army, and from that point they threatened Philadelphia. Washington, with an inferior and poorly furnished force, placed his army in form to receive the attack at the Birmingham meetinghouse near Chad's Ford on Brandywine Creek, a point about fifty miles south of Philadelphia.

[Pg
55]

Lafayette accompanied General Washington to the battle. His rank of major general gave him no command. Practically, he was a volunteer. But when he saw that the American troops were in danger of defeat before the superior English force, he asked to be allowed to go to the front. He plunged into the midst of the panic that followed the failure of the American line to stand up before the galling fire of the well-trained British soldiers. The retreat was rapidly becoming a panic. At this point Lafayette sprang from his horse and rushed in among the soldiers; by starting forward in the very face of the enemy and calling the disorganized men to follow, he did all in his power to induce the men to form and make a stand. It was impossible. The odds were too great against the Americans. Lafayette and the other generals waited until the British were within twenty yards of them before they retired.

But at the height of the confusion, when Lafayette was too excited to notice it, a musket ball struck his left leg just below the knee. Of this he was unconscious until one of the generals called his attention to the fact that blood was running over the top of his boot. Lafayette was helped to remount his horse by his faithful aid, Major de Gimat, and insisted on remaining with the troops until the loss of blood made him too weak to go further. Then he stopped long enough to have a bandage placed on his leg.

[Pg
56]

Night was coming on. The American troops were going pellmell up the road toward Chester. There was horrible confusion, and darkness was coming on. At a bridge just south of Chester, the American soldiers were at the point of complete disorganization. Seeing the great need for some decisive mind to bring order out of this chaos, Lafayette made a stand and placed guards along the road. Finally Washington came up and made Lafayette give himself into the hands of the surgeons. At midnight Washington wrote to Congress, and in his letter he praised the bravery of the young French soldier. Lafayette had passed his twentieth birthday but four days before.

General Washington was happy to have this French officer proved by test of battle and to find his favorable judgment more than warranted. He showed the most tender solicitude for his young friend and gave him into the care of the surgeons with instructions to do all in their power for him, and to treat him as if he were his own son.

Lafayette's spirits were not in the least dashed. When the doctors gathered round to stanch the blood, expressing their apprehensions for his safety, he looked at the wound and pluckily exclaimed,

[Pg
57]

"Never mind, gentlemen; I would not take fifteen hundred guineas for that."

It was partly this buoyant, merry spirit that made Lafayette win all hearts. To the army he was

now no stranger. His broken English was becoming more and more understandable. But words were not necessary; the look in his eyes said that he was a fearless and sincere man; that he had not come to this country to "show off," but from a true love for the principles for which he had offered his sword. Never was there a more complete adoption than that of Lafayette by the American army.

Lafayette's first care on reaching Philadelphia was to write to Adrienne lest she should receive exaggerated news concerning his wound.

"It was a mere trifle," he wrote. "All I fear is that you should not have received my letter. As General Howe is giving in the meantime rather pompous details of his American exploits to the king his master, if he should write word that I am wounded, he may also write word that I am killed, which would not cost him anything; but I hope that my friends, and you especially, will not give faith to reports of those persons who last year dared to publish that General Washington and all the general officers of his army, being in a boat together, had been upset and every individual drowned."

[Pg
58]

Years afterwards when Lafayette, then an elderly man, revisited our country, he referred to his wound in these gracious words: "The honor to have mingled my blood with that of many other American soldiers on the heights of the Brandywine has been to me a source of pride and delight."

After a few days it was thought wise to take the wounded Lafayette to a quieter place. So Henry Laurens, the President of Congress, who happened to be passing on his way to York, Pennsylvania, whither Congress had removed, took him in his traveling carriage to Bethlehem, where dwelt a community of Moravians, in whose gentle care Lafayette was left for the four wearisome weeks of convalescence.

"Be perfectly at ease about me," he wrote Adrienne. "All the faculty in America are engaged in my service. I have a friend who has spoken to them in such a manner that I am certain of being well attended to; that friend is General Washington. This excellent man, whose talents and virtues I admired, and whom I have learned to revere as I have come to know him better, has now become my intimate friend; his affectionate interest in me instantly won my heart. I am established in his house and we live together like two attached brothers with mutual confidence and cordiality."

[Pg
59]

Again Lafayette writes: "Our General is a man formed in truth for this revolution, which could not have been accomplished without him. I see him more intimately than any other man, and I see that he is worthy of the adoration of his country.... His name will be revered in every age by all true lovers of liberty and humanity."

At last Lafayette was well enough to go into service again. He requested permission this time to join General Greene who was making an expedition into New Jersey in the hope of crippling the force of Lord Cornwallis. Lafayette was given command of a detachment of three hundred men, and with these he reconnoitered a situation Lord Cornwallis was holding at Gloucester opposite Philadelphia. Here he came so near to the English that he could plainly see them carrying provisions across the river to aid in the projected taking of the city, and he so heedlessly exposed himself to danger that he might easily have been shot or imprisoned if the English had been alert. By urgent entreaty he was called back. After gaining this information, he met a detachment of Hessians in the service of the British army, and though they numbered more than his own detachment, he succeeded in driving them back. In the management of this enterprise he showed great skill, both in the vigor of his attack and in the caution of his return. He took twenty prisoners. General Greene, in reporting to Washington, said that Lafayette seemed determined to be found in the way of danger.

[Pg
60]

General Washington was now convinced that the titled volunteer could be trusted with a command. He wrote to Congress as follows:

"It is my opinion that the command of troops in that state cannot be in better hands than the Marquis's. He possesses uncommon military talents; is of a quick and sound judgment; persevering and enterprising, without rashness; and besides these, he is of a conciliating temper and perfectly sober,—which are qualities that rarely combine in the same person. And were I to add that some men will gain as much experience in the course of three or four years as some others will in ten or a dozen, you cannot deny the fact and attack me on that ground."

[Pg
61]

On this recommendation, Lafayette was appointed to the command of a division composed entirely of Virginians. Needless to say he was overjoyed; for though the division was weak in point of numbers, and in a state of destitution as to clothing, he was promised cloth for uniforms and he hoped to have recruits of whom he could make soldiers.

When Lafayette enlisted in the American army, he was not to lack for companionship. John Laurens had come from his study of history and military tactics at Geneva and, leaving his young wife and child behind, even as Lafayette had done, had rushed home to serve his country in her need. Alexander Hamilton was now both military aid and trusted adviser and secretary to General Washington. These three young men, all boys at the same time in different quarters of the globe, had come together while still in early youth and were entering into the great work of the American Revolution.

[Pg
62]

CHAPTER VII

A SUCCESSFUL FAILURE

IT was on the 20th of December that Lafayette received the joyful news of the birth of a second daughter. She was named Anastasie. The whole camp shared in the happiness of the young father. In fact, the affairs of the young hero interested everybody so much that there was indeed some danger that he would be spoiled. And he certainly would have been but for the balance of good judgment and mental poise that offset youthful rashness and vanity.

At about the same time, in a long letter to his father-in-law, he explained the course of action he had marked out for himself. He said: "I read, I study, I examine, I listen, I reflect; and the result of all is the endeavor at forming an opinion into which I infuse as much common sense as possible. I will not talk much, for fear of saying foolish things; for I am not disposed to abuse the confidence which the Americans have kindly placed in me."

This was Lafayette's real spirit and his secret counsel to himself; and we can but wonder that a young man so impetuous, so enthusiastic, one who had had the courage to start out on this hazardous enterprise, should have combined with those qualities so cool and steady a judgment and so rigid a self-control. But it was just this combination of qualities that led Lafayette on to his successes.

There was, however, severe discipline in store for him. His strength of purpose was to be put to a sharp test. This came about in two ways: first, in the stern ordeal of the winter at Valley Forge, and afterwards in the expedition into the wilderness north of Albany.

Everybody knows what the hardships of the American army were in those dark days of the Revolution, the winter of 1777-78. Washington had suffered defeat and disaster; but he, like his faithful followers, was of the temper that could not be depressed. At Valley Forge the men built a city of wooden huts, and these afforded at least a shelter from the storms, though they were scarcely better than dungeons. Their sufferings were terrible. They were inadequately clothed; many had neither coats, hats, shirts, nor shoes; they were in want of food; illness followed. Many had to have feet or legs amputated because of the effects of freezing. Lafayette had to see all this, and to him their patient endurance seemed nothing short of miraculous.

He even tried to make merry a little over their sad situation, and over the nearness of the British army, for he wrote to his wife, "I cannot tell whether it will be convenient for General Howe to make us a visit in our new settlement; but we shall try to receive him with proper consideration if he does."

For the moment the American cause was under a cloud. Should Lafayette return to France now? If he did, this would have been the interpretation of his act—he had lost faith in the American undertaking. This belief would have been heralded throughout the British army and would soon have been echoed in France. Lafayette did not wish to shoulder the responsibility of the effect his withdrawal might have on the hopes of help from French sympathy and French resources, and on the determination of other recruits who might come over and bring aid. He decided to remain with Washington and the American army and share whatever fate might be theirs. So Lafayette courageously remained. Accustomed to a life of luxury, he nevertheless adapted himself at once to the melancholy conditions at Valley Forge.

There was a strange surprise awaiting Lafayette when he came to know the American situation more intimately. Before he left Europe, his sincere mind had clothed the cause of liberty in this country in the most rosy colors. He thought that here almost every man was a lover of liberty who would rather die free than live a slave. Before leaving France he thought that all good Americans were united in one mind, and that confidence in the commander in chief was universal and unbounded; he now believed that if Washington were lost to America, the Revolution would not survive six months. He found that there were open dissensions in Congress; that there were parties who hated one another; people were criticizing without knowing anything about war methods; and there were many small jealousies. All this disheartened him greatly; he felt that it would be disastrous if slavery, dishonor, ruin, and the unhappiness of a whole world should result from trifling differences between a few jealous-minded men.

After a time the disaffected ones in the army tried to win Lafayette from his close allegiance to Washington. They entertained him with ideas of glory and shining projects—a clever way to entice him into their schemes. Deceived for a time, he received their proffers of friendship and their flattering compliments, but when he noted that some of them were able to speak slightly and even disrespectfully of the commander in chief, he dashed the temptation away with absolute contempt.

Filled with the desire to ward off all possible peril from an influence which he knew would disrupt the American cause, he impetuously started in to help. He sought an interview with Washington, but not finding an early opportunity for this, he wrote him a long and noble letter which has been preserved. In it he said:

"I am now fixed to your fate, and I shall follow it and sustain it by my sword as by all means in my power. You will pardon my importunity in favor of the sentiment which dictated it. Youth and friendship make me, perhaps, too warm, but I feel the greatest concern at all that has happened for

[Pg
63]

[Pg
64]

[Pg
65]

[Pg
66]

some time since."

In answer to this impulsive and true-hearted letter, General Washington wrote one of the most distinctive and characteristic of all the hundreds of letters of his that are preserved. He said:

"Your letter of yesterday conveyed to me fresh proof of that friendship and attachment which I have happily experienced since the first of our acquaintance and for which I entertain sentiments of the purest affection. It will ever constitute part of my happiness to know that I stand well in your opinion because I am satisfied that you can have no views to answer by throwing out false colors, and that you possess a mind too exalted to condescend to low arts and intrigues to acquire a reputation."

[Pg
67]

It must have been welcome to the harassed heart of the man who stood at the head of so great a cause to receive the proofs of this young man's friendship and of his absolutely loyal support. Washington closed the letter with these gracious and inspiring words:

"Happy, thrice happy, would it have been for this army, and for the cause we are embarked in, if the same generous spirit had pervaded all the actors in it... But we must not, in so great a contest, expect to meet with nothing but sunshine. I have no doubt that everything happens for the best, that we shall triumph over all our misfortunes, and in the end be happy; when, my dear Marquis, if you will give me your company in Virginia, we will laugh at our past difficulties and the folly of others; and I will endeavor, by every civility in my power, to show you how much and how sincerely I am your affectionate and obedient servant."

[Pg
68]

The political conspiracy developed into what is known in history as the "Cabal." Thwarted in their attempt to draw into their interests the man whose importance to them, as representing in an unofficial way the French influence in America, was fully appreciated, they hatched a scheme that should remove him from the side and from the influence of Washington. This scheme consisted of a project on paper to send an expedition into Canada, in order to win the people there to join the American revolt, if possible to do so, by persuasion or by force. The plan had many features that appealed to Lafayette.

The conspirators of the Cabal had carried a measure in Congress to give Lafayette the promise of an independent command, and the commission for this was inclosed to General Washington. He handed it to the major general, who had so lately joined the army as a volunteer, with the simple words, "I would rather they had selected you for this than any other man."

But Lafayette loyally put aside the tempting prospect of winning personal glory in the Old World and the New by this expedition, and declined to receive any commission from Congress that would make him independent of Washington. He would serve only as a subordinate of the commander in chief, as one detailed for special duties. He wished to be called "General and Commander of the Northern Army," not commander in chief. Congress accepted the condition.

[Pg
69]

It was in this way, then, that Lafayette received the title of "General," a distinction that he valued more than that of Marquis, and that to the end of his days he preferred above all other titles.

With characteristic enthusiasm Lafayette proceeded to York, where Congress was then assembled, and where the members of the conspiracy were living in comfort that contrasted curiously with the conditions surrounding General Washington at Valley Forge. At a dinner given while Lafayette was there, the northern expedition and Lafayette's brilliant prospects were made themes of praise. But Lafayette missed one name from the list of toasts; at the end of the dinner he arose and, calling attention to the omission, he proposed the name of the commander in chief. In silence the men drank the toast; they had learned by this time that the young French noble was made of unmanageable material.

With a heart, however, for any fate, Lafayette started on the long, wearisome journey northward. There were rivers deep and swift to cross; the roads were bad and the wintry storms made them worse. Floating ice crowded the fords. Rain and hail and snow and slush made up a disheartening monotony.

[Pg
70]

It certainly was dismal. On his way north the young general was made happy, however, by receiving a "sweet parcel of letters," telling him that his family were very well and that they were keeping in loving remembrance the man who was called in France, "The American Enthusiast." This warmed his heart as he plodded northward through the storm.

On Lafayette's arrival at Albany, he found that none of the promises made to him as to supplies, available men, money, and other necessary equipment had been kept; and the judgment of advisers who knew the difficulties of a northern excursion in the depth of winter was against the expedition. Lafayette was exasperated and wrote frantic letters to Washington, to Congress, and to Henry Laurens.

But it was of no avail. The expedition had to be given up. Lafayette remained at Albany during the months of February and March, giving his personal credit to pay many of the men and to satisfy other demands, and taking up various duties and projects. For one thing, he went up the Mohawk River to attend a large council of the Iroquois Indians. This was Lafayette's first official contact with the red men, and he at once manifested a friendship for them and an understanding of their nature that won their hearts. He sent one of his French engineers to build a fort for the Oneidas, and he was present at a grand treaty ceremony. A band of Iroquois braves followed Lafayette southward and later formed part of a division under his command.

[Pg
71]

It was a discomfited but not a despairing young warrior who returned in April to Valley Forge.

But joy was before him. The Cabal had vanished before the storm of loyalty to Washington that gathered when the conspiracy was discovered. Moreover, Lafayette received from Congress a testimonial, saying that they entertained a high sense of his prudence, his activity, and his zeal, and they believed that nothing would have been wanting on his part, or on the part of the officers who accompanied him, to give the expedition the utmost possible effect, if Congress had not thought it impracticable to prosecute it further. Better still, on the 2d of May came the great news that a treaty of commerce and alliance had been signed between France and the United States of America.

This event caused a wild wave of joy to spread over the whole country. This treaty assured the permanence of the United States as a nation. To be sure, the war with England must still be carried on, but now that France was an ally they would have more hope and courage.

[Pg
72]

In the doleful camp at Valley Forge there was the sincerest gratification and delight. A national salute of thirteen cannon was ordered; a thanksgiving sermon was preached; a fine dinner was served for the officers, and the table was made more delightful by the presence of Mrs. Washington, Lady Stirling, Mrs. Greene, and other wives and daughters of generals.

Lafayette took part in these scenes of rejoicing, but there was a reason why, underneath it all, his heart was heavy. Almost with the letters announcing the joyous news of the treaty, came others telling him of the death, in October, 1777, of his little daughter Henriette, of whom he had said that he hoped their relationship would be more that of friends than of parent and child. This happiness was not to be theirs. Lafayette now thought that he had never realized before what it meant to be so far away from his home. The thought of Henriette and of the grief of Adrienne, which he was not able by his presence to help assuage, was with him every moment of the day; but even while his heart was heavy with grief, he felt that he must attend and bear his part in the public rejoicings.

[Pg
73]

CHAPTER VIII

LAFAYETTE AT MONMOUTH

THE alliance with France put a new color upon every phase of the American contest. If, for instance, a French fleet should be already on its way across the Atlantic, and should enter Chesapeake Bay and threaten Philadelphia, the English would have to evacuate that city and retire to New York, risking the danger of being intercepted on the way by Washington's army. In view of such a possibility as this, the commander in chief of the American army held a council of war in which it was decided that they were not strong enough to risk a decisive engagement. It was, however, highly important that exact information should be gained as to the movements of the British around Philadelphia. In order that this might be accomplished, General Washington detached a group of soldiery from among the most able and valued of his army, and put them under Lafayette, with instructions to proceed into the country between the Delaware and Schuylkill, and there interrupt communications with Philadelphia, obstruct the incursions of the enemy's parties, and obtain intelligence of their motives and designs.

[Pg
74]

Lafayette was overjoyed at being chosen for so important a charge; and on the 24th of May, 1778, he started out with about twenty-two hundred men. His force included the band of Iroquois warriors who had come from Albany to follow his fortunes, and who, because of their knowledge of forest-craft, were invaluable as scouts. The British could command about four times as many soldiers as had been assigned to Lafayette, but their intention was to keep the American force out of their way and, if possible, to avoid a direct encounter.

For his camp Lafayette selected a piece of rising ground near the eleventh milestone north of Philadelphia, where there was a church, a grave-yard, and a few stone houses that might afford some protection in case of attack, and where four country roads led out to the four points of the compass. The place was called Barren Hill—name of ill-omen! But the fate of the day proved not altogether unfortunate for the young and intrepid commander.

[Pg
75]

Naturally, the people in Philadelphia had heard of the approach of the young French noble whose fame had been ringing in their ears, and they prepared to go out and engage him—capture him, if possible. At that time they were indulging in a grand, week-long festival, with masquerades, dancing, and fireworks; and in anticipation of the quick capture of the young French hero, a special party was invited for the next evening at which the guests were promised the pleasure of meeting the distinguished prisoner.

Lafayette had chosen his position in a region he had carefully examined. But the English were able to send bodies of troops up all the traveled approaches to the hill. While Lafayette was planning to send a spy to Philadelphia to find out, as Washington had directed, what preparations were there being made, the cry suddenly arose in his camp that they were being surrounded. It was a terrible moment. But Lafayette had this great quality—the power of being self-possessed under sudden danger. He did not lose his head, and he instantly thought of a plan of escape.

There was a dilapidated road that his keen eye had detected leading along beneath a high bank which protected it from observation. He directed the main body of his men to pass down that old

[Pg

road, while a small number were commanded to make a pretense of a demonstration near the church; others were to show some false heads of columns along the edge of the forest by the stone houses. These were withdrawn as the main body of soldiers disappeared down the hidden road and began to dot the surface of the river with their bobbing heads as they swam across. Lafayette and his loyal aid-de-camp, Major de Gimat, brought up the rear with the remainder of the men, whom they transferred across the river without loss. Then they formed on the farther bank and determined to contest the ford if the British followed. But the British had marched up the hill from the two opposite sides, simply meeting each other at the top; they then marched down again and did not seem to be in any mind to pursue their enemy further.

The only real encounter of that serio-comic day's adventures took place between the band of Iroquois and a company of Hessians in the pay of the British. The Indians were concealed in the brush at the side of the road when the Hessians, with waving black plumes in their tall hats and mounted on spirited horses, came along. The Indians rose as if from under the ground, giving their war whoop as they sprang. The horses, unused to this form of war cry, started back and fled far and wide; and the Indians, never having seen soldiers so accoutered, were as frightened as if confronted by evil spirits, and swiftly made good their escape from the impending "bad medicine."

The British carried their chagrin with them back to Philadelphia, and the diners were disappointed in their guest of honor. Next morning Lafayette returned to the top of Barren Hill, thence marched back to Valley Forge, and there relieved the anxiety of General Washington who had feared for his safety.

But the incident of Barren Hill, while it was not in any way an engagement, must be looked upon as a serious matter after all, for it gave Lafayette an opportunity to show that he was cool and self-possessed in a critical moment, and that he was clever and resourceful in finding ways to extricate himself from difficulties—both essential qualities in one who is to be trusted with great enterprises.

In about a month the anticipated event took place—the British evacuated Philadelphia; and, with a baggage-train eleven miles long, started northward with the intention of joining forces with the army at New York.

The question now was whether the army under General Washington should leave Valley Forge and with their inferior force make an attempt to intercept the British and bring on a battle. Several councils of war were held; one of special importance at Hopewell, a place north of Valley Forge, where the project of preparing for attack was earnestly favored by Lafayette, together with General Greene and Colonel Alexander Hamilton, but violently (and unaccountably at that time) opposed by General Lee. This council has been made the subject of one of the reliefs on the celebrated Monmouth Battle Monument. In this design Washington is represented as standing by the table in the center of the group, while Lafayette is spreading the map before the council and urging them to make a strong demonstration against the British, even if it should bring on a battle.

The various generals sit about the table and each expresses in his attitude what his feelings are in this crisis. Steuben and Duportail (at the extreme left) evidently agree with Lafayette, and eagerly press for compliance with his plan. General Patterson (seated at the table) is of the same mind, and so is the true-hearted Greene (seated at the right of Patterson). Brave Colonel Scammel (between Washington and Lafayette), Washington's Adjutant General, carefully notes the opinion of each for the guidance of his chief. Back in the shadow sits the treacherous General Lee, who looks sulky and is evidently planning mischief. The homely rooftop covers a critical scene in the history of the Revolution.



From a photograph by Norman L. Coe & Son.

The Council at Hopewell.

This bas-relief, by the sculptor J.E. Kelly, appears on the Monmouth Battle Monument.

Finally, Washington turned to General Wayne (behind Greene) and said,

"Well, General, what would *you* do?"

"Fight, Sir!" crisply replied the ardent and indomitable Wayne—an answer that pleased alike the commander in chief and the young volunteer major general, to whom it seemed an intolerable insult that a hostile army should be allowed to march through one's own country unchallenged.

General Lee was determined that the British should be allowed to pass through New Jersey without molestation. His sympathies were afterwards found to have been entirely with the British. At any rate, Washington did not follow his advice. He sent out men to fell trees in the enemy's path, to burn bridges before them, and to harass them as much as possible; and he forwarded detachments of such size that he needed a major general to take command of that branch of his army. The position was offered first to General Lee. He refused to take it. General Washington was then free to offer it to Lafayette, who accepted it with delight.

As these plans were being matured, General Lee suddenly changed his mind and announced that he would take command of the advance force; and he appealed to Lafayette's generosity to allow him to do so, even after having once given his refusal. Lafayette unselfishly resigned the command. It is the opinion of historians that the outcome of the battle of Monmouth would have been very different if the American side had been left in the capable hands of the young Lafayette.

The battle of Monmouth, which took place on the 28th of June, was widely scattered in its action over a hot and sandy plain. The outcome was that General Lee first brought his troops face to face with the enemy, and then, instead of leading on to the attack, gave the order for retreat. Afterwards, in the court-martial of Lee, it was made evident that the movement of the troops as ordered by Lee would have left Lafayette and his detachment abandoned in an extremely exposed position on the open plain, the troops that should have supported him having been withdrawn by Lee's orders and directed to retreat. Lafayette and the other generals felt great bitterness on that day because they had been swept into battle but had not been allowed to strike a blow.

Everybody knows how Washington rode up, and when he saw the retreat, how he indignantly reproved General Lee and commanded the battalions to turn back and form in position for battle. Lafayette was in command of a division stationed at the second line under Lord Stirling who sustained the left wing; they were now placed on an eminence behind a morass and there played the batteries to such good effect that they were able to check the advance of the British. This halt gave Washington time to place his army to advantage. The British were driven from a strong position they had taken, and before dark the American troops had turned the British back. That night they lay upon the field in bright moonlight, and while Washington and Lafayette discussed the possible outcome of the next day, the British were silently withdrawing from the Monmouth plains. The next morning all had disappeared except some forty of their wounded. At Sandy Hook, where the British army crossed to New York, it was learned that they had lost about two thousand men by desertions and by losses at Monmouth. Many of the soldiers on both sides had died from the extreme heat on that 28th of June.

During the battle Lafayette was master of himself. Almost fifty years later, Colonel Willett related that in the hottest of the fight he saw Lafayette ride up to one of the officers and, in a voice cool, steady, and slow, and with as much deliberation as if nothing exciting prevailed, say,

"General, the enemy is making an attempt to cut off our right wing; march to his assistance with all your force."

So saying he galloped off. Colonel Willett remembered that he was exceedingly well mounted, though plainly dressed, and "very sedate in his air for a Frenchman."

A number of situations arose soon after this in which Lafayette found himself of great use. The French fleet under Count d'Estaing appeared near Delaware Bay and sailed up the coast. Washington was at White Plains. The British held New York. It was thought that the French fleet could accomplish much by going to Newport and there cooperating with the land forces. Lafayette was given a detachment and commanded to proceed to Providence where he was to stand ready to give all possible aid.

But he was doomed to still another disappointment. The French fleet arrived off Point Judith near Newport; visits of ceremony were exchanged by the French and American generals; preparations were made; but through misunderstandings, the plans never worked out to an actual engagement. Before anything was accomplished, a severe storm overtook the fleet, and it withdrew to Boston for necessary repairs.

During this trying time, Lafayette was a trusted resource to Washington, who devoutly wished to reconcile all differences and to bring peace out of dissension. For this Lafayette had peculiar qualities, as he understood the character of both the French and the Americans, and believed absolutely in the good intentions of the officers on both sides. Twice he rode to Boston and back again to help in settling some difficulty, making on one of those occasions a journey of seventy miles, at night, in six and a half hours—a feat paralleled only by Sheridan's famous ride to Winchester.

But the fleet sailed away, bearing many disappointments with it, though much good had been done by its coming; it meant that the American cause had received definite encouragement from France.

It was now October of 1778 and autumn weather was closing the campaign of the year. The sending of the French fleet to our shores had been virtually a declaration that a state of war existed between France and England, and the thought that this might develop into an actual war in which Lafayette, after his practical experience and training in the Continental army, could take part and win glory, inclined him strongly at this point to return to his native land. Permission was given to him to do this. The proper farewells, official and private, were made, and Lafayette started on his way to Boston where he was to embark.

[Pg
84]

But the strain of the summer's excitement and overwork had been too much for Lafayette, and at Fishkill he was taken ill with a violent fever which prostrated him for some weeks. The greatest concern was felt for his life; the soldiers' love for him was shown by their great solicitude, and General Washington called upon him every day.

Lafayette slowly recovered and finally resumed his journey to Boston, where he went on board the *Alliance* which the government had given him to take him to France. At the moment of sailing he sent a letter to General Washington, in which he said:

"Farewell, my dear General. I hope your French friends will ever be dear to you. I hope I shall soon see you again and tell you myself with what emotions I now leave the land you inhabit, and with what affection and respect I shall ever be your sincere friend."

[Pg
85]

They set sail for Havre on the 11th of January, 1779. The voyage was not to be without adventure. They sailed into the teeth of a terrible three days' storm. Lafayette, as usual, was very seasick, and, as usual, was much discouraged thereby. For a time glory and fame had no charms for him! He declared he was surely going where he had wished to send all the English—namely, to the bottom of the sea!

Still worse was to follow. No sooner was the storm over than another danger loomed up. The ship's crew included a number of renegade English sailors who conspired to mutiny, to overwhelm the officers, and to kill the crew and passengers. By including in their confidence an American sailor, whom they mistook for an Irishman, their plot came to naught. Lafayette summoned the whole crew, put thirty-three mutineers in chains, and thus saved himself from capture and the ship from being towed into a British port as a prize. Shortly after this Lafayette brought the frigate into the harbor of Brest, where he had the pleasure of seeing, for the first time, the American flag receive the national salute as the symbol of an acknowledged sister nation in alliance with his native country.

[Pg
86]

CHAPTER IX

THE RETURN TO FRANCE

WHEN Lafayette learned of the birth of his little daughter Anastasie, whom he now ardently desired to see, he wrote to his wife:

"What expressions can my tenderness find sufficiently strong for our dear Anastasie? You will find them in your own heart, and in mine, which is equally open to you.... That poor little child must supply all that we have lost."

Letters like this would give great consolation to Madame de Lafayette, but alas, they came at long intervals, since many of her husband's long epistles never reached her. Therefore Adrienne felt his absence the more keenly, while rumors and exaggerated reports from America made her days an agony. When, however, he returned to France in February, 1779, her happiness was beyond all expression.

Adrienne's joy was increased by the fact that while her rash young husband had left his native land under a cloud, because it was understood that he did so against the command of the king, his return was that of a conqueror, triumphant and in favor.

[Pg
87]

He was not allowed, however, wholly to forget his formal error. His appeal to Adrienne for forgiveness for his absence was one that he had to make to others. His father-in-law testified in a letter that, so far as he was concerned, the recreant might be freely forgiven. Adrienne was only too willing to receive the one who had left her to go on a mission to the other side of the world; but what about the king whose command not to leave the shores of France he had practically disobeyed? Many a man had been shut up in the Bastille because of a much smaller offense.

Lafayette was brought to the court at Versailles by his relative, the Prince de Poix. The king received him and graciously accorded a punishment. He was to suffer imprisonment for the space of *one week*—his prison to be the grand residence of his father-in-law, the Hôtel de Noailles! After that his pardon was to be freely granted by his Majesty, with this warning—that he should avoid public places for a time lest the people should manifest their admiration for his disobedient conduct by their applause.

[Pg

The king's warning was not indeed without reason. But there was no use in trying to keep the impressionable French people from worshipping a hero after their hearts had been captured by him. The gallantry and the human-heartedness of Lafayette, as well as the ideals he held—ideals that were becoming more and more captivating to the fancy and to the reason of the French nation—contributed to make him the favorite of the hour. A passage from a certain play never failed to receive enthusiastic applause from the audiences because it was held by all to be susceptible of direct application to Lafayette; and this passage the queen copied in her own hand because she thought of him when she read it. It dwelt upon the union of mature and youthful qualities in a character, and ran as follows:

"Why talk of youth
 When all the ripe experience of the old
 Dwells with him? In his schemes profound and cool
 He acts with wise precaution, and reserves
 For times of action, his impetuous fire.
 To guard the camp, to scale the 'leaguered wall,
 Or dare the hottest of the fight, are toils
 That suit the impetuous bearing of his youth;
 Yet like the gray-haired veteran he can shun
 The field of peril. Still before my eyes
 I place his bright example, for I love
 His lofty courage, and his prudent thought;
 Gifted like him, a warrior has no age."

The queen's copy of this passage was given to Madame de Campan, the revered teacher of the young ladies of the court, and it met the fate of being burned on the very day Marie Antoinette's sad life came to an end at the hands of the executioner during the height of the Terror.

[Pg
89]

The queen had shown her interest in Lafayette's arrival by arranging to have an interview with the young hero when he was making his first visit to Versailles. At her suggestion Lafayette was now advanced by the king to be commander of an important regiment in the army of France, the king's own Dragoons. He was stationed at Saintes and afterwards at St. Jean-d'Angely, near Rochefort, where the regiment was conveniently quartered to be ready in case a project for the invasion of England by way of the British Channel should be carried out. Such a plan was under consideration, and Lafayette looked forward with delight to the prospect of action against the country which he considered the ancient foe of France.

But, to Lafayette's great grief, the plot to invade England failed; and he was now free to return to Paris and Versailles. The failure of the British plan also made it rather easier for the minds of prominent officials to look toward taking some further part in the American struggle. To aid this Lafayette gladly applied himself; for while loyal always to his own nation, and standing ready at any point to leave all to serve France, he had not for a moment forgotten the needs of his adopted country across the Atlantic. In fact, when he reached home, he had not waited for his one week's punishment to be over before beginning to create interest in the cause for which he had risked his life. Benjamin Franklin, then ambassador to the court of France from the United States, was promptly allowed, under pretense of calling upon Lafayette's father-in-law, to visit Lafayette himself.

[Pg
90]

There was a constant stream of callers coming to see and congratulate him, and never was there one among them who was permitted to misunderstand the fact that Lafayette wished to move heaven and earth to secure help for the Continental army in its struggle for freedom. He found himself, in a more important sense than ever before, the tie between France and America, for he enjoyed the confidence of both countries.

To Washington he wrote: "If there is anything in France concerning which not only as a soldier but as a politician, or in any other capacity, I can employ my exertions to the advantage of the United States, I hope it is unnecessary to say that I shall seize the opportunity and bless the day which shall render me useful to those whom I love with all the ardor and frankness of my heart."

[Pg
91]

General Washington, on his part, wrote to Lafayette in this wise:

"It gives me infinite pleasure to hear from your sovereign of the joy that your safe arrival in France has diffused among your friends.... Your forward zeal in the cause of liberty, your singular attachment to this infant world, your ardent and persevering efforts not only in America, but since your return to France, to serve the United States, your polite attentions to Americans, and your strict and uniform friendship for me, have ripened the first impressions of esteem and attachment which I imbibed for you into such perfect love and gratitude, as neither time nor absence can impair. This will warrant my assuring you that whether in the character of an officer at the head of a corps of gallant Frenchmen if circumstances should require this, whether as major-general commanding a division of the American army, or whether, after our swords and spears have given place to the plowshare and pruning-hook, I see you as a private gentleman, a friend and companion, I shall welcome you with all the warmth of friendship to Columbia's shores; and in the latter case, to my rural cottage, where homely fare and a cordial reception shall be substituted for delicacies and costly living. This, from past experience, I know you can submit to; and if the lovely partner of your happiness will consent to participate with us in such rural entertainments and amusements, I can undertake on behalf of Mrs. Washington that she will do all in her power to make Virginia agreeable to the Marchioness. My inclination and endeavors to do this cannot be doubted, when I assure you that I love everything that is dear to you."

[Pg
92]

Such a visit as this the Marchioness was never to pay. And we can not blame her if, during her husband's brief visits, she felt like complaining that he absorbed himself in the interests of the American cause or was always planning fresh enterprises. But though she was now only nineteen years old, she was proving herself the high-minded woman who could sympathize entirely with her husband's ideals, and who could consider him dedicated to a great cause; therefore she could cheerfully lay aside merely selfish wishes. No one ever heard a complaint from her absolutely loyal lips. In December, 1779, the family was made happy by the birth of a son, to whom, in honor of his illustrious friend, Lafayette gave the name of George Washington.

[Pg
93]

Lafayette had many testimonials from his friends in the United States showing their appreciation of his efforts for them; and among them was one of special import. It consisted of a sword richly ornamented, with a handle of solid gold, sent to him by the American Congress. To Franklin was intrusted the pleasant task of providing this rich gift. It was made in Paris and was engraved with representations of the actions in which Lafayette had taken part, together with his coat of arms, his chosen motto "Cur non?" and other emblematic designs selected by Franklin; and Franklin's grandson had the honor of conveying to Lafayette this testimonial of a nation's appreciation.

"By the help of the exquisite artists of France," graciously wrote Franklin in an accompanying letter, "I find it easy to express everything but the sense we have of your worth."

Lafayette may have been in a fair way to be spoiled, but if he was he had a happy way of concealing it. He answered, "In some of the devices I cannot help finding too honorable a reward for those slight services which, in concert with my fellow-soldiers, and under the god-like American hero's orders, I had the good fortune to render."

[Pg
94]

This beautiful sword was in the course of time to meet with ill luck. When Revolutionists rifled the Château de Chaviniac, it was buried for safe-keeping and remained thus hidden for many years. Long afterwards Lafayette's son, George Washington Lafayette, grown to young manhood, unearthed the treasure and found that the blade was totally rusted away. Lafayette then had the happy thought of adjusting to this handle of pure gold the blade of a sword that had been made out of bolts and bars taken from the Bastille. Thus the associations of both worlds and of two struggles for freedom were united in one historic sword.

There came a time when Lafayette felt himself warranted in presenting a Memoir to the Cabinet on the subject of giving direct relief to America. His plan, from a military standpoint, was masterly, and it produced so favorable an impression that it was accepted; and it soon became known to those worthy to be in the secret that France would send to America a reinforcement of six ships and six thousand men of the regular infantry. To this was added a loan of three million livres, and later still, through the appeals of Franklin, another loan of the same amount was supplied. The Count de Rochambeau, a trained soldier, was chosen to command the land forces and the Count de Ternay was to be admiral of the fleet. Lafayette was sent ahead to announce this happy news and to make preparations for the arrival of the expedition.

[Pg
95]

Wearing the uniform of an American officer, Lafayette took his leave of the king; and on the 4th of March, 1780, he sailed on the frigate *Hermione*. He reached Boston harbor on the 28th of April, 1780, after an absence of fifteen months. When word swept through the city that a ship was coming in with Lafayette on board, the people crowded to the wharf to welcome the returning French friend of America. This was the beginning of civic processions in Lafayette's honor. They cheered him from the ship's side to the residence of Governor Hancock where addresses were listened to and congratulations exchanged. He called upon the Legislature then in session, and in the evening viewed the illuminations in his honor. Lafayette gave a dinner on board the ship to which he invited a large number of officials—the president of the Massachusetts Council, members of the legislature, the consul of France, and other men of dignity. The frigate was gayly decorated with the flags of many nations. Thirteen toasts were drunk—the number thirteen cannot have been an unlucky number in those days!—and after the toast to Washington the great guns boomed seventeen times.

[Pg
96]

As rapidly as possible Lafayette rode to Washington's headquarters at Morristown, New Jersey, and made his happy announcement to the General himself. He then pressed on to Philadelphia to present to Congress the communication from the French government. He bore also a letter from Washington, in which the commander in chief introduced Lafayette as one who had "signally distinguished himself in the service of this country," and who, during the time that he had been in France, had "uniformly manifested the same zeal in our affairs which animated his conduct while he was among us"; who had been "on all occasions an essential friend to America."

The greatest possible effort was now made to equip the Continental army, but the resources of the country had already been grievously overtaxed. Washington had hardly been able to keep his army together at all. Half of his six thousand men were unfit for duty. They had sometimes had no bread for six days; sometimes for two or three days they would have neither meat nor bread. The commander clearly realized that an army reduced to nothing, without provisions or any of the necessary means to carry on a war, needed not a little help only—it needed a great deal.

[Pg
97]

When, on the 2d of May, the French fleet finally set sail, delays had reduced the number of soldiers and the amount of supplies. The English by this time had realized what was happening, and they carefully blockaded the second division of the squadron in the harbor of Brest; and when the first division reached Newport, the English cleverly surrounded the harbor with their ships, thus "bottling up" the French and rendering them inactive and useless. In this way the great good that was expected from the French expedition came to naught.

During all this trying time, Lafayette acted the part of a single-minded friend of both the French and the American armies. He was sent by Washington to Newport to confer with the French generals, and later he was present at a joint meeting of the great French and American generals which was held at Hartford, Connecticut. Lafayette rode from one army to the other, holding conferences and putting important decisions into writing, or dictating the results of conversations. Many of these documents have been preserved in French or American state archives.

[Pg
98]

Whatever time he could get apart from these labors he spent in training the battalion that had been assigned to him. This was a detachment of light infantry, selected from the best of the army. He took great pride in training these men, sent to France for black and white plumes for their caps, and tried to make them present as good an appearance as possible. The Marquis de Chastellux, who visited his camp on the Ramapo River, has left a delightful description of this visit in which he spoke of the fine appearance of the troops as their young commander had drawn them up on a height near his own station. Here, said Chastellux, Lafayette received his guest with more pride than if he had been entertaining at his estates in Auvergne. "Happy his country," said Chastellux, "if she employs his services; happier still if she has no use for them!"

It was during this autumn that Benedict Arnold made what Lafayette called that "horrid compact with the enemy"—an event that amazed and distressed him beyond any words. Lafayette was with Washington when the plot was discovered. He was also a member of the board to try the British spy, André. His attitude toward André was very different from that toward Benedict Arnold. André, he said, conducted himself in a manner so frank, so noble, and so delicate, that he could not help feeling infinite sorrow for him.

[Pg
99]

The winter of 1780-81 was the darkest period of the war. But it was to be followed by a happier season, one in which Lafayette was at last to have as large a share of action as his heart could wish.

[Pg
100]

CHAPTER X

LAFAYETTE IN VIRGINIA

THE British still held the city of New York. General Washington's army sat in their impregnable camps on the Hudson and along the Delaware, where he could reach out a hand to New England on the east, and to Philadelphia on the south, at the same time threatening now and then the stronghold of the British. Meantime an active campaign was being carried on in the states south of Virginia. At the battle of Charleston the brave General Lincoln and his gallant army were compelled by the British to lay down their arms and give themselves up as prisoners of war without the usual courtesies. The ceremony of surrender was particularly galling. Forbidden by their conquerors to play a British or a Hessian air, they marched to the joyous melody of "Yankee Doodle," their colors cased, and their hearts rebellious. The battle of Camden was another defeat for the Americans. On that disastrous day fell the companion of Lafayette's first voyage, the Baron de Kalb, who died bravely after receiving no less than eleven wounds. Sir Henry Clinton, the British commander in the south, thought that defeats like these would finish the question for that part of the country, so he gave out proclamations of amnesty to the tractable and built scaffolds to hang the unsubmissive. But the south was not to be so easily subdued. The British met with defeat at King's Mountain, and in October, 1780, General Greene was sent to push the southern campaign more vigorously.

[Pg
101]

One result of these southern disasters was to make the importance of Virginia increasingly evident as a base for operations in the Carolinas. Cornwallis saw this and he determined to reduce that state, to cut off the southern army from its base, and thus to control the approaches to the heart of the country. Accordingly, in January, 1781, he sent Benedict Arnold, who had been made a brigadier general in the British army, with a strong force, and with two trusted British colonels, to conduct a campaign in that state.

If the British commander in chief had wished to fill the men of the Continental army with a fire that would make them unconquerable, this was the way to do it, and this was the man against whom they most desired to fight. On the other hand, General Washington chose a leader for the defense who was so well beloved by his men, and who was himself filled with so fiery an enthusiasm for the cause, that this alone would have been enough to bring into effect all the strength of those drained and exhausted men and to energize them for prodigies of valor. This leader was Lafayette. In February, 1781, he was commissioned to go against Arnold.

[Pg
102]

Lafayette was glad to be trusted with a command and overjoyed at the prospect of action. But he still believed that the great final blow was to be struck at New York and he was most reluctant to be separated from Washington with whom he intensely longed to be when the great climax came. However, he obeyed orders with perfect alacrity and planned for a swift march in order to intercept any efforts on the part of Arnold to obtain access to the various storehouses and river crossings in Virginia. Leaving under guard his tents, artillery, and everything that could be spared, with orders to follow as rapidly as possible, he marched his men through heavy rains and over bad roads.

The Virginia campaign, says a French historian, is to be ranked among the classic tales of all time; and in this campaign the young Lafayette was the most notable leader. It was on the 6th of April, 1781, that General Washington wrote to Lafayette, giving him full instructions, which led him into the midst of active service.

[Pg
103]

Lafayette's detachment included men from New Jersey, from New Hampshire, and from other New England states. Among them were some of the men who had been willing to take their lives in their hands and follow their young leader on the hazardous expedition into Canada. Although the men had no idea at this time what was before them, they were now going to follow Lafayette to the glory that he so ardently desired.

But in spite of the splendid spirit of the troops, Lafayette found that they were in sore need of encouragement. They saw that they were not going toward the grand final attack; they were not used to the blind obedience exacted from trained European troops; and they did not understand this discouraging southward move.

Fearing that the summer would be wasted, Lafayette thought of a device to strengthen the tie between himself and his detachment. He wrote it down in the order of the day that they were about to start out on an expedition that would tax all a soldier's powers, and in which there would be abundant dangers and difficulties. The enemy, he said, was far superior to them in numbers, thoroughly despised them, and was determined to conquer them. He added that no soldier should accompany him who was inclined to abandon him; nor was it necessary that any one should desert; for any man could, if he desired, have a pass and be sent to join his regiment in winter quarters.

[Pg
104]

This method of approach had more than the desired effect. Lafayette soon wrote to Washington: "Our men are in high spirits. Their honor was interested, and murmurs as well as desertions are entirely out of fashion."

Soon after the advent of Lafayette in the Virginia field, he came into contact with Benedict Arnold in a very curious way. The commander of the opposing British forces had died, and Arnold took his place. About that time Arnold sent a message under a flag of truce to Lafayette. When Lafayette learned that the letter which was brought in was from the traitor, he returned it unopened, sending a verbal message stating that with Benedict Arnold he would hold no communication whatever. Later he sent a formal letter to the officer that had brought the flag, in which he declined all correspondence with Arnold, but added with the utmost courtesy that "in case any other British officer should honour him with a letter, he would always be happy to give the officers every testimony of esteem."

[Pg
105]

The subject of the letter from Arnold was an exchange of prisoners, a matter that interested him extremely, as he well knew that Lafayette could hardly have pleased the American people better than by presenting Benedict Arnold to them a prisoner. We know that Arnold's mind dwelt on this aspect of his sad situation from the fact that he once quizzed a captured American to find out what the Americans would do with him if they took him prisoner. The soldier audaciously replied that they would "cut off the leg that had been wounded in the country's service and hang the rest of him!" Lafayette's action in regard to the letter from Arnold was very gratifying to Washington; he said that in nothing had Lafayette pleased him more than in refusing to hold communication with Benedict Arnold.

Soon after this Arnold was transferred to New York, and Cornwallis came forward with reinforcements, declaring that he would now "proceed to dislodge Lafayette from Richmond." The struggle between the young French officer (not yet twenty-four years old) in his first attempt at carrying on an independent campaign, and the veteran British commander with years of service behind him, was now taken up with more spirit than ever before. It was the crisis of the Revolution. If the Continental army could only hold out a little longer, it might be possible, by adroit advance and diplomatic retreat, to avoid unequal battles until the foe was worn out or until some favorable opportunity should arise for a direct attack. Cornwallis, of course, despised his exhausted enemy. A letter from him was intercepted and brought into the American camp; in the letter he said, "The Boy cannot escape me!" Lafayette's face must have been set in very grim lines when he read that letter.

[Pg
106]

Technically, Lafayette had been taking orders from General Greene whose command was in the south and included Virginia. But on the 18th of May, Lafayette was ordered to take the entire command in Virginia and to send all reports directly to General Washington. "The Boy's" letters to Colonel Hamilton show that he fully recognized the gravity of affairs, the responsibility of his position, and the dangers of his own over-enthusiastic spirit. The British command of the adjacent waters, the superiority of their cavalry, and the great disproportion in the forces of the two armies, gave the enemy such advantages that Lafayette dared not venture to engage the British. The British generals thoroughly understood what they called Lafayette's "gasconading disposition," and they relied upon it to work woe to his plans and to contribute to their own glory. His prudence disappointed them as much as it satisfied Washington who had said of Lafayette, "This noble soldier combines all the military fire of youth with an unusual maturity of judgment." Lafayette desired to be worthy of this high praise.

[Pg
107]

On April 29, Lafayette and his light infantry reached Richmond in time to prevent its capture and to protect the supplies that had been concentrated there. In the battle at Green Spring his bravery led him once more to plunge into the thick of the fight, losing his horse (some reports say two horses) which was shot under him or by his side.

In Wayne's official report on that battle he said that "Lafayette was frequently requested to keep at a greater distance, but his native bravery rendered him deaf to the admonition."

He compelled the admiration of his opponents by his skill in defensive maneuvers. The "Boy" obeyed his commander in chief, and he succeeded in misleading his foe, for Cornwallis believed that the American force was larger than it actually was; he also believed that he could break down the loyalty of the inhabitants of Pennsylvania and of Virginia. In both these points he was direfully mistaken. But Lafayette had high respect for Cornwallis as a general. "His Lordship plays so well," he complained, "that no blunder can be hoped from him to recover a bad step of ours."

[Pg
108]

Finally, reënforcements did come to Lafayette. In despair the American Congress sent a special messenger express to Paris to bear one more urgent appeal for help. Washington wrote, "We are at the end of our tether; ... now or never our deliverance must come."

Impetuous young John Laurens was chosen to be this Ambassador Extraordinary to France. Laurens was greatly admired and loved by Lafayette and he recommended him to the affections of his noble relatives in Paris. At the moment Laurens's father was being held a prisoner by the British in the Tower of London—a fact that no doubt quickened the zeal of the son. At all events, he was successful in his mission. The French fleet in the West Indies was ordered to the United States and the king himself became surety for several millions of livres in addition to what had already been sent to our aid.

[Pg
109]

The time was coming when Lafayette could begin to move the British army before him little by little down the York River toward Yorktown, a method of procedure that now became, as the British reports described it, the "constant and good policy of the enemy." On the 24th of September, 1781, Cornwallis proceeded to occupy Yorktown and to strengthen it against attack.

The city of Yorktown is situated near the entrance to Chesapeake Bay. At that place two rivers enter the bay, the York and the James, and upon a conspicuous bluff on the northern side of the neck of land between them stood this small town.

Cornwallis began at once to prepare the place for assault. Around the village he built a series of fortifications consisting of seven redoubts and six batteries on the land side, and these he connected by intrenchments. He placed a line of batteries on the river bank to command the channel, and he established outworks to impede the approach of the enemy. Lafayette saw all this and rejoiced, for he believed that Cornwallis was at last where he most desired to have him—in a place where he would be open to attack, and with some hope of success. All the country around Yorktown was now familiar to Lafayette. He knew every inch of the land, the river, the morass, and the commanding hill. "Should a fleet come in at this moment, affairs would take a very happy turn," he wrote joyfully to General Washington.

[Pg
110]

On the 30th of August the French fleet, under the Count de Grasse, with twenty-eight ships of the line, appeared in the waters of Chesapeake Bay; a few days later the Marquis de Saint Simon, field marshal in the French army, debarked a large reënforcement of French troops; and on the 4th of September Lafayette moved nearer to Yorktown and took a position with the troops he could bring together,—his own light infantry, the militia, and the reënforcements at Williamsburg, a town in the vicinity of the British position.

Nothing now remained but the arrival of General Washington himself to take charge of the whole enterprise, and Lafayette's happiness was complete when, on the 14th of September, he resigned his command into the hands of his revered General.

[Pg
111]

CHAPTER XI

THE TWO REDOUBTS

IT is September, 1781. The "Boy" has not been caught. He is encamped at Williamsburg, and looks toward his powerful enemy who is surrounded by well-devised intrenchments at Yorktown, twelve miles down the river.

The American and French troops, fifteen or sixteen thousand in number, arrived and took their places. General Washington was in supreme command. America had never before seen such an army. The Americans had done their utmost. That part of the French army that had come down from Connecticut with Rochambeau had astonished the people of Philadelphia as they marched through the city by the brilliancy of their rose-and-violet-faced uniforms, and by the display of their graceful and accurate military movements. Now they were to have an opportunity to show whether their warlike spirit was expressed chiefly in ruffles and tinsel trimmings, or whether they could win fame by more solid qualities.

[Pg
112]

On the 29th of September the combined American and French armies moved southward to a point about four miles from the town. There they divided into two columns and the Americans defiled to the right, the French to the left. They then proceeded to arrange themselves around the town in an irregular semicircle that extended from the river bank at the west to the shore on the southeast, a distance of about two miles. Toward the southern side were ranged the various

American regiments under Baron Steuben and General Wayne; and next to these stood what was called the Light Infantry corps under Lafayette. He had ventured to suggest to General Washington that he wished his division might be composed of the troops that had been with him through the fatigues and dangers of the Virginia campaign; this, he said, would be the greatest reward he could have for the services he might have rendered, as he had now the strongest attachment for those troops. Still another division stood at the extreme right. This was under the command of General Lincoln, who had been forced, through no fault of his own, to surrender to the British at Charleston.

The approaches to Yorktown were easy; there were means of shelter everywhere, and the American army at once began preparations for the siege.

At last the men finished the construction of two parallels. They were now within three hundred yards of the British defenses. General Washington then placed his siege guns in position. It was the first week in October, 1781. On the sixth the siege began.

Every point in this dramatic history has been made the subject of story or poem, and naturally some legendary quality would after a time irradiate the incidents. Thus some writers affirm that General Washington gave the order for the first shot, and some say that it was Lafayette. The story is this. Before signing the order, General Washington turned to Thomas Nelson who was both governor of Virginia and a general in the army, and inquired,

"At what object shall this gun be fired?"

Pointing to his own dwelling where the roof appeared above the trees of Yorktown, and where it was understood Cornwallis had his headquarters, General Nelson answered,

"There is my house; aim at that!"

The story is that Washington turned to the gunner and said,

"For every shot you cause to hit that house, I will give you five guineas."

From the 6th to the 10th of October, the fire from the allied American and French army increased daily in vigor. On the 11th the second parallel was completed and entered, and the besieging line was thus tightened and strengthened. Within their intrenchments the British were watching for reinforcements that were fated never to come.

On the 14th of October it was found that the British held two redoubts whose guns were inconveniently active, and the Americans believed they must be silenced. The redoubts had been built on two small hills on the American right, in a difficult region where rocky cuts alternated with swampy depressions. These two hills were called "Number Nine" and "Number Ten"; "Number Ten" was also called "Rock Redoubt." These redoubts were about three hundred yards in front of the British garrison, and Washington decided after consultation that they were of sufficient importance to take by storm.

Accordingly the order was given. The reduction of Redoubt Number Nine was intrusted to a group of French grenadiers and chasseurs. Rock Redoubt stood nearest the river; this was assigned to Lafayette with his American regiments.

Important among the men under General Lafayette's command was Lieutenant Colonel de Gimat, the French aid who had always been so faithful a follower of Lafayette; he commanded a body of men from Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Then there was Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Hamilton, the young American to whom Lafayette was personally so warmly attached, who afterwards was to become one of the most distinguished servants of the new nation, and who was to meet so strange and sad an end after his great work was done.

When Hamilton heard a rumor that General Washington was intending to give to a certain Colonel Barber the opportunity to lead the attack, his spirit was immediately aroused. Without a moment's delay he hastened to headquarters and warmly urged his right to the honorable and dangerous task. He gained his point and returned in a state of exuberant satisfaction, exclaiming to his major, "We have it! We have it!" So Lafayette assigned Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Hamilton to lead the advance corps, to be assisted by Colonel de Gimat. In all there were four hundred men under Lafayette for this storming adventure.

It was eight o'clock on the evening of October 14. The storming of the two redoubts had been carefully planned even down to the least details; but so energetic was the work of the men, so dashing was their valor, that when the time really came, the attack lasted but a few minutes.

Lafayette's redoubt was taken in a mere flash of time—in less than ten minutes, some close observers said; others made it eight minutes. The six shells, the signal agreed upon, were fired. The men started the march. Rock Redoubt loomed before them in the thick dusk of twilight. They advanced in good order with their bayonets fixed and in utter silence, as they had been commanded. But when the first volley of musketry came down from the top of the redoubt, they broke their silence and huzzaed with all their power. Then they rushed forward, charging with their bayonets as they ran, and in almost no time they were within the redoubt, with the defending officer and forty-five men their prisoners. Not a shot had been fired; and so swift was the action that few of the Americans were lost.

The not ungenerous rivalry between the groups of men who took the two redoubts is one of the

most picturesque incidents of the American Revolution. If it had not been for the fact that the French detachment had paused to have the abatis cut through in regular order, they would probably have been in their redoubt before the Americans under Lafayette were in theirs; for when they were once on the height, they occupied but six minutes in making themselves masters of their redoubt and in manning it again for action.

[Pg
117]

One move follows another quickly at such a time, and when Lafayette had entered his redoubt, he looked over the parapet and saw that the men on the other height were still struggling for the possession of theirs. It happened that a certain General Viomesnil had expressed a doubt as to the efficiency of the American troops, therefore Lafayette welcomed this opportunity to show their valor. He instantly sent an aid to announce to General Viomesnil, with a flourish of compliments, that the American troops were in possession of their redoubt and to say that if M. le Baron de Viomesnil desired any help, the Marquis de Lafayette would have great pleasure in assisting him! The Major sent word,

"Tell the Marquis that I am not in mine, but that I will be in five minutes."

This promise was made good by the brave and energetic French troops. Perhaps never before had the space of two minutes been of so much importance in the honor of two nations.

General Washington who, in his eagerness to see this important action, had ridden near,—too near to please his officers and surgeons,—had closely watched the storming of the redoubts. When they were taken and the guns had been instantly whirled about to face the enemy, he turned to Generals Knox and Lincoln who stood near and said with emphasis,

[Pg
118]

"The work is done, and well done."

Then he mounted his horse and rode back to headquarters.

[Pg
119]

CHAPTER XII

THE SURRENDER OF YORKTOWN

AT the siege of Yorktown much of the gallantry and glory of war was to be seen; but there was another side as well. The dwelling houses in ruin, the sufferings of the wounded men, the surgical operations, the amputations, the groans and sighs and homesickness, the dying gasps, the bodies of slain horses lying in the way—these also are war.

In Yorktown itself many houses were in flames. A sortie had been attempted and had failed. British reënforcements had not come. Supplies were giving out. The outlook seemed hopeless. The men fought without spirit. An attempt was made to escape by sea. It also failed. A violent storm drove the boats back to shore. The idea of surrender was entertained.

Consequently, on the 17th of October, General Cornwallis sent a note to General Washington asking for a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, to settle terms for the surrender of Yorktown. Washington allowed two hours instead of twenty-four. Why waste any more time?

[Pg
120]

Interviews were immediately held, and a treaty of capitulation was framed.

When it was known that the British had yielded, a wave of the wildest joy spread through the American and French camps—and through the whole country as well. Messengers rode at top speed to Philadelphia to carry the good news. Congress was sitting there at the time. The rider came in at midnight. At one o'clock the watchers called "All's well," as usual, but added,

"*Cornwallis is taken!*"

Windows were opened and heads thrust out. The streets soon filled with rejoicing people. What Lafayette called "a good noisy feu de joie" followed.

The third article in the document of capitulation stated that the British troops should be required to march out to the place appointed in front of the posts, at two o'clock precisely, with shouldered arms, colors cased, and drums beating a British or a German march. They were then to ground their arms and return to their encampments. The same afternoon the works at Gloucester on the opposite side of the river were to be given up, the infantry to file out as prescribed for the garrison at York, and the cavalry to go forth with their swords drawn and their trumpets sounding.

[Pg
121]

Over all this there had been a sharp discussion. The British wished to receive the "honors of war," that is, to go out with colors flying and drums beating; and the courteous Washington was inclined to grant this request. But Lafayette remembered the requirements the British had made at the defeat at Charleston. They had compelled the men to march out with colors cased, and had forbidden them to play a British or a Hessian air; and he thought that in fair retaliation the British army should now give up their arms in the manner required by them on that occasion. He suggested, however, one original variation,—that they should be not forbidden but *required* to march to a British or a German air. Colonel Laurens was in accord with this. He had served at Charleston under General Lincoln, and he was only too glad to remind the British commissioners

that it had been so arranged and required of the American troops after that defeat.

"The article remains or I cease to be a commissioner," the young man said firmly. The high-spirited Laurens could but remember that at that very moment his own father was still imprisoned in the Tower of London.

[Pg
122]

The condition remained; and at noon on the 19th of October the capitulation was signed. At one o'clock possession was taken of the enemies' works, and at two the garrison marched out.

A field about a mile and a half south of Yorktown was chosen for the ceremony. The scene was brilliant and spectacular. All the American soldiers were drawn up in a line on one side of the road and the French stood opposite with General Rochambeau, their commander in chief, leading their line. General Washington, mounted on his horse and attended by his aids, was at the head. Washington was ardently admired by all the French officers and they must have envied him his magnificent appearance in this fortunate hour. That fearless and austere commander, who had shared the sufferings and privations of his men in the dark night of Valley Forge, now rejoiced with them in the hour of accomplishment.

The French made a splendid appearance with their uniforms of bright colors and contrasting trimmings. Nearly all had the conventional three-cornered Revolutionary cap of blue; and the trousers were prevailingly of a lemon or canary yellow. Glittering orders were flashing on many uniforms, their banners were embroidered with golden lilies; each noble had his servants arrayed in silver-laced livery, and the French bands of many fifes, horns, and cymbals, played such music as was never heard before.

[Pg
123]

The American soldiers, who had inherited no traditions of either the glory or the disasters of warfare, could not compare with the foreigners in their full-dress display. But in every heart among them there was a feeling that richly compensated for the lack of feathers and facings. Whether shopkeeper or farmer or mighty hunter from the interior who stood in that line, the tide of united nationality ran higher in his heart than ever before. And every last man among them was one degree happier by having the dashing young French Major General, their beloved "Marquis," on the American side of the procession instead of in the foreign line. The "Boy" that Cornwallis was so certain he could catch was splendid that day in the perfection of military form. He sat, as always, very perfectly on his horse and he had the grace to be proud of the company in which he stood. As to his own regiment of Light Infantry, he had always been fond of decorating them with finery. They appeared now in dark leather leggings and white trousers; their blue coats had white facings and white cuffs; and a blue feather stood up in front of the cap and waved over the crown. This was the regulation uniform for them, but perhaps, having just gone through the severities of their Virginia campaign, they were not able to "live up" to their fine clothes. However, nothing mattered on that great day.

[Pg
124]

A vast concourse of American spectators was present to witness the surrender, but their desire to see Lord Cornwallis was not gratified. He pleaded indisposition and appointed General O'Hara in his place. As this general approached the group of commanding officers, the bands added their music. By the stipulation, they had been commanded to play an English or a Hessian march, but they were too proud to select one of their dignified national airs. Instead, they gave the tune of an English folk song of hoary age, known from time immemorial as "Derry Down," but now called "The World Turned Upside Down," a title the British bandmaster no doubt considered appropriate to the circumstances.

But the dignity of the occasion required that they should now observe the proprieties, for there was a wonderful pageant to be viewed, and all felt the great import of the hour.

The conquered army advanced between the two long lines of French and American soldiers. General O'Hara led the procession, riding slowly and proudly. As he approached General Washington, he removed his hat and apologized for the absence of General Cornwallis. General Washington received the apology and indicated that he had appointed General Lincoln, as the conquered commander of Charleston, to do the honors of the day and to receive the arms of the conquered. The moment was historic.

[Pg
125]

In one of the halls at Yale University stands a celebrated picture, painted by Trumbull, which gives a vivid impression of the brilliancy and importance of the occasion. In this picture General Washington, in an attitude of great dignity, is placed in the center of the scene. Near him stands General Lincoln who is being richly rewarded for his bitter defeat at Charleston. His hand is held out to receive the sword which the representative of General Cornwallis is passing to him.

At the left of the picture are seen the French officers. Rochambeau is at the back and a little separated from the rest, and the others in the line are the counts, marquises, and barons who were officers in the French army.

General Lafayette, the American, was on the American side, not far from his beloved General Washington. The one nearest to the commander in chief is General (or Governor) Thomas Nelson, the one who had suggested that his own house roof be aimed at in the beginning of the siege; the next is Lafayette; then Baron Steuben; the others are representative commanders from various states.

[Pg
126]

The ceremony that followed this climax was most impressive. General Lincoln received the sword of Cornwallis, and at once handed it back to General O'Hara. The several regiments came forward to deliver their colors. Twenty-eight British captains, each bearing a flag folded in a

case, were drawn up in a line opposite the twenty-eight American sergeants who were stationed to receive the flags. Ensign Wilson, then but eighteen years old, the youngest commissioned officer in the American army, was chosen to conduct this ceremony and to hand the colors on to the American sergeants. Lafayette looked down from his place in the line of mounted American officers and felt that his most ardent hopes were now fulfilled, and that his motto, "Cur non," had brought him only the best of fortune.

The day after the ceremony of surrender was the Sabbath, and General Washington ordered that divine service should be held in all the regiments and that Thanksgiving should be the theme. The next day he gave a dinner to which the general officers of the three armies were invited. Lafayette could not restrain his admiration for Cornwallis for his gallant and appropriate conduct upon all these rather embarrassing occasions.



Photograph from Wm. H. Rau, Philadelphia.

The Surrender of Cornwallis.

From the painting by Colonel John Trumbull,
the soldier-artist of the Revolution.

If, however, he had possessed the gift of prophecy, he might have looked forward but one short century to the centennial of Yorktown, when the flags of the United States and of Great Britain would be run up together on the site of this historic surrender. Then he would have seen British and American officers stand together with bared heads and in brotherly friendliness, while salutes were fired and cheers rent the air.

Looking still further, he would have seen the day when the people of France would unite with their one-time foe in various endeavors both peaceful and warlike. A strange planet is this, for the shifting of national loyalties and the rending and intertwining of bonds of union! If history could make the human race amenable to receiving any instruction whatever, we should learn that war never yet decided any problem that could not have been better settled in some other way.

[Pg
127]

[Pg
128]

CHAPTER XIII

LIONIZED BY TWO WORLDS

THREE days after the surrender, the 22d of October, Lafayette was on board the *Ville de Paris* in Chesapeake Bay. It was believed that the surrender of Cornwallis would be practically conclusive as to the matter at issue between England and the United States. Lafayette therefore felt a sweep of thoughts toward home. Congress gave him leave of absence. The *Alliance* was again placed at his disposal and awaited him in Boston harbor.

An adoring France received him on his arrival. He had been the hero of the New World; he now became the hero of the Old. The king of France gave him audience; when he arrived the queen sent her carriage to bring Adrienne, who at the moment happened to be at some royal fête, as swiftly as possible to the Noailles mansion. Balls were given in his honor. He was presented with laurel at the opera. The king made him a field marshal, his commission to date from the day of Cornwallis's surrender, and he was invited by Richelieu to a dinner where all the field marshals of France were present, and where the health of Washington was drunk with words so full of reverent admiration that they did Lafayette's heart good.

About this time a traveled American gentleman, Ledyard by name, was staying in Paris and commented on the popularity of the returned American hero. He said:

"I took a walk to Paris this morning and saw the Marquis de Lafayette. He is a good man, this same Marquis. I esteem him. I even love him, and so we all do, except a few, who worship him.... If I find in my travels a mountain as much elevated above other mountains as he is above

[Pg
129]

ordinary men, I will name it Lafayette."

The meeting of Lafayette with Adrienne cannot be described. He had now proved the value of his love of freedom, and she was filled with pride in the acknowledgment he received on all sides. The family reunion was perfect. He wrote to Washington, "My daughter and your George have grown so much that I find I am much older than I thought." He had reached the advanced age of twenty-four!

[Pg
130]

Lafayette was at once concerned with the concluding negotiations for peace between England and the United States. To hasten these and to carry on further military plans, France united with Spain in a projected expedition against the English possessions in the West Indies. For this purpose Lafayette, in December, 1782, went to Cadiz as chief of staff, where an armament of sixty ships and twenty-four thousand men were assembling. But while waiting for the final orders to sail, a swift courier brought the news to Cadiz that the treaty of peace had, on the 20th of January, 1783, been finally signed at Paris. Lafayette wished to be the one to carry this news to America, but he was told that his presence at the negotiations at Madrid was necessary to their success, and therefore he had to forego the pleasure of being the personal messenger of the good news. Instead, he was allowed to borrow from the fleet a ship which he sent, as swiftly as possible, to the land of his heart. The ship lent him was *Le Triomphe*, well named for this message, and this was the first ship to bring the news of the Peace to our shores.

His work in Spain being successfully accomplished, he returned to Paris by swift posts, which means that he went in a carriage, with relays of good horses; and by driving day and night, over the mountains and through the valleys, following ancient Roman roads and crossing through many historic sites and cities, he covered the wide distance between the capital of Spain and that of France.

[Pg
131]

The war being over, Washington, as every one knows, retired to his estate at Mount Vernon, an act incomprehensible to some, but fully understood by his "adopted son," Lafayette, who wrote:

"Your return to a private station is called the finishing stroke of an unparalleled character. Never did a man exist who stands so honorably in the opinion of mankind, and your name if possible will become greater to posterity. Everything that is great and everything that is good were never hitherto united in one man; never did that man live whom the soldier, statesman, patriot, and philosopher could equally admire; and never was a revolution brought about which, in all its motives, its conduct, its consequences, could so well immortalize its glorious chief. I am proud of you, my dear General; your glory makes me feel as if it were my own; and while the world is gaping upon you, I am pleased to think and to tell that the qualities of your heart do render you still more valuable than anything you have done."

From Mount Vernon, where the wearied and peace-loving warrior was very glad to be, Washington, in February, 1784, wrote to Lafayette:

[Pg
132]

"At length, my dear Marquis, I am become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac, and under the shadow of my own vine and fig-tree, free from the bustle of the camp, and the busy scenes of public life, I am pleasing myself with those tranquil enjoyments of which the soldier who is ever in pursuit of fame; the statesman whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this globe was insufficient for us all; the courtier who is always watching the countenance of his prince in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have but little conception."

He then goes on to give a brief history of recent events—the evacuation of New York, the American troops entering that city in good order, and New York finally freed from the British flag. He regretfully declined the pressing invitation of Lafayette to come to Paris, and again invited him and Madame de Lafayette to pay a visit at Mount Vernon. The correspondents appear to have thought of each other frequently, though separated by the wide seas. Later, Lafayette had joyous news to impart, for he wrote to Washington:

[Pg
133]

"I want to tell you that Madame de Lafayette and my three children are well, and that all of us in the family join to present their dutiful affectionate compliments to Mrs. Washington and yourself. Tell her that I hope soon to thank her for a dish of tea at Mount Vernon. Yes, my dear General, before the month of June is over, you will see a vessel coming up the Potomac and out of that vessel will your friend jump, with a panting heart and all the feelings of perfect happiness."

During Lafayette's visit to America in 1784 the people had an opportunity to show their gratitude to one who had freely given his services to them in their day of need. In New York he was received with the greatest enthusiasm by the whole people, including his affectionate companions in arms. From here on he listened to the ringing of bells and the resounding of huzzas by day and saw lavish illuminations in his honor by night. A visit of ten days at Mount Vernon gave great pleasure to Washington as well as to Lafayette. In Boston his coming was celebrated at the stump of the Liberty Tree that the British had cut down during their occupation of the city. Many speeches were made during this journey, and Lafayette showed himself tactful in adapting his words to the occasion. His tact was prompted by a sincere liking for all people, a benevolent feeling toward the whole world. This was the foundation of much that was attractive and useful in his character.

[Pg
134]

During this journey Lafayette went as far north as Portsmouth and as far south as Yorktown. The various great battlefields of the campaign of 1781 each received a visit in the company of Washington and of other companions in arms. The different states vied with one another in giving his name to their towns and villages—a custom that has continued to this day. The state of

Virginia placed a bust of Lafayette in the capitol at Richmond; another was presented to the city of Paris by the minister of the United States, and was received with great pomp at the Hôtel de Ville, or city hall. Three states, Maryland, Connecticut, and Virginia, conferred on him the right of citizenship for himself and his children, an enactment that later became national; and so Lafayette became an American citizen in legal form as well as in spirit. How little did he think that this right would become so precious a boon to him and would be so sorely needed!

The bust in the Hôtel de Ville was destroyed at the time of the Terror; and the day came soon after when nearly all that remained to the "Hero of Two Worlds" was a certificate of citizenship in a country to which he was not native, while the owner of the certificate, because of his principles, was hurried from prison to prison. In 1784 he was riding on the high tide of success and popularity, but tragic days were soon to come in the life of America's loyal friend.

[Pg
135]

Lafayette took his farewell of Congress at Trenton, New Jersey, where it was then in session. The scene was dignified and affecting. It was at the close of this ceremony that Lafayette pronounced that wish—one might call it a prayer—which has been so often quoted.

"May this immense Temple of Freedom ever stand a lesson to oppressors, an example to the oppressed, and a sanctuary for the rights of mankind! And may these happy United States attain that complete splendor and prosperity which will illustrate the blessings of their government, and in ages to come rejoice the departed souls of their founders."

Following his return from America at this time, Lafayette made a long tour through Germany and Austria. His purpose was to improve himself, he said, by the inspection of famous fields of battle, by conversation with the greatest generals, and by the sight of well-trained troops. He visited Frederick the Great who, in the eyes of the exquisite Frenchman, presented a most untidy appearance in a dirty uniform covered over with Spanish snuff. He saw him review thirty-one battalions and seventy-five squadrons, thirty thousand men in all, and he admired the "perfectly regular machine wound up for forty years" by which they clicked off their movements. At the table of Frederick, Lafayette ate, at one time, with Cornwallis on one side and the son of the king of England on the other; on which occasion the Prussian despot indelicately amused himself by plying the young soldier with questions about American affairs. One wonders if in all his travels Lafayette caught any glimpse on the horizon of a certain grim fortress wherein, because of his hatred of despots like Frederick, fate decreed that he was to be immured for five long years.

[Pg
136]

[Pg
137]

CHAPTER XIV

GATHERING CLOUDS

THE great storm of the French Revolution was now to appear on the horizon, climb to its height, and break in terror over France. During these years, from 1784 to 1792, Lafayette was for most of the time in Paris where he took part in events of great importance and in such a way as to command respect from those who sympathized with his liberal ideas and to win detraction from devotees of monarchical systems.

At first, however, no one dreamed what the future held for France. Lafayette busied himself in doing what he could to further the affairs of the United States, turning his attention to commercial questions such as he had never supposed would interest him. Whale-oil, for instance, became a favorite subject with him; his services on behalf of that American industry were acknowledged by the seagoing people of Nantucket who sent him a gigantic, five-hundred-pound cheese, the product of scores of farms, as a testimonial of their appreciation.

[Pg
138]

A cause that interested him intensely was slavery. His views on this subject he summed up in 1786 in a letter to John Adams:

"In the cause of my black brethren I feel myself warmly interested, and most decidedly side, so far as respects them, against the white part of mankind. Whatever be the complexion of the enslaved, it does not, in my opinion, alter the complexion of the crime which the enslaver commits, a crime much blacker than any African face. It is to me a matter of great anxiety and concern, to find that this trade is sometimes carried on under the flag of liberty, our dear and noble stripes, to which virtue and glory have been constant standard-bearers."

Lafayette not only had a lofty sentiment about the condition of the slaves, but he put his theory into practice by buying at great expense an estate in Cayenne, or French Guiana, with a large number of slaves whom he put under a system of education, with the intention of making them free as soon as they were fitted for economic independence. Madame de Lafayette interested herself in the management of this estate; she provided pastors and teachers to go to Cayenne as missionaries and educators.

[Pg
139]

The experiment was going on well when the Revolution broke over France. Then it was doomed. While Lafayette was languishing in the dungeon at Olmütz, one of his great anxieties was for his Cayenne charge. He would have been even more unhappy if he had known that when the revolutionists took possession of his property, they caused that estate to be sold, together with all the slaves, who thus went back into slavery—a great inconsistency in those same revolutionists who imagined they were working for liberty and enfranchisement!

During this time Lafayette had two great interests: one, a public life marked by increasing premonitions of national danger; the other, at Chaviniac where his family stayed and where he was instituting all sorts of reforms on his own estate and in the village of Chaviniac, and working steadily for the welfare of the people who were dependent upon him. He founded an annual fair and a weekly market day. He built roads at his own expense. In the village he established a resident physician whose services the poor could have at any time without cost to themselves. He founded a weaving business and a school to teach the art. The agricultural advancement of America had interested him, so he brought a man from England to teach new methods to his farmers. New implements were imported and new breeds of cattle were introduced. In every way he brought enlightenment and betterment.

[Pg
140]

Meantime a spirit was rising that was soon to sweep not only over Paris but through all the provinces of France. Lafayette saw this storm coming. One day, in 1789, he was walking in the grand gallery of the Château de Chaviniac with a gentleman of the neighborhood. They spoke together of what the emancipation of the peasant would mean to the people of the Auvergne region. At that moment a group of peasants from his estate came in to offer Lafayette some nosegays and cheeses. They presented these gifts on bended knees, in an attitude of deep submission and respect.

"There," said the neighbor, "see how little disposed these peasants are to receive your boasted emancipation; depend upon it, they think very little on the matter."

"Well, well," replied Lafayette, "a few years hence we shall see who was right."

They did! The time was not far distant when the peasants of Auvergne, as well as the rabble of Paris, went singing:

Ah! ça ira, ça ira, ça ira!
Celui qui s'élève, on l'abaissera,
Et qui s'abaisse, on l'élèvera.

[Pg
141]

Significant events followed, and on every important occasion Lafayette bore a part. He was a member of the Assembly of Notables, and he led a minority of the nobility who demanded the calling of the States General, a representative assembly. He presented his famous composition, the Declaration of Rights, modeled on Jefferson's Declaration of Independence. He was made by acclamation Colonel General of the new National Guard and gave them the white cockade. He represented the people on the great day of the oath of loyalty to the new constitution. For a time he was riding on the top wave of popularity.

Lafayette believed in freedom for all people and to every man his rights. But he thought that France was not yet ready for the form of government that was succeeding in America. For France he believed the constitutional monarchy to be the best. He thought—and every one now thinks—that Louis XVI was a man of good intentions, and he believed these good intentions would show that monarch what was for the welfare and happiness of the people. Therefore he defended the king and the royal family as a part of the form of government that was the best for France. The newly adopted constitution appeared to him to be the just expression of royal authority.

[Pg
142]

In his blind optimism Lafayette could not believe but that his ideas would in the end have their proper weight. He stood with the nobility, resting proudly on their good intentions, and facing a brute force newly awakened by the tocsin of liberty. To this unreasoning instinct, liberty meant nothing but license. The result of putting this license into power meant anarchy.

Now came Lafayette's time of difficulty. He was accused of conniving at the attempt of the king and queen to escape. Afterwards the queen in her trial testified that Lafayette had known nothing whatever of the project. Lafayette was also blamed for the death of Foulon, a minister who was hanged, beheaded, and dragged through the streets by the mob. The fact was that he did all in his power to control the mob that caused Foulon's death. They accused him of firing on the mob. That he did, in defense of the life of the king—first standing before the cannon to give his life if need be. He was accused of being too liberal and of being too aristocratic. He was burned between the two fires. The people seemed determined not to understand him. They said that if Lafayette truly loved the people it was but another evidence that his soul was plebeian—his simplicity of manner and unstudied grace of speech were but further proofs thereof. Brutality and lawlessness, veiled under the name of patriotism, could hardly do less than hate an incorruptible man like Lafayette who was outspoken in his beliefs.

[Pg
143]

A coalition of European powers stood ready to invade France and place the monarchy again on a secure basis. Lafayette was at the head of one of three armies sent to withstand the forces of the coalition, but his own soldiers were secretly in sympathy with the revolutionary frenzy.

The end came when Lafayette defied the Jacobin party, and they in turn declared him a traitor and put a price on his head. But even at that late day, if there had been in France any number of men who possessed Lafayette's calmness, self-control, and generous spirit, the state might still have been saved from tumult and degradation. As it was, France turned its face away from its best light and hope, and Lafayette was, as Carlyle picturesquely said, "hooted forth over the borders into Cimmerian night." He put his army into the best order possible, and with a company of devoted officers and followers started for a neutral country.

Meantime in Paris the feet of the people were at the threshold of the Terror.

[Pg
144]

CHAPTER XV

LAFAYETTE IN PRISON

LAFAYETTE attempted to cross the frontier on his way to America when he was intercepted and taken prisoner. This was at Rochefort, on neutral territory. The arrest of peaceful citizens on their way through neutral territory to a neutral country was treason to all international covenant and courtesy; evidently, the phrase "international courtesy" had not then been coined; but the act has been abhorred by unprejudiced military men the world over.

The party were taken to Namur, thence to Wesel, where some were released; later, three remained to be imprisoned in Magdeburg. Lafayette is reported to have owned as his highest ambition that his name should be a terror to all kings and monarchs. If he made this remark, his wish was fulfilled; for at a meeting of a committee of the Coalition it was agreed that the "existence of Lafayette was incompatible with the safety of the governments of Europe."

[Pg
145]

Following this decision, in May, 1794, the king of Prussia gave him into the keeping of the Emperor of Austria, and the dangerous prisoner, together with three of the officers who were with him when arrested, Latour-Maubourg, Bureaux-de-Pusy, and Lameth, were promptly carried to the strong fortress of Olmütz, high up in the gloomy Carpathian Mountains. Lameth nearly died and therefore was released, but the other two remained, not, however, being allowed to see or to communicate with their distinguished companion.

Lafayette had no apologies to make for the step he had taken. Indeed, he had great hopes that he would escape from his captors. Friends were finding means to communicate with him and plots were forming in the undercurrents of correspondence.

But on the whole he much preferred to take his liberty than to have it granted to him. If indeed liberty were granted, it would be with conditions "like those made by a lower class of brigands in the corner of a thicket," and the discussion would in all probability result in a shutting on him of quadruple doors.

He "much preferred to take his liberty than to have it granted to him." Accordingly plans were made. In one letter he calls for a good chart, arms, a passport, a wig, some drugs to insure a quiet night's sleep to the jailors, with instructions as to the dose to be given, and an itinerary for the route, with dangerous places indicated in it. They must know the exact time horses were to be ready, and the exact house where they were to stand. He was in buoyant spirits.

[Pg
146]

"Although a sojourn of fourteen months in the prisons of their Majesties has not contributed to my health," he wrote, "still I have a strong constitution and my early habits of life, added to the recollection of my fetters, will enable me to make a very rapid journey."

Finishing one of these letters, he says, "I hear them opening my first locks [the outer doors] and must stop writing." Latour-Maubourg adds a passage in his own hand. He begs for a piece of sealing wax and emphasizes that Lafayette must surely be rescued, whether the others are or not.

The prisoners looked out for those who were helping them to escape; these helpers were to be protected from suspicion. To do this they put a manikin with a nightcap on in Lafayette's bed, dug a channel under the chimney, and left a coat in the passage well smudged with soot.

Why none of these plans worked is not known. Lafayette was carted on to Neisse, but the plotting still went on. At last the grim and impregnable fortress of Olmütz received the three prisoners. Here he could receive no letters; he could read no paper; he was harshly told that he should never again know anything of what was going on in the outside world; that he was now a complete nonentity, a being known only by a number, and that no person in Europe knew where he was nor ever should know until his death.

[Pg
147]

Lafayette's misery was turned to a still darker hue by the fact that he felt the gravest alarm for the welfare of Madame de Lafayette. As he was being carted from prison to prison, on his way eastward toward that final destination in the mountain fortress, the news that was smuggled to him by secret and mysterious bearers was not of a kind to bring peace to his mind. He heard of the extremes to which the revolutionary frenzy was carrying the Parisian people; he heard that the king and queen and various members of their family had been proscribed, denounced, and sentenced to death by a committee miscalled a "Committee of Public Safety," and that the nobility were being ruthlessly sacrificed. Saddest of all this for him was the news that his wife, that woman of heroic character, of marvelous spiritual charm, and of liberal and philanthropic mind, had been imprisoned and was in danger of perishing on the scaffold. This word—and nothing more! The darkness of life behind walls seven feet thick was not lightened for many a long month by any further news in regard to Adrienne. The thoughts of Lafayette in his prison were as sad as can be imagined.

[Pg
148]

As months and years passed on, Lafayette may be forgiven if he sometimes thought that he had been wholly forgotten. But it was not so. It was not an easy matter to liberate a man whose very existence was a menace to every throne. The kings had him completely in their power—they wished to keep him out of sight.

It goes without saying that to President Washington the imprisonment of his young friend, to whom he was bound by strong and vital bonds of gratitude and friendship, was a source of genuine anguish. But what could he do? As Lafayette said, America was far away and the politics of Europe were tortuous. In them Washington had no part and no influence; and he could not go to war for he had no equipment for any such exploit.

He did, however, put in train many schemes designed to influence others to aid his loyal friend. He used the greatest secrecy; the correspondence as it is preserved refers only to "our friend" and to "the one you know," so that if the letters were lost, no one could possibly divine what was being done. The President sent letters to the representatives of the United States in both France and England, commanding that informal solicitations for the release of that friend of America should be made, and that these were to be followed by formal ones if necessary. He wrote to the king of Prussia, urging the release of his dear friend as an act of justice as well as a personal favor to himself; and to the Emperor of Austria, begging that Lafayette might be allowed to come to America. The letter has that thorough goodness and that amplitude of dignity that were characteristics of Washington.

"PHILADELPHIA, 15 May, 1796.

"TO THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY:

"It will readily occur to your Majesty that occasions may sometimes exist, on which official considerations would constrain the chief of a nation to be silent and passive, in relation to objects which affect his sensibility, and claim his interposition as a man. Finding myself precisely in this situation at present, I take the liberty of writing this private letter to your Majesty, being persuaded that my motives will also be my apology for it.

"In common with the people of this country, I retain a strong and cordial sense of the services rendered to them by the Marquis de Lafayette; and my friendship for him has been constant and sincere. It is natural, therefore, that I should sympathize with him and his family in their misfortunes, and endeavor to mitigate the calamities which they experience; among which, his present confinement is not the least distressing.

"I forbear to enlarge on this delicate subject. Permit me only to submit to your Majesty's consideration whether his long imprisonment and the confiscation of his estates, and the indigence and dispersment of his family, and the painful anxieties incident to all these circumstances, do not form an assemblage of sufferings which recommend him to the mediation of humanity? Allow me, Sir, to be its organ on this occasion; and to entreat that he may be permitted to come to this country, on such conditions and under such restrictions as your Majesty may think fit to prescribe.

"As it is a maxim with me not to ask what under similar circumstances I would not grant, your Majesty will do me the justice to believe that this request appears to me to correspond with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom, which form the basis of sound policy and durable glory.

"May the Almighty and merciful Sovereign of the universe keep your Majesty under his protection and guidance!"

Little by little the place where Lafayette was imprisoned became known to a few, and public sentiment was aroused to the point of bringing up the matter before the British Parliament. It was a certain General Fitzpatrick who, strange to say, had met Lafayette in London before he went to America, and again between battles when they were ranged on opposite sides of the Revolution, who now brought up the question. Twice he made a motion in favor of acting for the release of Lafayette. Fitzpatrick was the kind of man who could not bear to entertain the idea that there should exist "in any corner of British soil, in any English heart, conceptions so narrow as to wish to see the illustrious pupil of Washington perishing in a dungeon on account of his political principles." General Fitzpatrick's motion was seconded by General Tarleton, who had fought Lafayette through the length and breadth of Virginia. Pitt and Burke spoke against it.

Lord Grey said that if asked what would be gained by furthering the release of Lafayette, he would reply that "we should exculpate ourselves from the suspicion of being accomplices in the foulest wrong that ever disgraced humanity." The question was put to vote and stood forty-six yeas and one hundred and fifty-three nays. Such was the composition of the British Parliament at that time.

The next year Fitzpatrick renewed his efforts for Lafayette and proposed another motion. In an eloquent speech which should make his name honored for all time, he reviewed the former debate and paid a wonderful tribute to the character of Madame de Lafayette. The discussion that followed dwelt mainly on the question whether Lafayette was to be considered as a subject of the emperor or as a prisoner of war. The vote stood, yeas fifty, nays one hundred and thirty-two. Evidently the British Parliament had not made any great advance in the intervening year.

Meantime secret plans were being made to rescue Lafayette. The beautiful Angelica Schuyler Church, daughter of the American general, Philip Schuyler, was then in London; her husband, John Barker Church, had fought under Lafayette, and was now in the British Parliament. Mrs. Church was the sister-in-law of Alexander Hamilton, one of Lafayette's dearest friends among his young companions-in-arms, and she was in touch with a group of French émigrés. In fact, she was the center of a little volcano of feeling for the exile.

This secret circle kept up a constant communication with Mr. Pinckney and Mr. Jay. Mrs. Church wrote to Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State in the United States, and to many others, begging, pleading for help. For Lafayette, whom she had known in New York, her heart was constantly bleeding.

Proceeding from a mysterious writer who signed his name "Eleutherios," spirited articles soon began to appear in the English newspapers, and thus constantly fed a flame of feeling. All sorts of fears for Lafayette were entertained. "I see him in a dungeon," wrote one; "I see him in Siberia; I see him poisoned; I see him during what remains of his life torn by the uncertainty of the fate of all that he loves."

Soon after this the name of a Hanoverian doctor begins to appear in the documents preserved. This Dr. Bollman had carried one exploit through successfully, bringing out of Paris during the Terror a certain French émigré and conveying him to London in safety. Bollman was to be engaged by the London group to start out and see what could be done for Lafayette. This scheme resulted in a great adventure in which an American youth figured nobly.

[Pg
153]

[Pg
154]

CHAPTER XVI

AN ATTEMPTED RESCUE

THE hope that potentates and governments might take up the cause of Lafayette began to fail and other plans were made. Chivalric dreams of going to seek the place where he was confined and effect what seemed the impossible—a personal rescue—began to haunt the minds of daring youths. A letter is on record from a young man who wrote to Washington to ask if he might not have permission to go and seek Lafayette, and, if possible, conduct him and his family to America. Washington told him that all was being done that could be done, and that personal attempts would only result in failure. But there was another enterprising soul who did not wait for permission—he acted upon his own initiative. The story of that splendid young American must now be told.

Francis Kinloch Huger was the first child that Lafayette saw after he landed in America. It will be remembered that the little company of adventurers first touched shore on the country estate of Major Benjamin Huger, at Prospect Hill, near Charleston, South Carolina. Here Lafayette was received hospitably and sent on in his host's carriage to Charleston.

The child Francis was then five years old and was the young representative of a remarkable family of Huguenot extraction. The first Daniel Huger came from Loudon, France, soon after the Edict of Nantes, and his descendants to-day number six thousand; among them are found a large number of distinguished names. Five Huger brothers held important positions in Revolutionary times. Three served in the war; Brigadier General Isaac Huger was second in command to General Greene at Guilford Court House; Lieutenant Colonel Frank Huger was promoted from Moultrie's Regiment to be Quartermaster General of the Southern Army of the Revolution; and Major Benjamin Huger, Lafayette's host and the father of the child Francis, was killed in 1780 before the lines at Charleston. Of the other two brothers in this remarkable family group, Daniel was one of Governor Rutledge's Privy Council and later a member of Congress, and John was on the Council of Safety and Secretary of State.

The boy Francis thus came from a stock of stalwart men. He was eight years old when his father was killed at Charleston. The pity of it was driven into his young soul when the ignominy of that defeat was accomplished.

Immediately after that event young Huger was sent to England to acquire a medical education. Later he, as the custom was, went on his travels and to hear lectures at great seats of learning. But the passion for chivalric action that was inspiring youth everywhere he could not quell. He dreamed of finding Lafayette.

Meantime, American, English, and French friends of the illustrious prisoner were busy in London, and they had commissioned the "Hanoverian doctor," known as Dr. Bollman, to make a search for him. This man made careful preparations. He traveled in a leisurely way through Germany in the guise of a wealthy and philanthropic physician. He let it be known that he was a sort of follower of Cagliostro, a notorious Italian whose ideas were popular at the time. He treated the poor free of charge and he showed a special interest in prisoners.

At last he reached Olmütz, a journey at that time something like going from New York to Nome. He made acquaintance with the attending physician of the garrison and was invited to dinner. He in return asked the surgeon to dine with him at his inn. The dinner was sumptuous. M. de Colombe, who tells this part of the story, says that the wine was especially excellent. No one could distrust a simple-hearted doctor, an unselfish student of mankind, and especially one who ordered such delicious wine! In time, conversation turned upon prisoners of note. It was rumored, hinted the artful and ingenious doctor, that there was such an one at Olmütz. Could this be true? It was even so, the unsuspecting surgeon admitted; the great Lafayette was under his close care. The doctor inquired for Lafayette's health and was told that it was fairly good. Dr. Bollman ventured to send his compliments to the prisoner with a message that he had lately left

[Pg
155]

[Pg
156]

[Pg
157]

Lafayette's friends in England. The unsuspecting surgeon carried the innocent message.

On another occasion he brought word that Lafayette would like to know who those friends were. The doctor tried to speak the names, but could not pronounce them so that the Austrian could understand them. He felt in his pocket for a bit of paper (which he had carefully placed there beforehand) and on it wrote the names which he sent to Lafayette. These words also were written on the paper:

"If you read this with as much care as did your friend at Magdeburg, you will receive equal satisfaction."

The reference was to a prisoner at Magdeburg who received a book which contained messages written on the flyleaves in lemon juice. He held the book to the fire and by doing this the written words came out in brown lines and could be read. Lafayette took the hint, and discovered the message written with this invisible ink on the bit of paper. After this Bollman was allowed to lend Lafayette a book to read. It came back with lemon-juice messages on its margins. Lafayette wrote that he was sometimes allowed to drive, and as he was unknown to Bollman, he suggested a signal by which he could be recognized. He said that his lieutenant was a sheepish dolt, and that his corporal was covetous, treacherous, and cowardly. He added that the rides were allowed for the sake of his health. It appears that the government did not wish to arouse the frenzy of indignation that would follow if Lafayette were allowed to die in prison, so he was occasionally taken out to ride a league or even two from the fortress gate. If a rescuer and a trusty helper should appear, they could surely effect the escape. Lafayette would agree to frighten the cowardly little corporal himself; they need not provide a sword for him, for he would take the corporal's. An extra horse, one or two horses along the road—it could easily be done. It was a bold plan, but the bolder the plan, the more unexpected it was, and the better chance of success. Every day he would watch for them along the road.

After securing this definite information, the doctor retired to Vienna to make further plans.

This account may be in some respects the later elaboration of a story many times retold. But it sounds probable. At any rate, in some such way Dr. Bollman gained communication with Lafayette's cell, and brought the welcome news that friends were working for him. Then they projected a plan.

The story is again taken up in a coffeehouse in Vienna where Bollman is accustomed to go. Lafayette has suggested an assistant, and Bollman realizes that he can do nothing without one. Therefore he is looking about to find one who shall have spirit and fitness for the work. We see him now at the supper table, eagerly conversing with a certain young American, like himself a medical student on his travels. Curiously enough, it is Francis Kinloch Huger, now twenty-one years old. They talk of America. Bollman, with elaborate inadvertence, touches on the personality of Lafayette. The young man relates his childish memory of the arrival of that enthusiastic youth when he first came ashore at his father's South Carolina country place. Bollman tests Huger in various ways and makes up his mind that this is the best possible person to help him. He broaches the subject. Young Huger is only too ready—this very enterprise has been his dearest thought and his dream. The danger does not daunt him. "He did not let the grass grow under his feet," said his daughter years later, "but accepted at once."

It was not, however, purely romantic sentiment with him; he did not accede on the impulse of a moment. "I felt it to be my duty to give him all the aid in my power," said Colonel Huger to Josiah Quincy many years later. And though he may not have been conscious of it at the time, there was still another reason, for he admitted, long afterwards, "I simply considered myself the representative of the young men of America and acted accordingly."

The story may here be taken up almost in the words of Colonel Huger's daughter who wrote it down exactly as her father related it.



Francis Kinloch Huger.

This bas-relief, by the sculptor R. Tait McKenzie, shows the brave young American who, with Dr. Bollman, attempted to rescue Lafayette from the great fortress of Olmütz.

In October, 1794, they set out from Vienna in a light traveling carriage and with two riding horses, one of them being strong enough to carry two persons if necessary. They intended to appear in the characters of a young Englishman and his traveling tutor, and they were provided with passes for the long journey. With assumed carelessness they proceeded toward Olmütz. The gentlemen were generally riding, while their servants and the baggage were in the carriage. They went to the same inn where Dr. Bollman had stayed on his former visit. Here they remained two days, while they secretly sent a note to Lafayette and received his answer. They paid their bill at the inn, sent their carriage on ahead to a village called Hoff, and directed their servants to await them there.

[Pg
161]

Now Bollman and Huger are riding leisurely along the level plain that surrounds the fortress. The huge, dark prison looms in the distance. Every portion of the wide plain is visible to the sentinels at the gates, and within reach of the cannon on the walls. It is market day and many persons are passing back and forth. The two foreign travelers look in every direction for the carriage which may bring Lafayette. Both are eager for his coming.

At last they notice a small phaëton being driven slowly along. In the carriage they see a prisoner in a blue greatcoat with an officer beside him and an armed soldier riding behind. They spur on, and, as they pass, the prisoner gives the sign agreed upon. He raises his hat and wipes his forehead. The feelings excited by the assurance that this was indeed Lafayette, Huger never to his dying day forgot. The riders look as indifferent as possible, bow slightly, and pass on.

[Pg
162]

The phaëton stops at the side of the road and Lafayette alights. He draws the officer toward a footpath that runs along the highroad at that point, and appears to be leaning on the officer as if scarcely able to walk.

"This must be the time," cries Bollman.

"He signs to us," says Huger in great excitement.

The two young men put spurs to their horses and dash up together. As they approach, Lafayette seizes the officer's sword. A struggle follows. Bollman leaps from his horse and throws the bridle to Huger. But the flash of the drawn sword has frightened the horse; he dashes aside and gallops away. Huger dismounts, passes his arm through his bridle, and he and Bollman seize the soldier and tear his hands from Lafayette's throat. The soldier runs toward the town, shouting and waving his cap to call the attention of the sentinels.

[Pg
163]

What was to be done? They had now but one horse. The alarm had been given. Not a minute could be lost.

Huger gave his horse to Lafayette and told him hurriedly to go to Hoff, the rendezvous agreed upon. Lafayette mounted the horse and started out. But he could not bear to leave his two rescuers in such a plight, so he came back to ask if he could not do something for them.

"No, no!" they cried. "Go to Hoff! Go to Hoff!" they repeated. "We will follow."

Now if they had said this in French, if they had said "Allez à Hoff," Lafayette would have understood the direction. But not knowing the name of this near-by village, he misunderstood. He thought the English words meant only "Go off!" A fatal misunderstanding!

Huger and Bollman soon released their officer and both mounted the remaining horse. He was not used to "carrying double." The insulted creature set his feet in a ditch and threw them both. Bollman was stunned. Huger lifted him up and then started off to recover the horse. On the way he was thinking what course he should take in this critical and dangerous juncture.

[Pg
164]

When he came back he had decided. He said that Bollman should take the horse and follow Lafayette, for Bollman knew German and could give more help than he could. Alarm guns were beginning to be fired from the battlements, and trains of soldiers were seen issuing from the gates; but these portentous signs did not influence him. Bollman was persuaded; he mounted, put spurs to his horse, and was soon out of sight. Young America stood alone on this wide, dangerous plain; the shadow of that ominous fortress fell gloomily on its border. The guards came down. Between two rows of fixed bayonets Huger passed into the fortress.

The bold plan was doomed to complete failure! Lafayette rode twenty miles; but the blood on his greatcoat awakened suspicion; he was arrested and carried back to Olmütz where a heavier and gloomier imprisonment awaited him.

The same fate awaited Bollman; but Lafayette's despair was the deeper because he feared that his brave rescuers had been executed for their gallant attempt in his behalf.

The imprisonment accorded to the intrepid young American was as vile and cruel as any devised in the Dark Ages. He was put in a cell almost underground, with but one small slit near the top to let in a little light. A low bench and some straw formed the furnishings, while two chains linked him at ankle and wrist to the ceiling. To make things a trifle more cheerful for him, they showed him a prisoner in a cell which was only a walled hole in the ground! The prisoner had been there

[Pg
165]

for many years and his name and residence were now utterly forgotten. The jailers also exhibited their expert method of swift decapitation and acted out the method with a large two-bladed sword. Daily questionings of a cruel kind were used in order to force him to confess the truth—or rather what they wished to believe was the truth—that he had been the agent of a widespread plot. He stated that it was no man's plot but his own. They threatened torture, but he did not flinch or change his statement.

At last the officers were convinced that there had been no concerted plot. They then softened the rigors of Huger's imprisonment, gave him a cell with a window where a star could sometimes be seen, and lengthened his chains so that he could take as many as three whole steps. After a time he managed to get into communication with Bollman who was in the room above. With a knotted handkerchief Bollman lowered a little ink in a walnut shell from his window, together with a scrap of dingy paper. Huger then wrote a letter of a few lines only to General Thomas Pinckney, then American Minister at London. His entreaty was to let his mother know that he was still alive; also to let Lafayette's friends know that he would certainly have escaped but that he had been recognized as an Olmütz prisoner in a small town where he changed his horse; and that he had already mounted a fresh one when stopped. Huger's letter ended with the words, "Don't forget us. F.K.H. Olmütz, Jan. 5th, 1795." By bribery and cajolery they started this letter off.

[Pg
166]

Suffice it to say at present that, through the intervention of General Pinckney, the two young men were finally released and made their way swiftly out of the country. It was well that they hurried, for the emperor decided they had been released too soon and sent an edict for their rearrest. They had, however, by that time crossed the line and were out of his domain.

After a short stay in London, Huger started for America. The passengers on his ship discussed the story of Lafayette's attempted rescue through the entire six weeks of the voyage, and they never dreamed that their quiet young fellow-passenger was one of the rescuers until he received an ovation on landing. This is related by the only member of the Huger family living to-day (1916) who heard the story of the attempted rescue from the lips of "Colonel Frank" himself, as the family affectionately call him. She says that Colonel Frank was the most silent of men. He was the kind that *do* more than they *talk*.

[Pg
167]

When Huger reached Philadelphia, he called at once on President Washington and told him of the effort he had made. The President said that he had followed the whole course of events with the greatest solicitude and had wished that it might have met with the success it deserved.

In time Colonel Huger married the second daughter of General Thomas Pinckney who had effected his release from Olmütz and under whom he fought in the war of 1812; he had eleven children and made his home on a large estate in the highlands of South Carolina. When Congress presented Lafayette with an extensive section of land, he asked Huger to share it with him. Colonel Huger thanked him for the generous offer, but sturdily announced that he himself was able to provide for his daughters and that his sons should look out for themselves. His faith in his sons was justified, for they made good their father's opinion of their ability. Among his children and grandchildren were many who not only amassed goodly fortunes but held honored positions in public and military affairs.

[Pg
168]

When Lafayette made his memorable visit to America in 1824, he said that the one man in the country whom he most wished to see was the one who when a youth had attempted to rescue him from Olmütz. Colonel Huger had a corresponding desire to see Lafayette. On the General's arrival he started north at once, reached New York, and sought out the lodgings of Lafayette early in the morning, in order that their first meeting might be entirely without interruption. No account of that meeting has ever been made public, but the rescuer and his champion were together most of the time during that patriotic journey. Josiah Quincy once had the privilege of driving Colonel Huger in his coach through the suburbs of Boston and of calling with him upon many distinguished personages. Huger charmed and delighted every one. Josiah Quincy said that he had that "charm of a high-bred southerner which wrought with such peculiar fascination upon those inheriting Puritan blood." Besides his attractive personality, there was the romantic association with the attempted rescue. Scott's novels were then in the full blossom of popularity; but there was no hero in all those brave tales whose adventures appeared more chivalrous and thrilling.

[Pg
169]

To be sure, the effort at rescue had resulted in failure. Lafayette remained in prison. But it was known where he was, and, what was better, word had been conveyed to him that he was not forgotten. Yet the conditions of his imprisonment were now more severe than before, and his mind must have suffered intensely from being thrown back upon itself after that one hour's prospect of liberty.

On the way from Wesel to Magdeburg Lafayette had had a moment's conversation with a stranger who told him something of what was happening in Paris, and of the lawlessness and carnage of the Reign of Terror. Lafayette saw to what lengths an unregulated mob might go, even when originally inspired by a noble passion for liberty. He heard of the death of Louis XVI, and called it an assassination. He realized that these things were being done in France by the people in whom he had so blindly, so persistently, believed. He was deeply disappointed. Yet he did not quite lose faith. The cause of the people was still sacred to him; they might destroy for him whatever charm there had been in what he called the "delicious sensation of the smile of the multitude"; but his belief in the ultimate outcome for democratic government, as the best form of government for the whole world, remained unchanged.

[Pg
170]

CHAPTER XVII

A WELCOME RELEASE

MORE than a year had passed after the attempt at rescue when one day Lafayette heard the big keys turning in the several locks, one after another, that barred his cell, and in a moment his wife and two daughters stood before his amazed eyes! Could this be true, or was it a vision?

It will be remembered that shortly after Lafayette's arrest he had heard that Madame de Lafayette was imprisoned and was in danger of perishing on the scaffold. A year later the news was smuggled to him that she was still alive. But what had been happening to her and to his three children during all these dismal years?

Through the instrumentality of James Monroe, the ambassador to France from the United States,—the only foreign power that in the days of the French Revolution would send its representative,—Madame de Lafayette was liberated from an imprisonment that tried her soul, even as Olmütz had proved and tested the spirit of her husband. Through all those tragic months Adrienne showed herself a woman of high and unswerving courage.

Now, indeed, was the American citizenship of her husband—and it had included his family also—of value to her. Madame de Lafayette's first letter to Mr. Monroe shows this. This dignified letter is preserved in the manuscript department of the New York Public Library and is here printed for the first time:

"Having learned that a minister of the United States has recently arrived in France, who has been sent by his government and invested with powers representing a people in whose interests I have some rights that are dear to my heart, I have felt that such misfortunes as I have not already suffered were no longer to be feared for me, that the most unjust of captivities was about to be at an end, and that my sufferings accompanied by irreproachable conduct towards the principles and towards the laws of my country, cause me to have confidence in the name of this protecting nation at a moment when the voice of justice is once more heard, and when the National Convention is undertaking to deliver such patriots as have been unjustly imprisoned. I have begun to hope that the wishes of my heart shall be fulfilled—that I may be returned to my children. For ten months I have been taken away from them. From the very moment of their birth they have heard that they have a second country, and they have the right to hope that they will be protected by it."

Through the official authority of Mr. Monroe, Madame de Lafayette was given money and passports. When Washington first heard of her plight, he sent her a reverent letter inclosing a thousand dollars, and he was unceasing in his correspondence with representatives in France and England for herself as well as for Lafayette. She sent her son, George Washington de Lafayette, to his illustrious namesake in America, and as "Madame Motier, of Hartford, Connecticut," she, with her two young daughters, made her way to Hamburg where, instead of taking ship for America, she took carriage across the wide spaces of Germany and Austria. Here she gained an audience with the emperor, and bowing at his feet asked permission to go to the fortress of Olmütz and stay with her husband until he was set free.

"Your request is granted," he said; "but as for Lafayette—I cannot free him; my hands are tied." Exactly what it was that had "tied the hands" of the great potentate has never been revealed.

Her petition being granted, Madame de Lafayette continued her journey. Two days more and she and her daughters were with her husband.

The day of their meeting was spent in trying to bear the joy of the reunion. Not until the daughters were sent to their cell did she tell Lafayette of the sad things that had happened. Her mother, her grandmother, and her sister had, with many friends and relatives, been led to the scaffold. These and many other facts of tragic interest to the man so long deprived of any word from outside his prison were shared with Lafayette.

It may go without saying that Lafayette's prison days were now far easier to bear, except that to see Madame de Lafayette grow more and more broken in health as days went on, in their close, unlighted, and malodorous cells, must have caused an added sorrow. After a time she was obliged to ask the emperor to allow her to go to Vienna for medical attendance. He granted the request, but with the proviso that she should never return. Then she decided to remain with her husband, even at the risk of her life.

Shall the miseries of their prison life be dwelt upon? Their jailers were the coarsest of human beings. They surpassed in brutality the slave drivers of Constantinople. The food, which the family bought for themselves, was coarse and miserably cooked. Tobacco floated in the coffee. Lafayette's clothes were in tatters. When his shoes had been soled fifteen times and resented the indignity any further, his daughter Anastasie took it upon herself to make shoes for him out of an old coat.

Lafayette's dingy cell was, however, now brightened by companionship and by inspiring conversation. Even work was going on, for Madame de Lafayette prepared a life of her mother

while she was at Olmütz. It was written with a toothpick and a little lampblack on the margins of a copy of Buffon which she succeeded in obtaining. One of the daughters amused the family by making pencil sketches; one of the burly old turnkey, with his sword, candle, and keys, and his hair in a comical queue behind, amused the family very much and was carried with them when they left their dismal abode.

Before the desolate prison of Olmütz fades from our view, let one laurel wreath be placed upon the head of young Felix Pontonnier, sixteen years old when he became the servant of Lafayette, whom he faithfully followed into prison. He was with Lafayette when he was arrested and was bidden to look after his master's belongings; so he was separated from him for several days. This gave him an excellent opportunity to escape, but he refused to take advantage of it. Of his own accord he joined Lafayette once more, and during the whole long season of his captivity he gave ample proof of his devotion. He possessed a rare inventive genius and was constantly on the alert to devise means for making the prisoners comfortable and to find out ways for carrying on secret correspondence. He invented a special language known only to himself and to the prisoners, and also a unique gesture-language. He whistled notes like a captive bird; with varied modulations he conveyed to the prisoners whatever news he could ferret out. Prison life proved to be bad for him, and his health was several times endangered. For a fancied offense he was once confined in total darkness for three months. But none of his sufferings dashed his gay spirits. He was constantly sustained by a buoyant cheer, and his wonderful devotion should win him a place among heroes. After the five years of captivity were over, Lafayette made Felix the manager of his farm at La Grange. He filled this position with success and probity.

[Pg
176]

It was through the fiat of Napoleon Bonaparte that the removal of Lafayette from Olmütz was made possible. Bonaparte was influenced by a long-sighted policy; he desired to win to himself the man of so unique a personality. He was also spurred on by various writers and diplomats, by representatives of the French Directory, and by Brigadier General Henri Jacques Guillaume Clarke, who was for a time governor of Vienna and who won the title of "the incorruptible" from Napoleon. President Washington's dignified and effective letter to the Emperor of Austria is believed to have left its mark; and in a thousand ways public opinion had awakened to the ignominy of leaving such a man as Lafayette in prison. Lafayette disliked to be indebted to anybody but himself for an escape from his dungeon; but he willingly admitted that he owed much to his devoted wife whose many letters imploring help for her husband were among the causes that unlocked the double-barred doors of Olmütz.

[Pg
177]

When finally released, Lafayette was taken in a carriage from Olmütz to Dresden, thence by way of Dresden, Leipzig, and Halle to Hamburg, where the American consul received him. So wearied was Madame de Lafayette that she made the journey with the greatest difficulty, and a voyage to America at that time was out of the question. The family, therefore, took refuge in an obscure town in Holland, since there was no other European country where the monarchy would be safe if it conferred the right of residence upon any man who bore the name of Lafayette.

[Pg
178]

[Pg
179]

CHAPTER XVIII

A TRIUMPHAL TOUR

FOR some years events did not shape themselves so that Lafayette could return to Paris. That he, in 1799, was considering the possibility of a voyage to America is shown by a letter written in that year to his "deliverer," Francis Kinloch Huger, which his descendant of the same name has kindly allowed to be printed here. It was sent from Vianen in Holland, and introduces his fellow-prisoner, M. Bureaux-de-Pusy, who was seeking a home in the United States.

VIANEN, 17th April, 1799.

MY DEAR HUGER:

Here is one of my companions in captivity, Bureaux Pusy, an Olmütz prisoner, and at these sounds my heart vibrates with the sentiments of love, gratitude, admiration, which forever bind and devote me to you! How I envy the happiness he is going to enjoy! How I long, my dear and noble friend, to fold you in my arms! Pusy will relate to you the circumstances which hitherto have kept me on this side of the Atlantic—even now the illness of my wife, and the necessity of her having been a few weeks in France before I set out, prevent me from embarking with Pusy and his amiable family. But in the course of the summer I shall look over to you and with inexpressible delight I shall be welcomed by my beloved deliverer. No answer from you has yet come to me. We are expecting every day my friend McHenry's nephew—perhaps I may be blessed with a letter from you!

[Pg
180]

I need not recommend to you Bureaux Pusy. The conspicuous and honorable part he has acted in the French Revolution, his sufferings during our imprisonment—you but too well know what it is—are sufficient introductions to your great and good heart. He is one of the most accomplished men that can do honour to the country where he is born, and to the country where he wishes to become a citizen. He is my excellent friend. Every service, every mark of affection he can receive from you and your friends, I am happily authorized to depend upon.

My son is gone to Paris. My wife and my two daughters, who love you as a brother, present you with the sincere, grateful expressions of their friendship. The last word George told me at his setting out was not to forget him in my letter to you. He will accompany me to America.

Adieu, my dear Huger, I shall to the last moment of my life be wholly

Yours,
LAFAYETTE.

The wish to revisit the land of his adoption was strong, but many years were to pass before it could be carried out. He was forty years old when he was liberated from Olmütz, and he was sixty-seven when he paid his last visit to our shores.

[Pg
181]

He little dreamed of the reception he was to find, for the whole American people were waiting to greet, with heart and soul, the man who, in his youth, had taken so noble a part in their struggle for freedom. He reached New York on the 16th of August, 1824. He came with modest expectation of some honorable attentions—nothing more. On the *Cadmus* he asked a fellow-traveler about the cost of stopping at American hotels and of traveling in steamboats and by stage; of this his secretary, M. Levasseur, made exact note. He came to visit the interesting scenes of his youth and to enjoy a reunion with a few surviving friends and compatriots. Instead, he found a whole country arising with one vast impulse to do him honor. It was not mere formality; it was a burst of whole-souled welcome from an entire nation. So astonished was he, so overcome, to find a great demonstration awaiting him, where he had expected to land quietly and to engage private lodgings, that his eyes overflowed with tears.

The harbor of New York was entered on a Sunday. He was asked to accept a sumptuous entertainment on Staten Island till Monday, when he could be received by the city with more honor. On that day citizens and officers, together with old Revolutionary veterans, attended him. Amid the shouting of two hundred thousand voices he reached the Battery. The band played "See the Conquering Hero Comes," the "Marseillaise," and "Hail, Columbia." Lafayette had never dreamed of such a reception or of such sweeps of applause. The simple-hearted loyalty of the American people had a chance to show itself, and their enthusiasm knew no bounds. Lafayette's face beamed with joy. Four white horses bore him to the City Hall, while his son, George Washington Lafayette, his secretary, M. Levasseur (who wrote an account of the whole journey of 1824), and the official committee followed in carriages. The mayor addressed the city's guest; and Lafayette's reply was the first of many hundred appropriate and graceful speeches made by him during the journey. There were many ceremonies; school children threw garlands of flowers in his way; corner stones were laid by him; squares were renamed for "General Lafayette" (as he assured everybody he preferred to be called by that title), and societies made him and his son honorary members for life.

[Pg
182]

Hundreds of invitations to visit different cities poured in. The whole country must be traveled over to satisfy the eagerness of a grateful nation. Are republics ungrateful? That can never be said of our own republic after Lafayette's visit to the United States in 1824.

[Pg
183]

He set out for Boston by way of New Haven, New London, and Providence. All along the way the farmers ran out from the fields, shouting welcomes to the cavalcade, and children stood by the roadside decked with ribbons on which the picture of Lafayette was printed. Always a barouche with four white horses was provided to carry him from point to point. It was not a bit of vanity on the part of Lafayette that he was ever seen behind these steeds of snowy white. President Washington had set the fashion. His fine carriage-horses he caused to be covered with a white paste on Saturday nights and the next morning to be smoothed down till they shone like silver. It was a wonderful sight when that majestic man was driven to church—the prancing horses, the outriders, and all. And when Lafayette came, nothing was too good for him! The towns sent out the whitest horses harnessed to the best coaches procurable,—cream color, canary color, or claret color,—for the hero to be brought into town or sped upon his way departing. Returning to New York by way of the Connecticut River and the Sound, he found again a series of dinners and toasts, as well as a ball held in Castle Garden, the like of which, in splendor and display, had never before been thought of in this New World.

[Pg
184]

Lafayette left the festivity before it was ever in order to take the boat, at two in the morning, to go up the Hudson River. He arose at six to show his son and his secretary the place where André was captured. As soon as the fog lifted, he described, in the most enthusiastic manner, the Revolutionary events which he had seen.

At West Point there was a grand banquet. One of the speakers alluded to the fact that at Valley Forge, when the soldiers were going barefooted, Lafayette provided them with shoes from his own resources, and then proposed this toast:

"To the noble Frenchman who placed the Army of the Revolution on a new and better footing!"

At the review of the cadets, Generals Scott and Brown, in full uniform, with tall plumes in their hats, stood by General Lafayette. The three, each towering nearly six feet in height, made a magnificent tableau, declares one record of the day.

Returning from the Hudson River excursion, the party went southward, visiting Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington. With ceremonies of great dignity Congress received Lafayette, and later voted him a present of two hundred thousand dollars, together with a whole township anywhere he might choose in the unappropriated lands of the country.

[Pg
185]

Among other places visited was Yorktown, where the party attended a brilliant celebration. The marks of battle were still to be seen on many houses, and broken shells and various implements of war were found scattered about. An arch had been built where Lafayette stormed the redoubt, and on it were inscribed the names of Lafayette, Hamilton, and Laurens. Some British candles were discovered in the corner of a cellar, and these were burned to the sockets while the old soldiers told tales of the surrender of Yorktown.

The party visited other places connected with the campaign in Virginia. Lafayette called on ex-President Jefferson at Monticello, his stately home near Charlottesville, Virginia, and was conducted by Jefferson to the University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

Charleston was the next stopping-place; this was the home of the Huger family. Here were more combinations of "Yankee Doodle" and the "Marseillaise," more laying of corner stones, more deputations, more dinners, more public balls. It is not difficult to understand how it happened that, in the last half of the nineteenth century, there were so many old ladies living who could boast of having danced with Lafayette in their youth.

[Pg
186]

Proceeding on their way by boat and carriage, the company came to Savannah, and thence moved across Georgia and Alabama, down the river to the Gulf of Mexico, along the shore to the mouth of the Mississippi, and up the "grand rivièrè" to St. Louis. "Vive Lafayette" was the universal cry all the way.

All the cities vied with each other in doing honor to the nation's guest. At Pittsburg, for instance, a bedroom was prepared for the distinguished visitor in a hall that had been a Masonic lodge room. The ceiling was arched, and the sun, moon, and stars were painted upon it. The bed prepared for Lafayette was a vast "four-poster" of mahogany, on whose posts were inscribed the names of Revolutionary heroes. Above the canopy a large gilt eagle spread its wings and waved a streamer on which were written the names of Washington and Lafayette. In this city, as everywhere, Lafayette was shown everything notable, including all the foundries and factories.

As usual, the hero left the city in a coach shining with the freshest paint, and drawn by four white steeds.



A Carriage in which Lafayette Rode.

This interesting relic is now in Cooperstown, New York. The picture shows it being used in a present-day pageant, filled with boys and girls in colonial costumes. (See page [187](#).)

At Buffalo, after a visit to Niagara, they embarked on the newly-built Erie Canal. Then followed a part of the journey that was much enjoyed by Lafayette—the beautiful country of central New York. He was charmed with this bit of travel after the long distances between towns in the western region.

[Pg
187]

Syracuse was the next stopping-place. The carriage in which Lafayette traveled into that City of Sixty Hills was kept for many decades as a precious treasure. Not many years ago it was in a barn back of one of the houses on James Street in that city. Now, however, after wandering from place to place and taking part in various pageants, it may be seen in the celebrated village of Cooperstown, where the young folks, when they attire themselves in Revolutionary costume, may ride as bride or coachman, as shown in the picture.

Lafayette reached the "Village of Syracuse" at six o'clock in the morning. The people had been watching all night for the arrival of the illustrious guest and were still watching when the colors of the illuminations were melting into those of sunrise. The guest of honor had been in his carriage all night and must have been weary, but he gayly asserted that the splendid supper that had been prepared the night before made an excellent breakfast, and he spent the three hours allotted to that "village" in shaking hands with the hundreds of people whose desire to see him had kept them waiting all night.

[Pg
188]

At nine o'clock he bade good-by to his friends of a day and embarked upon the packet boat of the canal, while the air resounded with good wishes for his voyage. Through Rome they passed by night in an illumination that turned darkness into daylight, and at every place they received deputations from the city just ahead of the one where they were. There were cannon to welcome and cannon to bid farewell. At Utica three Oneida chiefs demanded an interview on the score of having been Lafayette's helpers in 1778. They were very old but still remarkably energetic. Lafayette begged them to accept certain gifts of silver, and they went away happy.

The traveling was now hastened in order that General Lafayette might reach Boston by the Fourth of July, 1825, and take part in laying the corner stone of Bunker Hill Monument. This event in our national history has been described by Josiah Quincy in his "Figures of the Past" and by many others. It was a great national celebration, and a general meeting of Revolutionary comrades, one of whom wore the same coat he had worn at the battle of Bunker Hill, almost half a century before, and could point to nine bullet-holes in its texture. Daniel Webster delivered his grand oration. All Boston was on the alert. There were a thousand tents on the Common, and a dinner to which twelve hundred persons sat down. General Lafayette gave a reception to the ladies of the city. Then there was a ball—with the usual honor bestowed. Everybody was proud and happy to have General Lafayette as a national guest on that great day.

[Pg
189]

One more incident must be related. In July of 1825 the people of Brooklyn were erecting an Apprentices' Free Library Building at the corner of Cranberry and Henry streets, later incorporated in the Brooklyn Institute, and they wished Lafayette to assist in laying the corner stone. He was brought to Brooklyn in great state, riding in a canary-colored coach drawn by four snow-white horses. The streets were crammed with people. Among them were many citizens and their wives, some old Revolutionary veterans, troops of Brooklyn children, and a number of negroes who had been freed by the recent New York Emancipation Acts.

Through the closely packed masses of people the carriage of the noble Frenchman was slowly driven, the antics of the impatient horses attracting the attention of the small boy as much as the illustrious visitor himself. As they came near the stand where the ceremony was to take place, Lafayette saw that various gentlemen were carefully lifting some little children over the rough places where soil from excavations and piles of cut stone had been heaped, and were helping them to safe places where they could see and hear. He at once alighted from the carriage and came forward to assist in this work.

[Pg
190]

Without suspecting it in the least, he was making another historic minute; for one of the boys he was thus to lift over a hard spot was a five-year-old child who afterwards became known to the world as Walt Whitman. Lafayette pressed the boy to his heart as he passed him along and affectionately kissed his cheek. Thus a champion of liberty from the Old World and one from the New were linked in this little act of helpfulness. When he was an old man, Whitman still treasured the reminiscence as one of indescribable preciousness.

"I remember Lafayette's looks quite well," he said; "tall, brown, not handsome in the face, but of fine figure, and the pattern of good-nature, health, manliness, and human attraction."

Through nearly all of this long and exciting journey, Lafayette was accompanied by Colonel Francis Kinloch Huger, by his secretary, and by his son, George Washington Lafayette, then a man full grown. The latter was almost overcome by the warmth of his father's reception. Writing to a friend at home, after having been in America but twenty days, he said:

[Pg
191]

"Ever since we have been here my father has been the hero, and we the spectators, of the most imposing, beautiful, and affecting sights; the most majestic population in the world welcoming a man with common accord and conducting him in triumph throughout a journey of two hundred leagues. Women wept with joy on seeing him, and children risked being crushed to get near to a man whom their fathers kept pointing out to them as one of those who contributed the most in procuring them their happiness and independence. This is what it has been reserved to us to see. I am knocked off my feet—excuse the expression—by the emotions of all kinds that I experience."

Lafayette has been accused of being a spoiled hero. In a moment of asperity Jefferson had alluded to Lafayette's love of approbation. If, indeed, Lafayette did yield to that always imminent human frailty, and if Olmütz had not been able to eradicate or subdue it, the itinerary of 1824 must have been to him a period of torture. He must have suffered from satiety to an unbearable degree, for praise and admiration were poured out by a grateful people to an extent not easily imagined. To keep up a fiction is the most wearying thing in the world. The only refreshing and vivifying thing is to be absolutely sincere. This it must be believed Lafayette was. His simple attitude toward the land of his adoption was shown in a letter to President Monroe in which he bade farewell to a nation where "in every man, woman, and child of a population of twelve million I have found a loving, indeed an enthusiastic, friend."

[Pg
192]

It did as much good to the American people as it did to Lafayette to take part in this great tide of gratitude and devotion. A vast, swelling emotion is unifying and it is strengthening. Our people made a great stride toward nationalization when Lafayette came to let us, as a people, throw our heart at his feet.

[Pg
193]

CHAPTER XIX

MINGLED with the joys of Lafayette's visit to the United States in 1824 there was one profound sorrow; he no longer saw here the great man to whom he had given such whole-hearted devotion. President Washington died in 1799; and one of the most affecting moments of all the journey of 1824 was when General Lafayette and his son, George Washington Lafayette, stood together by the tomb of the man whom both regarded as a father.

On the centennial anniversary of the birth of Washington, in 1832, the 27th Regiment State Artillery of New York sent Lafayette a magnificent commemorative medal. In acknowledgment of this gift Lafayette wrote to the Committee, calling the gift "a new testimony of that persevering affection which has been, during nearly sixty years, the pride and delight of my life to be the happy object. The only merit on my part which it does not exceed is to be found in the warmth of my gratitude and the patriotic devotion that binds to the United States the loving heart of an adopted son. The honor was enhanced by the occasion—the birthday of the matchless Washington, of whom it is the most gratifying circumstance to have been the beloved and faithful disciple."

[Pg
194]

This attitude Lafayette never failed to hold. The relation between the two men was from beginning to end honorable to both in the highest degree. It was one of the great friendships of history.

In one respect the private tastes of Washington and Lafayette were similar; both dearly loved a farm. No one can visit Mount Vernon without feeling the presence there of a lover of growing things. From this productive place fine hams and bacon were forwarded to Lafayette and his family in France and were there eaten with the keenest relish. Fine birds were also sent—ducks, pheasants, and red partridges. In return Lafayette dispatched by request some special breeds of wolf hounds and a pair of jackasses; also, strange trees and plants, together with varied gifts such as Paris only could devise. The visitor to Mount Vernon finds in the family dining room Lafayette's ornamental clock and rose jars, and his mahogany chair in Mrs. Washington's sitting room. The key to the Bastille, which he sent in 1789, is shown under a glass cover on the wall by the staircase in the entrance hall, and a model of that ancient fortress of tyranny, made from a block of stone from the renowned French prison, sent over in 1793, stands in happy irony in the banquet hall. A bedchamber on the second floor is pointed out as the room in which Lafayette slept. It still bears his name.

[Pg
195]

After Lafayette returned to France, he lived for years in semi-exile on an estate known as La Grange, that Madame de Lafayette had inherited. It lay about forty miles east of Paris, in a beautiful country covered with peach orchards and vineyards. At the time it was, from an agricultural point of view, in a sadly neglected condition; and it was not by any means the least of the achievements of Lafayette that he turned his hand cleverly to the great task of developing this estate into a really productive farm, and succeeded. Beginning with a single plow—for he was too poor at first to buy numerous appliances—he gradually developed the estate into a valuable property. After a time he supplied himself with fine breeds of cattle, sheep, and pigs; indeed, specimens of various kinds from all zones of the earth were sent him by his friends the American shipmasters, who, it must be remembered, appreciated the ardent efforts he had made to establish American commerce. To Washington, who was a good farmer as well as a good President, every detail of these labors would have been interesting if he had been living.

[Pg
196]

In patriarchal happiness Lafayette carried on the estate of eight hundred French acres, with all its industries, in a perfect system. In a fine old mansion built in the days of Louis IX, Lafayette lived with his two daughters and their families under an efficient household system. Sometimes twelve cousins, brothers and sisters, would be there together. The combined family formed a perfect little academy of its own; and just to live at La Grange was an education in itself. The walls were covered with pictures and memorabilia, to know which would mean to understand European and American history for a century past. A picture of Washington had the place of honor. The Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of Rights were hung side by side. A miniature of Francis Kinloch Huger in a frame of massive gold was among the treasures. Dress swords, gifts of many kinds, symbols of honors, and rich historical records decorated the whole house. Even the name of the estate, La Grange, was American, for it was so called in honor of the Manhattan Island home of his friend Alexander Hamilton.



The Children's Statue of Lafayette.

This spirited statue, by the sculptor Paul Wayland Bartlett, was a gift to France from five millions of American school children. (See page [201](#).)

There was one room in the château at La Grange that was more sacred than any other; it was the room in which Madame de Lafayette had died. This chamber was never entered except on the anniversary of her death, and then by her husband alone, who cherished her memory tenderly and faithfully as long as he lived.

[Pg
197]

Many wonderful visitors came to La Grange, and in later years to the Paris home of the Lafayettes. There were Irish guests to tell tales of romance; there were Poles to plead the cause of their country; misguided American Indians were sometimes stranded there; Arabs from Algeria; negro officers in uniform from the French West Indies—all people who had the passion for freedom in their hearts naturally and inevitably gravitated to Lafayette. His house was a modern Babel, for all languages of the world were spoken there.

And Americans! So many Americans came along the Rosay Road that little boys learned the trick of meeting any foreign-looking persons who spoke bad French, and announced themselves as guides of all the "Messieurs Americains"; they would capture the portmanteau, swing it up to a strong shoulder, and then set out for the château at the regular jog trot of a well-trained porter.

[Pg
198]

One of these American guests was the grandson of General Nathanael Greene with whom Lafayette had had cordial relations during the Virginia campaign. In the year 1828 this grandson visited La Grange and wrote an account full of delightful, intimate touches, which was printed in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1861. Of Lafayette himself he said:

"In person he was tall and strongly built, with broad shoulders, large limbs, and a general air of strength.... He had more dignity of bearing than any man I ever saw. And it was not merely the dignity of self-possession, which early familiarity with society and early habits of command may give even to an ordinary man, but that elevation of manner which springs from an habitual elevation of thought, bearing witness to the purity of its source, as a clear eye and ruddy cheek bear witness to the purity of the air you daily breathe. In some respects he was the mercurial Frenchman to the last day of his life; yet his general bearing, that comes oftenest to my memory, was of calm earnestness, tempered and mellowed by quick sympathies."

The death of Lafayette, on the 20th of May, 1834, set the bells a-tolling in many lands, but in none was the mourning more sincere than in our own. Members of Congress were commanded to wear the badge of sorrow for thirty days, and thousands of the people joined them in this outward expression of the sincere grief of their hearts.

[Pg
199]

His services to his own country and to ours were many and valuable. But his personal example of character, integrity, and constancy was even more to us and to the world than his distinct services. What he *was* endeared him to us, even more than the things he did. He gave his whole soul in youth to his world-wide dream of freedom—freedom under a constitution guaranteeing it, through public order, to every human being. He found himself in a world where monarchical

government seemed the destiny and habit of mankind. He thought it a bad habit—one that ought to be broken. Sincerely and passionately believing this, he was willing to die in the service of any people who were ready to make the struggle against the existing national traditions. He made mistakes; he made the mistake of trusting Louis Philippe. In doing this he had with him the whole French people. But let it be said on the other hand that he did not make the mistake of trusting Bonaparte, whose blandishments he resisted during the whole passage of that meteor. And he was making no mistake when, to the very end of his life, he remained true to his love for the land he had aided in his youth. His visions did not all come true in exactly the shape he devised, but to the last he retained a glorious confidence that they would ultimately be realized in full.

[Pg
200]

Lafayette was absolutely fearless. He had physical bravery; he was equally indomitable in moral and intellectual realms. He had the power of courage. He could decide quickly and then stand by the decision to the bitter end. The essence of his bold, adventurous youth is expressed in the motto he then chose, "Cur non." But the confirmed and tried spirit of his full manhood is more truly set forth in another motto: "Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra." "Do what you ought, let come what may."

For a man so possessed by a great, world-wide idea, so fearless, so constant, it is quite fitting that monuments should be erected and that his birthday should be celebrated. Probably there is no man in all history who has had so many cities, counties, townships, boulevards, arcades, mountains, villages, and hamlets named for him, in a country to which he was not native-born, as has the Frenchman Lafayette in the United States of America. Also, many notable statues of Lafayette stand in city squares and halls of art, both in our country and in his own. Among them there is one special statue in which the young people of America have a peculiar interest. On the 19th of October, 1898, five millions of American school children contributed to a Lafayette Monument Fund. With this sum a bronze statue was made and presented to the French Republic. Mr. Paul Wayland Bartlett was the sculptor intrusted with this work. The statue was completed in 1908 and placed in a court of the Louvre in Paris. It was originally intended that the statue of Bonaparte should occupy the center of that beautiful court, but it is the statue of Lafayette that stands there—the "Boy" Cornwallis could not catch, the man Napoleon could not intimidate. No one can tell us just how Lafayette's statue happened to be assigned the place intended for Napoleon's; but however it was, the fact is a luminous example of how a man who loved people only to master and subjugate them did not reach the heart of the world so directly as the man who loved human beings for their own sakes and to do them good.

[Pg
201]

Printed in the United States of America.

THE following pages contain advertisements of Macmillan books by the same author

TRUE STORIES OF GREAT AMERICANS

"Should be read by every boy and girl."

This important new series of brief and vivid biographies will give to the young mind an intimate picture of the greatest Americans who have helped to make American history. In each instance the author has been chosen either because he is particularly interested in the subject of the biography, or is connected with him by blood ties and possessed, therefore, of valuable facts. Only those, however, who have shown that they have an appreciation of what makes really good juvenile literature have been entrusted with a volume. In each case they have written with a child's point of view in mind, those events being emphasized which are calculated to appeal to the younger reader, making a full and well-balanced narrative, yet always authentic.

"Most admirable in their construction and purpose. The volumes are interesting and attractive in appearance, graphic in style, and wonderfully inspiring in subject matter, reaching an enviable mark in juvenile literature."—*Philadelphia Public Ledger*.

"Far away from the 'dry as dust' type of biography."—*San Francisco Bulletin*.

"Simply and attractively told.... Especially interesting to children."—*Christian Advocate*.

"An excellent series."—*New York Sun*.

See the following pages for descriptions of the individual books of this series.

The Lives of National Heroes Told in a New Way for Children

EACH VOLUME ILLUSTRATED, \$.50

Christopher Columbus

By Mildred Stapley

Mildred Stapley has consulted new and recently discovered sources of contemporary information, and the history of Columbus' voyages is revised and corrected, though the romance and excitement still glow through the record of his achievements, and his fame as a daring navigator remains an example of courage and unequalled valor.

Captain John Smith

By Rossiter Johnson

The adventurous Captain who founded Virginia lived the life of a typical hero of romance—Soldier of Fortune in America, Europe, Asia, and Africa, pirate, slave, and friend of princes. He was an able executive and a man of energy and capacity.

William Penn

By Rupert S. Holland

The life of William Penn is of especial interest and value because the events of his career are closely related to American and English history at a time when America was separating herself from her parent country and shaping her destiny as an independent Republic.

Benjamin Franklin

By E. Lawrence Dudley

As a statesman, diplomat, scientist, philosopher, and man of letters, Benjamin Franklin was the foremost American of his time. The story of his life is an inspiring and stimulating narrative, with all the fascination and interest of Colonial and Revolutionary America.

New Illustrated Biographies for Young People

EACH VOLUME ILLUSTRATED, \$.50

Thomas A. Edison

By Francis Rolt-Wheeler

Thomas Alva Edison is the typical American. From boyhood to ripest manhood he has been keen to see an opportunity, and quick to turn that opportunity to a practical use. His genius is peculiar because it is so American.

Robert Fulton

By Alice C. Sutcliffe

The life of Robert Fulton makes good reading. The story of his belief in and work upon a submarine and his journeys to France and England to lay his plans before the British Government—his steamboat, and the years of study and labor which went toward perfecting it—his paintings—his travels in foreign lands in days when American travellers were few—combine to make one of the most interesting and inspiring books of the series.

Robert E. Lee

By Bradley Gilman

Robert E. Lee ranks with the greatest of all English-speaking military leaders. Bradley Gilman has told the story of his life so as to reveal the greatness and true personality of a man "who has left an enduring memory of the highest idealism."

Davy Crockett

By William C. Sprague

No fictitious tale of perils and adventures could surpass the true story of Davy Crockett, pioneer. His life and adventures are closely bound up with the greatest events of American history.

New Illustrated Biographies for Young People

EACH VOLUME ILLUSTRATED, \$.50

Nathan Hale

By Jean Christie Root

There is hardly another story in the whole range of American history which contains so much of inspiration and splendid heroism as that of Nathan Hale.

"There is more than the work of a gifted biographer here. There is a message."—*New York World*.

U. S. Grant

By F.E. Lovell Coombs

There is but little fiction which can compare in interest with the true story of Ulysses S. Grant. Mr. Coombs has told it admirably.

Abraham Lincoln

By Daniel E. Wheeler

Another view of the greatest product of American democracy. The inspiring story of the great war President told with spirit in a new way.

NEW VOLUMES

Daniel Boone

By Lucile Gulliver

La Salle

By Louise S. Hasbrouck

Lafayette

By Martha F. Crow

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

Publishers 64-66 Fifth Avenue New York

Transcriber's Notes

List of Illustrations and Illustration Captions have been made consistent to each other as follows.

"Portrait of Lafayette"—Caption has been extended from "Lafayette"

"A Carriage in which Lafayette Rode"—entry in the List of Illustrations has been extended from "Lafayette's Carriage"

On page 109 "Yorktown was now familiar to Lafayette" has been corrected to "Yorktown was now familiar to Lafayette"

In the song quoted on page 141 the last line "Et qui s'abaisse, on l'évèra." has been changed to "Et qui s'abaisse, on l'élèvera."

All other spelling, punctuation, grammatical and typesetting errors have been left as they were in the original book.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK LAFAYETTE ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™

concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE
THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE
PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of

the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase "Project Gutenberg" associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain "Defects," such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™’s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation’s EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state’s laws.

The Foundation’s business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation’s website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support

and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.