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AN ENGLISHMAN IN PARIS

(*NOTES AND RECOLLECTIONS*)

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE

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AN ENGLISHMAN IN PARIS.

CHAPTER I.

Long before Baron Haussmann began his architectural transformation, many parts of Paris had undergone changes, perceptible only to those who had been brought up among the inhabitants, though distinct from them in nationality, education, habits, and tastes. Paris became to a certain extent, and not altogether voluntarily, cosmopolitan before the palatial mansions, the broad avenues, the handsome public squares which subsequently excited the admiration of the civilized world had

been dreamt of, and while its outer aspect was as yet scarcely modified. This was mainly due to the establishment of railways, which caused in the end large influxes of foreigners and provincials, who as it were drove the real Parisian from his haunts. Those visitors rarely penetrated in large numbers to the very heart of the Quartier-Latin. When they crossed the bridges that span the Seine, it was to see the Sorbonne, the Panthéon, the Observatory, the Odéon, and the Luxembourg; they rarely stayed after nightfall. The Prado, the Théâtre Bobino, the students' taverns, escaped their observation when there was really something to see; and now, when the Closerie des Lilas has become the Bal Bullier, when the small theatre has been demolished, and when the taverns are in no way distinguished from other Parisian taverns—when, in short, commonplace pervades the whole—people flock thither very often. But during the whole of the forties, and even later, the *rive gauche*, with its Quartier-Latin and adjacent Faubourg St. Germain, were almost entirely sacred from the desecrating stare of the deliberate sightseer; and, consequently, the former especially, preserved its individuality, not only materially, but mentally and morally—immorally would perhaps have been the word that would have risen to the lips of the observer who lacked the time and inclination to study the life led there deeper than it appeared merely on the surface. For though there was a good deal of roystering and practical joking, and short-lasted *liaison*, there was little of deliberate vice, of strategic libertinism—if I may be allowed to coin the expression. True, every Jack had his Jill, but, as a rule, it was Jill who had set the ball rolling.

The Quartier-Latin not only sheltered sucking lawyers and doctors, budding professors and savans and littérateurs, but artists whose names have since then become world-renowned. It was with some of these that I was most thrown in contact in that quarter, partly from inclination, because from my earliest youth I have been fonder of pictures than of books, partly because at that time I had already seen so many authors of fame, most of whom were the intimate acquaintances of a connection of mine, that I cared little to seek the society of those who had not arrived at that stage. I was very young, and, though not devoid of faith in possibilities, too mentally indolent when judgment in that respect involved the sitting down to manuscripts. It was so much easier and charming to be able to discover a budding genius by a mere glance at a good sketch, even when the latter was drawn in charcoal on a not particularly clean "whitewashed" wall.

I was scarcely more than a stripling when one morning such a sketch appeared on the walls of Paris, and considerably mystified, while it at the same time amused the inhabitants of the capital. It was not the work of what we in England would call a "seascape and mackerel artist," for no such individual stood by to ask toll of the admirers; it was not an advertisement, for in those days that mode of mural publicity was scarcely born, let alone in its infancy, in Paris. What, then, was this colossal, monumental nose, the like of which I have only seen on the faces of four human beings, one of whom was Hyacinth, the famous actor of the Palais-Royal, the other three being M. d'Argout, the Governor of the Bank of France; M. de Jussieu, the Director of the Jardin des Plantes; and Lasailly, Balzac's secretary? What was this colossal nose, with a ridiculously small head and body attached to it? The nasal organ was certainly phenomenal, even allowing for the permissible exaggeration of the caricaturist, but it could surely not be the only title of its owner to this sudden leap into fame! Was it a performing nose, or one endowed with extraordinary powers of smell? I puzzled over the question for several days, until one morning I happened to run against my old tutor, looking at the picture and laughing till the tears ran down his wrinkled cheeks. It was a positive pleasure to see him. "C'est bien lui, c'est bien lui," he exclaimed; "c'est absolument son portrait craché!" "Do you know the original?" I asked. "Mais, sans doute, je le connais, c'est un ami de mon fils, du reste, toute le monde connait Bouginier." "But I do not know him," I protested, feeling very much ashamed of my ignorance. "Ah, you! that's quite a different thing; you do not live in the Quartier-Latin, but everybody there knows him." From that moment I knew no rest until I had made the acquaintance of Bouginier, which was not very difficult; and through him I became a frequent visitor to "La Childebert," which deserves a detailed description, because, though it was a familiar haunt to many Parisians of my time with a taste for Bohemian society, I doubt whether many Englishmen, save (the late) Mr. Blanchard Jerrold and one of the Mayhews, ever set foot there, and even they could not have seen it in its prime.

But before I deal with "La Childebert," I must say a few words about Bouginier, who, contrary to my expectations, owed his fame solely to his *proboscis*. He utterly disappeared from the artistic horizon in a few years, but his features still live in the memory of those who knew him through a statuette in *terra cotta* modelled by Dantan the younger. During the reign of Louis-Philippe, Dantan took to that branch of art as a relaxation from his more serious work; he finally abandoned it after he had made Madame Malibran burst into tears, instead of making her laugh, as he intended, at her own caricature. Those curious in such matters may see Bouginier's presentment in a medallion on the frontispiece of the Passage du Caire, amidst the Egyptian divinities and sphinxes. As a matter of course, the spectator asks himself why this modern countenance should find itself in such incongruous company, and he comes almost naturally to the conclusion that Bouginier was the owner, or perhaps the architect, of this arcade, almost exclusively tenanted—until very recently—by lithographers, printers, etc. The conclusion, however, would be an erroneous one. Bouginier, as far as is known, never had any property in Paris or elsewhere; least of all was he vain enough to perpetuate his own features in that manner, even if he had had an opportunity, but he had not; seeing that he was not an architect, but simply a painter, of no great talents certainly, but, withal, modest and sensible, and as such opposed to, or at any rate not sharing, the crazes of mediævalism, romanticism, and other *isms* in which the young painters of that day indulged, and which they thought fit to emphasize in public and among one another by eccentricities of costume and language, supposed to be in harmony with the periods they had adopted for illustration. This absence of enthusiasm one way or the other aroused the ire of his fellow-lodgers at the "Childebert," and one of them, whose pencil was more deft at that kind of work than those of the others, executed their vengeance, and drew Bouginier's picture

on the "fag end" of a dead wall in the vicinity of the Church of St. Germain-des-Prés. The success was instantaneous and positively overwhelming, though truth compels one to state that this was the only flash of genius that illumined that young fellow's career. His name was Fourreau, and one looks in vain for his name in the biographical dictionaries or encyclopedias of artists. Fate has even been more cruel to him than to his model.

For the moment, however, the success, as I have already said, was overwhelming. In less than a fortnight there was not a single wall in Paris and its outskirts without a Bouginier on its surface. Though Paris was considerably less in area than it is now, it wanted a Herculean effort to accomplish this. No man, had he been endowed with as many arms as Briareus, would have sufficed for it. Nor would it have done to trust to more or less skilful copyists—they might have failed to catch the likeness, which was really an admirable one; so the following device was hit upon. Fourreau himself cut a number of stencil plates in brown paper, and, provided with them, an army of Childebertians started every night in various directions, Fourreau and a few undoubtedly clever youths heading the detachments, and filling in the blanks by hand.

Meanwhile summer had come, and with it the longing among the young Tintos to breathe the purer air of the country, to sniff the salt breezes of the ocean. As a matter of course, they were not all ready to start at the same time, but being determined to follow the same route, to assemble at a common goal, the contingent that was to leave a fortnight later than the first arranged to join the others wherever they might be.

"But how?" was the question of those who were left behind. "Very simply indeed," was the answer; "we'll go by the Barrière d'Italie. You'll have but to look at the walls along the road, and you'll find your waybill."

So said, so done. A fortnight after, the second division left head-quarters and made straight for the Barrière d'Italie. But when outside the gates they stood undecided. For one moment only. The next they caught sight of a magnificent Bouginier on a wall next to the excise office—of a Bouginier whose outstretched index pointed to the Fontainebleau road. After that, all went well. As far as Marseilles their Bouginier no more failed them than the clouds of smoke and fire failed the Israelites in the wilderness. At the seaport town they lost the track for a little while, rather through their want of faith in the ingenuity of their predecessors than through the latter's lack of such ingenuity. They had the Mediterranean in front of them, and even if they found a Bouginier depicted somewhere on the shore, his outstretched index could only point to the restless waves; he could do nothing more definite. Considerably depressed, they were going down the Cannebière, when they caught sight of the features of their guiding star on a panel between the windows of a shipping office. His outstretched index did not point this time; it was placed over a word, and that word spelt "Malta." They took ship as quickly as possible for the ancient habitation of the Knights-Templars. On the walls of the Customs in the island was Bouginier, with a scroll issuing from his nostrils, on which was inscribed the word "Alexandria." A similar indication met their gaze at the Pyramids, and at last the second contingent managed to come up with the first amidst the ruins of Thebes at the very moment when the word "Suez" was being traced as issuing from Bouginier's mouth.

Among the company was a young fellow of the name of Berthier, who became subsequently an architect of some note. The Passage du Caire, as I have already observed, was in those days the head-quarters of the lithographic-printing business in general, but there was one branch which flourished more than the rest, namely, that of *lettres de faire part,*[1] menus of restaurants and visiting-cards. The two first-named documents were, in common with most printed matter intended for circulation, subject to a stamp duty, but in the early days of the Second Empire Louis-Napoléon had it taken off. To mark their sense of the benefit conferred, the lithographic firms[2] determined to have the arcade, which stood in sad need of repair, restored, and Berthier was selected for the task. The passage was originally built to commemorate Bonaparte's victories in Egypt, and when Berthier received the commission, he could think of no more fitting façade than the reproduction of a house at Karnac. He fondly remembered his youthful excursion to the land of Pharaohs, and at the same time the image of Bouginier uprose before him. That is why the presentment of the latter may be seen up to this day on the frieze of a building in the frowsiest part of Paris.

If I have dwelt somewhat longer on Bouginier than the importance of the subject warranted, it was mainly to convey an idea of the spirit of mischief, of the love of practical joking, that animated most of the inmates of "La Childebert." As a rule their devilries were innocent enough. The pictorial persecution of Bouginier is about the gravest thing that could be laid to their charge, and the victim, like the sensible fellow he was, rather enjoyed it than otherwise. Woe, however, to the starched bourgeois who had been decoyed into their lair, or even to the remonstrating comrade with a serious turn of mind, who wished to pursue his studies in peace! His life was made a burden to him, for the very building lent itself to all sorts of nocturnal surprises and of guerilla sorties. Elsewhere, when a man's door was shut, he might reasonably count upon a certain amount of privacy; the utmost his neighbours could do was to make a noise overhead or by his side. At the "Childebert" such privacy was out of the question. There was not a door that held on its hinges, not a window that could be opened or shut at will, not a ceiling that did not threaten constantly to crush you beneath its weight, not a floor that was not in danger of giving way beneath you and landing you in the room below, not a staircase that did not shake under your very steps, however light they might be; in short, the place was a wonderful illustration of "how the rotten may hold together," even if it be not gently handled.

The origin of the structure, as it stood then, was wrapt in mystery. It was five or six stories high, and must have attained that altitude before the first Revolution, because the owner, a Madame Legendre,

who bought it for assignats amounting in real value to about one pound sterling, when the clergy's property was sold by the nation, was known never to have spent a penny upon it either at the time of the purchase or subsequently, until she was forced by a tenant more ingenious or more desperate than the rest. That it could not have been part of the abbey and adjacent monastery built by Childebert I., who was buried there in 558, was very certain. It is equally improbable that the Cardinal de Bissy, who opened a street upon the site of the erstwhile abbey in the year of Louis XIV.'s death, would have erected so high a pile for the mere accommodation of the pensioners of the former monastery, at a time when high piles were the exception. Besides, the Nos. 1 and 3, known to have been occupied by those pensioners, all of whose rooms communicated with one another, were not more than two stories high. In short, the original intention of the builder of the house No. 9, yclept "La Childebert," has never been explained. The only tenant in the Rue Childebert who might have thrown a light on the subject had died before the caravansary attained its fame. He was more than a hundred years old, and had married five times. His fifth wife was only eighteen when she became Madame Chanfort, and survived him for many, many years. She was a very worthy soul, a downright providence to the generally impecunious painters, whom she used to feed at prices which even then were ridiculously low. Three eggs, albeit fried in grease instead of butter, for the sum of three-half-pence, and a dinner, including wine, for sixpence, could not have left much profit; but Madame Chanfort always declared that she had enough to live upon, and that she supplied the art-students with food at cost price because she would not be without their company. At her death, in '57, two years before the "Childebert" and the street of the same name disappeared, there was a sale of her chattels, and over a hundred portraits and sketches of her, "in her habit as she lived," came under the hammer. To show that the various occupants of "La Childebert" could do more than make a noise and play practical jokes, I may state that not a single one of these productions fetched less than fifty francs—mere crayon studies; while there were several that sold for two hundred and three hundred francs, and two studies in oil brought respectively eight hundred francs and twelve hundred francs. Nearly every one of the young men who had signed these portraits had made a name for himself. The latter two were signed respectively Paul Delaroche and Tony Johannot.

Nevertheless, to those whose love of peace and quietude was stronger than their artistic instincts and watchful admiration of budding genius, the neighbourhood of "La Childebert" was a sore and grievous trial. At times the street itself, not a very long or wide one, was like Pandemonium let loose; it was when there was an "At Home" at "La Childebert," and such functions were frequent, especially at the beginning of the months. These gatherings, as a rule, partook of the nature of fancy dress *conversaziones*; for dancing, owing to the shakiness of the building, had become out of the question, even with such dare-devils as the tenants. What the latter prided themselves upon most was their strict adherence to the local colour of the periods they preferred to resuscitate. Unfortunately for the tranquillity of the neighbourhood, they pretended to carry out this revival in its smallest details, not only in their artistic productions, but in their daily lives. The actor who blacked himself all over to play Othello was as nothing to them in his attempted realism, because we may suppose that he got rid of his paint before returning to the everyday world. Not so the inmates of "La Childebert." They were minstrels, or corsairs, or proud and valiant knights from the moment they got up till the moment they went to bed, and many of them even scorned to stretch their weary limbs on so effeminate a contrivance as a modern mattress, but endeavoured to keep up the illusion by lying on a rush-bestrewn floor.

I am not sufficiently learned to trace these various and succeeding disguises to their literary and theatrical causes, for it was generally a new book or a new play that set the ball rolling in a certain direction; nor can I vouch for the chronological accuracy and completeness of my record in that respect, but I remember some phases of that ever-shifting masquerade. When I was a very little boy, I was struck more than once with the sight of young men parading the streets in doublets, trunk hose, their flowing locks adorned with velvet caps and birds' wings, their loins girded with short swords. And yet it was not carnival time. No one seemed to take particular notice of them; the Parisians by that time had probably got used to their vagaries. Those competent in such matters have since told me that the "get-up" was inspired by "La Gaule Poétique" of M. de Marchangy, the novels of M. d'Arlincourt, and the kindred stilted literature that characterized the beginning of the Restoration. Both these gentlemen, from their very hatred of the Greeks and Romans of the first Empire, created heroes of fiction still more ridiculous than the latter, just as Metternich, through his weariness of the word "fraternity," said that if he had a brother he would call him "cousin." A few years later, the first translation of Byron's works produced its effect; and then came Defauconpret, with his very creditable French versions of Walter Scott. The influence of Paul Delaroche and his co-champions of the cause of romanticism, the revolution of July, the dramas of Alexandre Dumas and Victor Hugo, all added their quota to the prevailing confusion in the matter of style and period, and early in the forties there were at the "Childebert" several camps, fraternizing in everything save in their dress and speech, which were the visible and audible manifestation of their individual predilection for certain periods of history. For instance, it was no uncommon thing to hear the son of a concierge, whose real or fancied vocation had made him embrace the artistic profession, swear by "the faith of his ancestors," while the impoverished scion of a noble house replied by calling him "a bloated reminiscence of a feudal and superstitious age."

At the *conversaziones* which I mentioned just now, the guests of the inmates of "La Childebert" not only managed to out-Herod Herod in diction and attire, but, to heighten illusion still further, adopted as far as possible the mode of conveyance supposed to have been employed by their prototypes. The classicists, and those still addicted to the illustration of Greek and Roman mythology, though nominally in the minority at the "Childebert" itself, were, as a rule, most successful in those attempts. The ass that had borne Silenus, the steeds that had drawn the chariot of the triumphant Roman

warrior, the she-goat that was supposed to have suckled Jupiter, were as familiar to the inhabitants of the Rue Childebert as the cats and mongrels of their own households. The obstructions caused by the former no longer aroused their ire; but when, one evening, Romulus and Remus made their appearance, accompanied by the legendary she-wolf, they went mad with terror. The panic was at its height when, with an utter disregard of mythological tradition, Hercules walked up the street, leading the Nemæan lion. Then the aid of the police was invoked; but neither the police nor the national guards, who came after them, dared to tackle the animals, though they might have done so safely, because the supposed wolf was a great dane, and the lion a mastiff, but so marvellously padded and painted as to deceive any but the most practised eye. The culprits, however, did not reveal the secret until they were at the commissary of police's office, enjoying the magnificent treat of setting the whole of the neighbourhood in an uproar on their journey thither, and of frightening that official on their arrival.

In fact, long before I knew them, the inmates of the "Childebert" had become a positive scourge to the neighbourhood, while the structure itself threatened ruin to everything around it. Madame Legendre absolutely refused to do any repairs. She did not deny that she had bought the place cheap, but she pointed out at the same time that the rents she charged were more than modest, and that eight times out of ten she did not get them. In the beginning of her ownership she had employed a male concierge, to prevent, as it were, the wholesale flitting which was sure to follow a more strenuous application for arrears upon which she ventured now and then in those days. That was towards the end of the Empire, when the disciples of David had been reduced to a minority in the place by those of Lethière, who sounded the first note of revolt against the unconditional classicism of the illustrious member of the Convention. If all the disciples of the Creole painter had not his genius, most of them had his courage and readiness to draw the sword on the smallest provocation,[3] and the various Cerberi employed by Madame Legendre to enforce her claims had to fly one after another. The rumour of the danger of the situation had spread, and at last Madame Legendre could find no man to fill it, except on monetary conditions with which she would not—perhaps could not—comply. From that day forth she employed a woman, who was safe, because she had been told to let "lawless impecuniosity" take its course, and it was recorded that pecuniarily the proprietress was the better off for this change of tactics.

I am willing to repeat that record, which, if true, did credit to the head of the landlady and the hearts of her tenants, but am compelled to supplement it by a different version. When I saw the "Childebert" in '37 or '38, no man in his senses would have paid rent for any one room in it on the two top stories; he might as well have lived in the streets. It was an absolute case of the bottomless sedan chair in which two of his fellow-porters put Pat; "but for the honour of the thing, he might have walked." Consequently the tenants there were rarely harassed for their rent; if they paid it at all, it was so much unexpected gain. It happened, however, that now and then by mistake a youngster was put there who had scruples about discharging his liabilities in that respect; and one of these was Émile Lapierre, who subsequently became a landscape-painter of note. One night, after he had taken up his quarters there, the floodgates of heaven opened over Paris. Lapierre woke up amidst a deluge. I need not say that there were no bells at the "Childebert;" nevertheless there was no fear of dying unattended, provided one could shout, for there was always a party turning night into day, or hailing the smiling morn before turning in. Lapierre's shouts found a ready echo, and in a few moments the old concierge was on the spot.

"Go and fetch a boat—go and fetch a boat!" yelled Lapierre. "I am drowning!" yelled Lapierre.

"There are none in the quarter," replied the old woman innocently, thinking he was in earnest.

"Then go and fetch Madame Legendre, to show her the pond she is letting me instead of the room for which I pay her."

"Madame would not come, not even for you, monsieur, who are the only one punctual with your rent; besides, if she did come, she would have no repairs done."

"Oh, she'll have no repairs done! We'll soon find out. I think I'll make her," screamed Lapierre; and he kept his word.

It was the only instance of Madame Legendre having had to capitulate, and I have alluded to it before; it remains for me to tell how it was done.

Lapierre, contrary to the precept, allowed the sun to go down upon his wrath, in the hope perhaps of inducing Madame Legendre to change her oft-announced decision of doing no repairs; but he rose betimes next morning, and when there was no sign of workmen, he proceeded to carry out his plan. The floors of the "Childebert" were made of brick, and he simply removed three or four squares from his, after which he went downstairs and recruited half a dozen water-carriers, and bade them empty their full pails into the opening he had made. I shall probably have some remarks to make elsewhere about the water-supply of Paris; at present it is sufficient to say that in those days there was not a single house in the capital which was not dependent upon those Auvergnats who carried the commodity round in barrels on carts drawn by hand or horse. These gentlemen, though astonished at the strange task required of them, consented. In less than ten minutes there was a string of water-carts stationed in the Rue Childebert, and in a few minutes more the lower stories were simply flooded. Aimé Millet, the sculptor, whose room was situated immediately beneath that of Lapierre, was the first victim. It was he who gave the alarm, but, as a matter of course, in the twinkling of an eye there were one or two heads at every window, and though very early, there was a stampede of

very primitively clad models (?) into the street, shouting and yelling out at the top of their voices. Outside no one seemed to know exactly what had occurred; the prevailing impression was that the place was on fire. Then Madame Legendre was sent for in hot haste. By that time the truth had become known in the house. The alarm had subsided, but not the noise. When the report of Madame Legendre's coming got wind, a deputation went to the entrance of the street to welcome her. It was provided with all sorts of instruments except musical ones, and the old dame was conducted in state to Millet's room. The cause of the mischief was soon ascertained, for the water-carriers were still at work. The police had refused to interfere; in reality, they would not have been sorry to see the building come down with a crash, for it was as great a source of annoyance to them as to the peaceful burghers they were supposed to protect. A move was made to the room above, where Lapierre—without a stitch of clothing—stood directing the operations.

"What are you doing, Monsieur Lapierre?" screeched Madame Legendre.

"I am taking a bath, madame; it is very warm. You gave me one against my will the night before last; and lest I should be accused of selfishness, I am letting my neighbours partake of the pleasure."

That is how Madame Legendre was compelled to repair the roof of "La Childebert."

Such was the company amidst which I was introduced by the son of my old tutor. Many years have passed since then, during which I have been thrown into the society of the great and powerful ones of this world, rather through the force of circumstances than owing to my own merits, but I have looked in vain for the honest friendships, the disinterested actions, the genuine enthusiasm for their art, underlying their devilry, of which these young men were capable. The bourgeois vices, in the guise of civic and domestic virtues, entered the souls of Frenchmen early in the reign of Louis-Philippe, and have been gnawing since, with ever-increasing force, like a cancer, at everything that was noble and worthy of admiration in a nation. But those vices never found their way to the hearts of the inmates of "La Childebert" while they were there, and rarely in after-life. Many attained world-wide reputations; few gathered riches, even when they were as frugal as the best among them—Eugène Delacroix.

To have known these young men was absolutely a liberal education. To the Podsnap and Philistine of no matter what nationality, it seems a sad thing to have no thought for to-morrow. And these youngsters had not even a thought for the day. Their thoughts were for the future, when the world mayhap would ring with their names; but their physical or mental hearing never strained for the ring of money. They were improvident creatures, to be sure; but how much more lovable than the young painters of the present period, whose ideal is a big balance at their bankers; who would rather have their names inscribed on the registers of the public debt than in the golden book of art; whose dreamt-of Eden is a bijou villa in the Parc Monceaux or in the Avenue Villiers; whose providence is the *richard*, the parvenu, the wealthy upstart, whose features they perpetuate, regardless of the perpetuation of their own budding fame!

When I began to jot down these notes, I made up my mind to eschew comparisons and moralizing; I find I have unconsciously done both, but will endeavour not to offend again. Still, I cannot help observing how the mere "moneyed nobody" rushes nowadays to the eminent painter to have his lineaments reproduced, when a guinea photograph would serve his purpose just as well for "family use;" for I take it that no one, besides his relations and friends, cares or will care to gaze upon his features. And yet our annual picture exhibitions are crowded with the portraits of these nonentities. They advertise themselves through the painters that transfer them to canvas, and the latter are content to pocket heavy fees, like the advertising agents they are. I am certain that neither Holbein, Rubens, Van Dyck, Hals, nor Rembrandt would have lent themselves to such transactions. When they, or a Reynolds, a Lawrence, a Gainsborough, conferred the honour of their brush upon some one, it was because he or she was already distinguished from his or her fellow-creatures by beauty, social position, talents, genius, or birth; not because he or she wanted to be, or, in default of such distinction, wanted to attract the public notice at all costs. That, I fancy, was the way in which painters of other days looked upon the thing. I know it was the way in which the young fellows at the "Childebert" did; and woe to their comrade who ventured to apply in art the principle of international maritime law, that "le pavillon couvre la marchandise" (the flag covers the cargo)! He was scouted and jeered at, and, moreover, rarely allowed to reap the pecuniary benefit of his artistic abasement. Hence the "patron for a portrait" seldom found his way to "La Childebert." When he did, the whole of the place conspired to make his life and that of his would-be *protégé* a misery.

To enumerate all the devices resorted to to make the sittings abortive, to "distort the features that had donned the bland smile of placid contentment" with the paralyzing fear of some impending catastrophe, would be impossible; the mention of a few must suffice. That most frequently employed, and comparatively easy of execution, was the setting alight of damp straw; the dense smoke penetrated every nook and cranny of the crazy building, and the sitter, mad with fright, rushed away. The chances were a hundred to one against his ever returning. Another was the intrusion of a male model offering his services as a Saint-Jérôme, or a female one offering hers as Godiva; for, curious to relate, the devotion of the wife of Leofric of Murcia was a favourite subject with the Childebertians. As a matter of course, the applicants were in the costume, or rather lack of costume, appropriate to the character. The strait-laced bourgeois or bourgeoise was shocked, and did not repeat the visit. The cry that there was a mad dog in the house was a common one on those occasions; and at last the would-be portrait-painters had to give in, and a big placard appeared on the frontispiece: "Le commerce des portraits a été cédé aux directeur et membres de l'École des Beaux-Arts."

The most curious thing in connection with the "Childebert" was that, though the place was

inexpressibly ill kept, it escaped the most terrible visitations of the cholera. I prefer not to enter into details of the absolute disregard of all sanitary conditions, but in warm weather the building became positively uninhabitable. Long before the unsavoury spectacle of "learned fleas" became a feature of the suburban fairs, Émile Signol, who is best known as a painter of religious subjects, had trained a company of performers of a different kind of nocturnal pests. He averred in his opening lecture that their ingenuity was too great to remain unknown, and cited anecdotes fully proving his words. Certain is it that they were the only enemies before which the combined forces of the Childebertians proved powerless. But even under such trying circumstances the latter never lost their buoyant spirits, and their retreats *en masse* were effected in a manner the reports of which set the whole of Paris in a roar. One Sunday morning, the faithful worshippers, going to matins at the Church of St. Germain-des-Prés, found the square occupied by a troop of Bedouins, wrapt in their burnouses, and sleeping the sleep of the just. Some had squatted in corners, calmly smoking their *chibouks*. This was in the days of the Algerian campaign, and the rumour spread like wildfire that a party of Arab prisoners of war were bivouacked round the church, where a special service would be given in the afternoon as the first step to their conversion to Christianity. It being Sunday, the whole of Paris rushed to the spot. The Bedouins had, however, disappeared, but a collection was made in their behalf by several demure-looking young men. The Parisians gave liberally. That night, and two or three nights after, the nocturnal pests' occupation was gone, for the "Childebert" was lighted *a giorno* from basement to roof, and the Childebertians held high festival. The inhabitants of the streets adjacent to the Rue Childebert spent as many sleepless nights, though their houses were perfectly wholesome and clean.

I had the honour to be a frequent guest at those gatherings, but I feel that a detailed description of them is beyond my powers. I have already said that the craziness of the structure would have rendered extremely dangerous any combined display of choregraphic art, as practised by the Childebertians and their friends, male and female, at the neighbouring Grande-Chaumière; it did, however, not prevent a lady or gentleman of the company from performing a *pas seul* now and then. This, it must be remembered, was the pre-Rigolbochian period, before Chicard with his *chahut* had been ousted from his exalted position by the more elegant and graceful evolutions of the originator of the modern cancan, the famous Bridid; when the Faubourg du Temple, the Bal du Grand Saint-Martin, and "the descent of the Courtille" were patronized by the Paris *jeunesse dorée*, and in their halcyon days, when the *habitués* of the establishment of Le Père Lahire considered it their greatest glory to imitate as closely as possible the bacchanalian gyrations of the choregraphic autocrat on the other side of the Seine. No mere description could do justice to these gyrations; only a draughtsman of the highest skill could convey an adequate idea of them. But, as a rule, the soirées at the "Childebert" were not conspicuous for such displays; their programme was a more ambitious one from an intellectual point of view, albeit that the programme was rarely, if ever, carried out. This failure of the prearranged proceedings mainly arose from the disinclination or inability of the fairer portion of the company to play the passive part of listeners and spectators during the recital of an unpublished poem of perhaps a thousand lines or so, though the reciter was no less a personage than the author. In vain did the less frivolous and male part of the audience claim "silence for the minstrel;" the interrupters could conceive no minstrel without a guitar or some kindred instrument, least of all a minstrel who merely spoke his words, and the feast of reason and flow of soul came generally to an abrupt end by the rising of a damsel more outspoken still than her companions, who proposed an adjournment to one of the adjacent taverns, or to the not far distant "Grande-Chaumière," "si on continue à nous assommer avec des vers." The threat invariably produced its effect. The "minstrel" was politely requested to "shut up," and Béranger, Desaugiers, or even M. Scribe, took the place of the Victor Hugo in embryo until the small hours of the morning; the departure of the guests being witnessed by the night-capped inhabitants of the Rue Childebert from their windows, amidst the comforting reflections that for another three weeks or so there would be peace in the festive halls of that "accursed building."

My frequent visits to "La Childebert" had developed a taste for the Bohemian attractions of the Quartier-Latin. I was not twenty, and though I caught frequent glimpses at home of some of the eminent men with whom a few years later I lived on terms of friendship, I could not aspire to their society then. It is doubtful whether I would have done so if I could. I preferred the Théâtre Bobino to the Opéra and the Comédie-Française; the Grande-Chaumière—or the Chaumière, as it was simply called—to the most brilliantly lighted and decorated ball-room; a stroll with a couple of young students in the gardens of the Luxembourg to a carriage-drive in the Bois de Boulogne; a dinner for three francs at Magny's, in the Rue Contrescarpe-Dauphine, or even one for twenty-two sous at Viot's or Bléry's, to the most sumptuous repast at the Café Riche or the Café de Paris. I preferred the buttered rolls and the bowl of milk at the Boulangerie Crétaine, in the Rue Dauphine, to the best suppers at the Café Anglais, whither I had been taken once or twice during the Carnival—in short, I was very young and very foolish; since then I have often wished that, at the risk of remaining very foolish for evermore, I could have prolonged my youth for another score of years.

For once in a way I have no need to be ashamed of my want of memory. I could not give an account of a single piece I saw during those two or three years at Bobino, but I am certain that not one of the companions of my youth could. It is not because the lapse of time has dimmed the recollection of the plots, but because there were no plots, or at any rate none that we could understand, and I doubt very much whether the actors and actresses were more enlightened in that respect than the audience. The pieces were vaudevilles, most of them, and it was sufficient for us to join in the choruses of the songs, with which they were plentifully interlarded. As for the dialogue, it might have been sparkling with wit and epigram; it was nearly always drowned by interpolations from one side of the house or the other. When the tumult became too great, the curtain was simply lowered, to be almost immediately raised, "discovering" the manager—in his dressing-gown. He seemed prouder of that piece of attire than the

more modern one would be of the most faultless evening dress. He never appealed to us by invoking the laws of politeness; he never threatened to have the house cleared. He simply pointed out to us that the police would inevitably close the place at the request of the inhabitants of the Rue de Madame if the noise rose above a certain pitch, and disturbed their peaceful evening hours, spent in the bosom of their families; which remark was always followed by the audience intoning as one man Gretry's "Où peut-on être mieux qu'au sein de sa famille?" the orchestra—such an orchestra!—playing the accompaniment, and the manager himself beating time. Then he went on. "Yes, messieurs et mesdames, we are here en famille also, as much en famille as at the Grande-Chaumière; and has not M. Lahire obtained from the Government the permission de faire sa police tout seul! After all, he is providing exercise for your muscles; I am providing food for your brain."

The speech was a stereotyped one—we all knew it by heart; it invariably produced its effect in keeping us comparatively quiet for the rest of the evening, unless a bourgeois happened to come in. Then the uproar became uncontrollable; no managerial speech could quell it until the intruder had left the theatre.

By a bourgeois was meant a man who wore broadcloth and a top hat, but especially the latter. In fact, that headgear was rarely seen within the inner precincts of the Quartier-Latin, even during the daytime, except on the head of a professor, or on Thursdays when the collegians—the term "lycéen" was not invented—were taken for their weekly outing. The semi-military dress of the present time had not been thought of then. The collegian wore a top hat, like our Eton boys, a white necktie, a kind of black quaker coat with a stand-up collar, a very dark blue waistcoat and trousers, low shoes, and blue woollen stockings. In the summer, some of them, especially those of the Collége Rollin, had a waistcoat and trousers of a lighter texture, and drab instead of blue. They were virtually prisoners within the walls of the college all the week, for in their Thursday promenades they were little more than prisoners taking exercise under the supervision of their gaolers. They were allowed to leave on alternate Sundays, provided they had parents, relations, or friends in Paris, who could come themselves or send their servants to fetch them in the morning and take them back at night. The rule applied to all, whether they were nine or double that number of years; it prevails even now. I only set foot in a French college of those days twice to see a young friend of mine, and I thanked my stars that four or five years of that existence had been spared to me. The food and the table appointments, the bedrooms—they were more like cells with their barred windows—would have been declined by the meanest English servant, certainly by the meanest French one. I have never met with a Frenchman who looks back with fond remembrance on his school-days.

The evening was generally wound up with a supper at Dagneaux's, Pinson's, or at the rôtisseuse—that is, if the evening happened to fall within the first ten days of the month; afterwards the entertainment nearly always consisted of a meat-pie, bought at one of the charcutiers', and washed down with the bottles of wine purchased at the Hôtel de l'Empereur Joseph II., at the south-eastern angle of the Rue de Tournon, where it stands still. The legend ran that the brother of Marie Antoinette had stayed there while on a visit to Paris, but it is scarcely likely that he would have done so while his sister was within a step of the throne of France; nevertheless the Count von Falkenstein—which was the name he adopted when travelling incognito—was somewhat of a philosopher. Did not he once pay a visit to Jean-Jacques Rousseau without having apprised him of his call? Jean-Jacques was copying music as the door opened to let in the visitor, and felt flattered enough, we may be sure; not so Buffon, whom Joseph surprised under similar circumstances, and who could never forgive himself for having been caught in his dressing-gown—he who never sat down to work except in lace ruffles and frill.

If I have been unwittingly betrayed into a semi-historical disquisition, it is because almost every step in that quarter gave rise to one, even amongst those light-hearted companions of mine, to the great astonishment of the fairer portion of the company. They only took an interest in the biography of one of the inhabitants of the street, whether past or present, and that was in the biography of Mdlle. Lenormand, a well-known fortune-teller, who lived at No. 5. They had heard that the old woman, who had been the mistress of Hébert of "Père Duchesne" fame, had, during the First Revolution, predicted to Joséphine de Beauharnais that she should be empress, as some gipsy at Grenada predicted a similar elevation to Eugénie de Montijo many years afterwards. Mdlle. Lenormand had been imprisoned after Hébert's death, but the moment Napoléon became first consul she was liberated, and frequently sent for to the Luxembourg, which is but a stone's throw from the Rue de Tournon. As a matter of course her fame spread, and she made a great deal of money during the first empire. Ignorant as they were of history, the sprightly grisettes of our days had heard of that; their great ambition was to get the five francs that would open the door of Mdlle. Lenormand's to them. Mdlle. Lenormand died about the year '43. Jules Janin, who lived in the same street, in the house formerly inhabited by Théroigne de Méricourt, went to the fortune-teller's funeral. The five francs so often claimed by the *étudiante*, so rarely forthcoming from the pockets of her admirer, was an important sum in those days among the youth of the Quartier-Latin. There were few whose allowance exceeded two hundred francs per month. A great many had to do with less. Those who were in receipt of five hundred francs—perhaps not two score among the whole number—were scarcely considered as belonging to the fraternity. They were called "ultrapontins," to distinguish them from those who from one year's end to another never crossed the river, except perhaps to go to one of the theatres, because there was not much to be seen at the Odéon during the thirties. With Harel's migration to the Porte St. Martin, the glory of the second Théâtre-Français had departed, and it was not until '41 that Lireux managed to revive some of its ancient fame. By that time I had ceased to go to the Quartier-Latin, but Lireux was a familiar figure at the Café Riche and at the divan of the Rue Le Peletier; he dined now and then at the Café de Paris. So we made it a point to attend every one of his first nights, notwithstanding the warnings in verse

and in prose of every wit of Paris, Théophile Gautier included, who had written:

"On a fait là dessus mille plaisanteries,
Je le sais; il poussait de l'herbe aux galeries;
Trente-six variétés de champignons malsains
Dans les loges tigraient la mousse des coussins."

It was impossible to say anything very spiteful of a theatre which had remained almost empty during a gratuitous performance on the king's birthday; consequently while I frequented the Quartier-Latin the students gave it a wide berth. When they were not disporting themselves at Bobino, they were at the Chaumière, and not in the evening only. Notwithstanding the enthusiastic and glowing descriptions of it that have appeared in later days, the place was simple enough. There was a primitive shooting-gallery, a skittle-alley, and so forth, and it was open all day. The students, after having attended the lectures and taken a stroll in the gardens of the Luxembourg, repaired to the Chaumière, where, in fine weather, they were sure to find their "lady-loves" sitting at work demurely under the trees. The refreshments were cheap, and one spent one's time until the dinner hour, chatting, singing, or strolling about. The students were very clannish, and invariably remained in their own sets at the Chaumière. There were tables exclusively occupied by Bourguignons, Angevins, etc. In fact, life was altogether much simpler and more individual than it became later on.

One of our great treats was an excursion to the establishment of Le Père Bonvin, where the student of to-day would not condescend to sit down, albeit that the food he gets in more showy places is not half as good and three times as dear. Le Père Bonvin was popularly supposed to be in the country, though it was not more than a mile from the Barrière Montparnasse. The "country" was represented by one or two large but straggling plots of erstwhile grazing-lands, but at that time dotted with chalk-pits, tumble-down wooden shanties, etc. Such trees as the tract of "country" could boast were on the demesne of Père Bonvin, but they evidently felt out of their element, and looked the reverse of flourishing. The house of Père Bonvin was scarcely distinguished in colour and ricketiness from the neighbouring constructions, but it was built of stone, and had two stories. The fare was homely and genuine, the latter quality being no small recommendation to an establishment where the prolific "bunny" was the usual *plat de résistance*. For sophistication, where the rabbit was concerned, was part of the suburban traiteur's creed from time immemorial, and the fact of the former's head being visible in the dish was no guarantee as to that and the body by its side having formed one whole in the flesh. The ubiquitous collector of rags and bottles and rabbits' skins was always anxiously inquiring for the heads also, and the natural conclusion was that, thanks to the latter, stewed grimalkin passed muster as gibelotte. At Père Bonvin's no such suspicion could be entertained for one moment; the visitor was admitted to inspect his dinner while alive. Père Bonvin was essentially an honest man, and a character in his way. During the daytime he exercised the functions of garde-champêtre; at night he became the restaurateur.

In those days both his sons, François and Léon, were still at home, but the former had apparently already made up his mind not to follow in his sire's footsteps. He was a compositor by trade, but the walls of the various rooms showed plainly enough that he did not aim at the fame of an Aldine or an Elzevir, but at that of a Jan Steen or a Gerard Dow. He has fully maintained the promise given then. His pictures rank high in the modern French school; there are few of his contemporaries who have so thoroughly caught the spirit of the Dutch masters. Léon was a mere lad, but a good many among the *habitués* of Père Bonvin predicted a more glorious career for him than for his brother. The word "heaven-born musician" has been often misapplied; in Léon's instance it was fully justified. The predictions, however, were not realized. Whether from lack of confidence in his own powers, or deterred by the never-ceasing remonstrances of his father, Léon, unlike François, did not strike out for himself, but continued to assist in the business, only turning to his harmonium in his spare time, or towards the end of the evening, when all distinction between guests and hosts ceased to exist, and the whole made a very happy family. He married early. I lost sight of him altogether, until about '64 I heard of his tragic end. He had committed suicide.

CHAPTER II.

My introduction to the celebrities of the day — The Café de Paris — The old Prince Demidoff — The old man's mania — His sons — The furniture and attendance at the Café de Paris — Its high prices — A mot of Alfred de Musset — The cuisine — A rebuke of the proprietor to Balzac — A version by one of his predecessors of the cause of Vatel's suicide — Some of the *habitués* — Their intercourse with the attendants — Their courteous behaviour towards one another — Le veau à la casserole — What Alfred de Musset, Balzac, and Alexandre Dumas thought of it — A silhouette of Alfred de Musset — His brother Paul on his election as a member of the Académie — A silhouette of Balzac, between sunset and sunrise — A curious action against the publishers of an almanack — A full-length portrait of Balzac — His pecuniary embarrassments — His visions of wealth and speculations — His constant neglect of his duties as a National Guard — His troubles in consequence thereof — L'Hôtel des Haricots — Some of his fellow-prisoners — Adam, the composer of "Le Postillon de Lonjumeau" — Eugène Sue; his portrait — His dandyism — The origin of the Paris Jockey Club — Eugène Sue becomes a member — The success of "Les Mystères de Paris" — The origin of "Le Juif-

Errant" — Sue makes himself objectionable to the members of the Jockey Club — His name struck off the list — His decline and disappearance.

If these notes are ever published, the reader will gather from the foregoing that, unlike many Englishmen brought up in Paris, I was allowed from a very early age to mix with all sorts and conditions of men. As I intend to say as little as possible about myself, there is no necessity to reveal the reason of this early emancipation from all restraint, which resulted in my being on familiar terms with a great many celebrities before I had reached my twenty-first year. I had no claim on their goodwill beyond my admiration of their talents and the fact of being decently connected. The constant companion of my youth was hand and glove with some of the highest in the land, and, if the truth must be told, with a good many of the lowest; but the man who was seated at the table of Lord Palmerston at the Café de Paris at 8 p.m., could afford *de s'encanailler* at 2 a.m. next morning without jeopardizing his social status.

The Café de Paris in those days was probably not only the best restaurant in Paris, but the best in Europe. Compared to the "Frères Provençaux" Véfour and Véry, the Café de Paris was young; it was only opened on July 15, 1822, in the vast suite of apartments at the corner of the Rue Taitbout and Boulevard de Italiens, formerly occupied by Prince Demidoff, whose grandson was a prominent figure in the society of the Second Empire, and whom I knew personally. The grandfather died before I was born, or, at any rate, when I was very young; but his descendant often told me about him and his two sons, Paul and Anatole, both of whom, in addition to his vast wealth, inherited a good many of his eccentricities. The old man, like many Russian grand seigneurs, was never so happy as when he could turn his back upon his own country. He inhabited Paris and Florence in turns. In the latter place he kept in his pay a company of French actors, who were lodged in a magnificent mansion near to his own, and who enacted comedies, vaudevilles, and comic operas. The London playgoer may remember a piece in which the celebrated Ravel made a great sensation; it was entitled "Les Folies Dramatiques," and was founded upon the mania of the old man. For he was old before his time and racked with gout, scarcely able to set his feet to the ground. He had to be wheeled in a chair to his entertainments and theatre, and often fell into a dead faint in the middle of the performance or during the dinner. "It made no difference to his guests," said his grandson; "they wheeled him out as they had wheeled him in, and the play or repast went on as if nothing had happened." In fact, it would seem that the prince would have been very angry if they had acted otherwise, for his motto was that, next to enjoying himself, there was nothing so comfortable as to see others do so. Faithful to this principle, he always kept some one near, whose mission it was to enjoy himself at his expense. He was under no obligation whatsoever, except to give an account of his amusements, most frequently in the dead of the night, when he got home, because the old prince suffered from insomnia; he would have given the whole of his vast possessions for six hours' unbroken slumber.

I have an idea that the three generations of these Demidoffs were as mad as March hares, though I am bound to say, at the same time, that the form this madness took hurt no one. Personally, I only knew Prince Anatole, the second son of the old man, and Paul, the latter's nephew. Paul's father, of the same name, died almost immediately after his son's birth. He had a mania for travelling, and rarely stayed in the same spot for forty-eight hours. He was always accompanied by a numerous suite and preceded by a couple of couriers, who, nine times out of ten, had orders to engage every room in the hotel for him. Being very rich and as lavish as he was wealthy, few hotel proprietors scrupled to turn out the whole of their guests at his steward's bidding and at a moment's notice. Of course, people refused to put up with such cavalier treatment; but as remonstrance was of no avail, they often brought actions for damages, which they invariably gained, and were promptly settled by Boniface, who merely added them to Prince Paul's bill. The most comical part of the business, however, was that the prince as often as not changed his mind on arriving at the hotel, and without as much as alighting, continued his journey. The bill was never disputed. Another of his manias was that his wife should wash her hands each time she touched a metal object. For a while Princess Demidoff humoured her husband, but she found this so terribly irksome that she at last decided to wear gloves, and continued to do so long after her widowhood.

It must be obvious to the reader that this digression has little or no *raison d'être*, even in notes that do not profess to tell a succinct story; but my purpose was to a certain extent to vindicate the character of one of the most charming women of her time, who had the misfortune to marry what was undoubtedly the most eccentric member of the family. I am referring to Princess Anatole Demidoff, *née* Bonaparte, the daughter of Jérôme, and the sister of Plon-Plon.

To return to the Café de Paris and its *habitués*. First of all, the place itself was unlike any other restaurant of that day, even unlike its neighbour and rival, the Café Hardi, at the corner of the Rue Laffitte, on the site of the present Maison d'Or. There was no undue display of white and gold; and "the epicure was not constantly reminded that, when in the act of eating, he was not much superior to the rest of humanity," as Lord Palmerston put it when commenting upon the welcome absence of mirrors. The rooms might have been transformed at a moment's notice into private apartments for a very fastidious, refined family; for, in addition to the tasteful and costly furniture, it was the only establishment of its kind in Paris that was carpeted throughout, instead of having merely sanded or even polished floors, as was the case even in some of the best Paris restaurants as late as five and six years ago (I mean in the seventies)—Bignon, the Café Foy, and the Lion d'Or, in the Rue du Helder, excepted. The attendance was in every respect in thorough keeping with the grand air of the place, and, albeit that neither of the three or four succeeding proprietors made a fortune, or anything approaching it, was never relaxed.

On looking over these notes, I am afraid that the last paragraph will be intelligible only to a small section of my readers, consequently I venture to explain. Improved communication has brought to Paris during the third quarter of the century a great many Englishmen who, not being very familiar either with French or with French customs in their better aspect, have come to look upon the stir and bustle of the ordinary Paris restaurant, upon the somewhat free-and-easy behaviour of the waiters, upon their eccentricities of diction, upon their often successful attempts at "swelling" the total of the dinner-bill as so much matter of course. The abbreviated nomenclature the waiter employs in recapitulating the bill of fare to the patron is regarded by him as merely a skilful handling of the tongue by the native; the chances are ten to one in favour of the patron trying to imitate the same in his orders to the attendant, and deriving a certain pride from being successful. The stir and bustle is attributed to the more lively temperament of our neighbours, the free-and-easy behaviour as a wish on the waiter's part to smooth the linguistically thorny path of the benighted foreigner, the attempt to multiply items as an irrepressible manifestation of French greed.

Wherever these things occur, nowadays, the patron may be certain that he is "in the wrong shop;" but in the days of which I treat, the wrong shop was legion, especially as far as the foreigner was concerned; the Café de Paris and the Café Hardi were the notable exceptions. Truly, as Alfred de Musset said of the former, "you could not open its door for less than fifteen francs;" in other words, the prices charged were very high; but they were the same for the representatives of the nations that conquered as for those who were vanquished at Waterloo. It would be more correct to say that the *personnel* of the Café, from the proprietor and manager downward, were utterly oblivious of such distinctions of nationality. Every one who honoured the establishment was considered by them a grand seigneur, for whom nothing could be too good. I remember one day in '45 or '46—for M. Martin Guépet was at the head of affairs then—Balzac announcing the advent of a Russian friend, and asking Guépet to put his best foot forward. "Assuredly, monsieur, we will do so," was the answer, "because it is simply what we are in the habit of doing every day." The retort was sharp, but absolutely justified by facts. One was never told at the Café de Paris that this or that dish "could not be recommended," that "the fish could not be guaranteed." When the quality of the latter was doubtful, it did not make its appearance on the bill of fare. *À propos* of fish, there was a story current in the Café de Paris which may or may not have been the invention of one of the many clever literary men who foregathered there. It was to the effect that one of Guépet's predecessors—Angilbert the younger, I believe—had cast a doubt upon the historical accuracy of the facts connected with the tragic death of Vatel, the renowned chef of the Prince de Condé. According to Angilbert, Vatel did not throw himself upon his sword because the fish for Louis XIV.'s dinner had not arrived, but because it had arrived, been cooked, and was found "not to be so fresh as it might be." The elimination of those dishes would have disturbed the whole of the economy of the *menu*, and rather than suffer such disgrace Vatel made an end of himself. "For you see, monsieur," Angilbert is supposed to have said, "one can very well arrange a perfect dinner without fish, as long as one knows beforehand; but one cannot modify a *service* that has been thought out with it, when it fails at a moment's notice. As every one of my chefs is a treasure, who would not scruple to imitate the sacrifice of his famous prototype; and as I do not wish to expose him to such a heroic but inconvenient death, we take the certain for the uncertain, consequently doubtful fish means no fish."

Truth or fiction, the story accurately conveys the pride of the proprietors in the unsullied gastronomic traditions of the establishment, and there is no doubt that they were ably seconded in that respect by every one around them, even to the *clientèle* itself. Not a single one of the latter would have called the waiters by their names, nor would these have ventured to rehearse the names of the dishes in a kind of slang or mutilated French, which is becoming more frequent day by day, and which is at best but fit as a means of communication between waiters and scullions. Least of all, would they have numbered the clients, as is done at present. A gentleman sitting at table No. 5 was "the gentleman at table No. 5," not merely "number five." There was little need for the bellowing and shouting from one end of the room to the other, because the head waiter himself had an eye everywhere. The word "addition," which people think it good taste in the seventies and eighties to employ when asking for their bills, was never heard. People did not profess to know the nature of the arithmetical operation by which the total of their liabilities was arrived at; they left that to the cashier and the rest of the underlings.

No coal or gas was used in the Café de Paris: lamps and wood fires upstairs; charcoal, and only that of a peculiar kind, in the kitchens, which might have been a hundred miles distant, for all we knew, for neither the rattling of dishes nor the smell of preparation betrayed their vicinity. A charming, subdued hum of voices attested the presence of two or three score of human beings attending to the inner man; the idiotic giggle, the affected little shrieks of the shopgirl or housemaid promoted to be the companion of the quasi-man of the world was never heard there. The *cabinet particulier* was not made a feature of the Café de Paris, and suppers were out of the question. Now and then the frank laughter of the younger members of a family party, and that was all. As a rule, however, there were few strangers at the Café de Paris, or what are called chance customers, as distinct from periodical ones. But there were half a score of tables absolutely sacred from the invasion of no matter whom, such as those of the Marquis du Hallays, Lord Seymour, the Marquis de St. Cricq, M. Romieu, Prince Rostopchine, Prince Soltikoff, Dr. Véron, etc., etc. Lord Palmerston, when in Paris, scarcely ever dined anywhere else than at the Café de Paris—of course I mean when dining at a public establishment.

Almost every evening there was an interchange of dishes or of wines between those tables; for instance, Dr. Véron, of whom I will have a good deal to say in these notes, and who was very fond of Musigny vintage, rarely missed offering some to the Marquis du Hallays, who, in his turn, sent him of the finest dishes from his table. For all these men not only professed to eat well, but never to suffer

from indigestion. Their gastronomy was really an art, but an art aided by science which was applied to the simplest dish. One of these was *veau à la casserole*, which figured at least three times a week on the bill of fare, and the like of which I have never tasted elsewhere. Its recuperative qualities were vouched for by such men as Alfred de Musset, Balzac, and Alexandre Dumas. The former partook of it whenever it was on the bill; the others often came, after a spell of hard work, to recruit their mental and bodily strength with it, and maintained that nothing set them up so effectually.

These three men were particularly interesting to me, and their names will frequently recur in these notes. I was very young, and, though perhaps not so enthusiastic about literature as I was about painting and sculpture, it would indeed have been surprising if I had remained indifferent to the fascination experienced by almost every one in their society: for let me state at once that the great poet, the great playwright, and the great novelist were even something more than men of genius; they were men of the world, and gentlemen who thought it worth their while to be agreeable companions. Unlike Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Chateaubriand, and Eugène Sue, all of whom I knew about the same time, they did not deem it necessary to stand mentally aloof from ordinary mortals. Alfred de Musset and Alexandre Dumas were both very handsome, but each in a different way. With his tall, slim figure, auburn wavy hair and beard, blue eyes, and finely-shaped mouth and nose, De Musset gave one the impression of a dandy cavalry officer in mufti, rather than of a poet: the "Miss Byron" which Préault the sculptor applied to him was, perhaps, not altogether undeserved, if judged intellectually and physically at first sight. There was a feminine grace about all his movements. The "Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle," his play, "Frédéric and Bernerette," were apt to stir the heart of women rather than that of men; but was it not perhaps because the majority of the strong sex cannot be stirred except with a pole? And the poet who was so sensitive to everything rough as to leave invariably the coppers given to him in exchange, was unlikely to take voluntarily to such an unwieldy and clumsy instrument to produce his effects.[4]

Throughout these notes, I intend to abstain carefully from literary judgments. I am not competent to enter into them; but, if I were, I should still be reluctant to do so in the case of Alfred de Musset, who, to my knowledge, never questioned the talent of any one. De Musset improved upon better acquaintance. He was apt to strike one at first as distant and supercilious. He was neither the one nor the other, simply very reserved, and at the best of times very sad, not to say melancholy. It was not affectation, as has been said so often; it was his nature. The charge of superciliousness arose from his distressing short-sightedness, which compelled him to stare very hard at people without the least intention of being offensive.

I have said that Balzac often came, after a spell of hard work, to recruit his forces with the *veau à la casserole* of the Café de Paris; I should have added that this was generally in the autumn and winter, for, at the end of the spring and during the summer, the dinner hour, seven, found Balzac still a prisoner at home. Few of his acquaintances and friends ever caught sight of him, they were often in total ignorance of his whereabouts, and such news as reached them generally came through Joseph Méry, the poet and novelist, the only one who came across him during those periods of eclipse. Méry was an inveterate gambler, and spent night after night at the card-table. He rarely left it before daybreak. His way lay past the Café de Paris, and for four consecutive mornings he had met Balzac strolling leisurely up and down, dressed in a pantalon à pieds (trousers not terminating below the ankle, but with feet in them like stockings), and frock coat with velvet facings. The second morning, Méry felt surprised at the coincidence; the third, he was puzzled; the fourth, he could hold out no longer, and asked Balzac the reason of these nocturnal perambulations round about the same spot. Balzac put his hand in his pocket and produced an almanack, showing that the sun did not rise before 3.40. "I am being tracked by the officers of the Tribunal de Commerce, and obliged to hide myself during the day; but at this hour I am free, and can take a walk, for as long as the sun is not up they cannot arrest me."

I remember having read that Ouvrard, the great army contractor, had done the same for many years; nevertheless, he was arrested one day,—the authorities proved that the almanack was wrong, that the sun rose ten minutes earlier than was stated therein. He brought an action against the compiler and publishers. They had to pay him damages.

Though literary remuneration was not in those days what it became later on, it was sufficiently large to make it difficult to explain the chronic impecuniosity of Balzac, though not that of Dumas. They were not gamblers, and had not the terrible fits of idleness or drinking which left De Musset stranded every now and again. Lamartine suffered from the same complaint, I mean impecuniosity. There is proof of Balzac's industry and frugality in two extracts from his letters to his mother, dated Angoulême, July, 1832, when he himself was thirty-two years old, and had already written half a dozen masterpieces. "Several bills are due, and, if I cannot find the money for them, I will have them protested and let the law take its course. It will give me breathing time, and I can settle costs and all afterwards."

Meanwhile he works eight hours a day at "Louis Lambert," one of the best things among his numberless best things. His mother sends him a hundred francs, and, perhaps with the same pen with which he wrote those two marvellous chapters that stand out like a couple of priceless rubies from among the mass of other jewels, he thanks her and accounts for them. "For the copying of the maps, 20 frs.; for my passport, 10 frs. I owed 15 frs. for discount on one of my bills, and 15 frs. on my fare. 15 frs. for flowers as a birthday present. Lost at cards, 10 frs. Postage and servant's tips, 15 frs. Total, 100 frs."

But these ten francs have not been lost at one fell swoop; they represent his bad luck at the *gaming*

table during the whole month of his stay at Angoulême, at the house of his friend and sister's schoolfellow, Madame Zulma Carraud,—hence, something like seven sous (3-1/2*d.*) per day: for which extravagance he makes up, on his return to Paris, by plunging into work harder than ever. He goes to roost at 7 p.m., "like the fowls;" and he is called at 1 a.m., when he writes until 8 a.m. He takes another hour and a half of sleep, and, after partaking of a light meal, "gets into his collar" until four in the afternoon. After that, he receives a few friends, takes a bath, or goes out, and immediately he has swallowed his dinner he "turns in," as stated above. "I shall be compelled to lead this nigger's life for a few months without stopping, in order not to be swamped by those terrible bills that are due."

These extracts are not personal recollections. I have inserted them to make good my statement that Balzac was neither a gambler, a drunkard, nor an idler.

"How does he spend his money?" I asked Méry, when he had told us of his fourth meeting with Balzac on that very morning.

"In sops to his imagination, in balloons to the land of dreams, which balloons he constructs with his hard-won earnings and inflates with the essence of his visions, but which nevertheless will not rise three feet from the earth," he answered. Then he went on explaining: "Balzac is firmly convinced that every one of his characters has had, or has still, its counterpart in real life, notably the characters that have risen from humble beginnings to great wealth; and he thinks that, having worked out the secret of their success on paper, he can put it in practice. He embarks on the most harum-scarum speculations without the slightest practical knowledge; as, for instance, when he drew the plans for his country-house at the Jardies (Ville d'Avray), and insisted upon the builder carrying them out in every respect while he was away. When the place was finished there was not a single staircase. Of course, they had to put them outside, and he maintained that it was part of his original plan; but he had never given a thought to the means of ascent. But here is Monsieur Louis Lurine. If you would like an idea of Balzac's impracticability, let him tell you what occurred between Balzac and Kugelmann a few months ago."

Kugelmann was at that time publishing a very beautifully illustrated work, entitled "Les Rues de Paris," which Louis Lurine was editing. We were standing outside the Café Riche, and I knew Lurine by sight. Méry introduced me to him. After a few preliminary remarks, Lurine told us the following story. Of course, many years have elapsed since, but I think I can trust to my memory in this instance.

"I had suggested," said Lurine, "that Balzac should do the Rue de Richelieu, and we sent for him. I did not want more than half a sheet, so imagine my surprise when Balzac named his conditions, viz., five thousand francs, something over six hundred francs a page of about six hundred words. Kugelmann began to yell; I simply smiled; seeing which, Balzac said, as soberly as possible, 'You'll admit that, in order to depict a landscape faithfully, one should study its every detail. Well, how would you have me describe the Rue de Richelieu, convey an idea of its commercial aspect, unless I visit, one after the other, the various establishments it contains? Suppose I begin by the Boulevard des Italiens: I'd be bound to take my déjeûner at the Café Cardinal, I would have to buy a couple of scores at Brandus', a gun at the gunsmith's next door, a breastpin at the next shop. Could I do less than order a coat at the tailor's, a pair of boots at the bootmaker's?'

"I cut him short. 'Don't go any further,' I said, 'or else we'll have you in at "Compagnie des Indes," and, as both lace and Indian shawls have gone up in price, we'll be bankrupt before we know where we are.'

"Consequently," concluded Lurine, "the thing fell through, and we gave the commission to Guénot-Lacointe, who has done the thing very well and has written twice the pages Balzac was asked for, without buying as much as a pair of gloves."

When Balzac was not being harassed by the officials of the Tribunal de Commerce, he had to dodge the authorities of the National Guards, who generally had a warrant against him for neglect of duty. Unlike his great contemporary Dumas, Balzac had an invincible repugnance to play the amateur warrior—a repugnance, by-the-way, to which we owe one of the most masterly portraits of his wonderful gallery, that of the self-satisfied, bumptious, detestable bourgeoise, who struts about in his uniform; I am alluding to Crével of "La Cousine Bette." But civil discipline could take no cognizance of the novelist's likes and dislikes, and, after repeated "notices" and "warnings," left at his registered domicile, his incarceration was generally decided upon. As a rule, this happened about half a dozen times in a twelvemonth.

The next thing was to catch the refractory national guard, which was not easy, seeing that, in order to avoid an enforced sojourn at the Hôtel des Haricots,[5] Balzac not only disappeared from his usual haunts, but left his regular domicile, and took an apartment elsewhere under an assumed name. On one occasion, at a small lodgings which he had taken near his publisher, Hippolyte Souverain, under the name of Madame Dupont, Léon Gozlan, having found him out, sent him a letter addressed to "Madame Dupont, *née* Balzac."

The sergeant-major of Balzac's company had undoubtedly a grudge against him. He happened to be a perfumer, and ever since the publication and success of "César Birotteau" the Paris perfumers bore Balzac no goodwill. That particular one had sworn by all his essences and bottles that he would lay hands on the recalcitrant private of his company in the streets, for only under such conditions could he arrest him. To watch at Balzac's ordinary domicile was of no use, and, when he had discovered his temporary residence, he had to lure him out of it, because the other was on his guard.

One morning, while the novelist was hard at work, his old housekeeper, whom he always took with him, came to tell him that there was a large van downstairs with a case addressed to him. "How did they find me out here?" exclaimed Balzac, and despatched the dame to gather further particulars. In a few moments she returned. The case contained an Etruscan vase sent from Italy, but, seeing that it had been knocking about for the last three days in every quarter of Paris in the carman's efforts to find out the consignee, the former was anxious that M. Balzac should verify the intact condition of the package before it was unloaded. Balzac fell straight into the trap. Giving himself no time even to exchange his dressing-gown, or rather his monk's frock he was in the habit of wearing, for a coat, or his slippers for a pair of boots, he rushed downstairs, watching with a benign smile the carrier handling most delicately the treasure that had come to him.

"Caught at last," said a stentorian voice behind him, and dispelling the dream as its owner laid his hand on the novelist's shoulder, while a gigantic companion planted himself in front of the street door and cut off all retreat that way.

"With a refinement of cruelty, which in the eyes of posterity will considerably diminish the glory of his victory"—I am quoting Balzac's own words as he related the scene to us at the Hôtel des Haricots—the sergeant-major perfumer would not allow his prisoner to change his clothes, and while the van with the precious Etruscan vase disappeared in the distance, Balzac was hustled into a cab to spend a week in durance vile, where on that occasion he had the company of Adolphe Adam, the composer of "Le Postillon de Lonjumeau."

However, "les jours de fête étaient passés," and had been for the last five years, ever since the Hôtel des Haricots had been transferred from the town mansion of the De Bazancourts in the Rue des Fossés-Saint-Germain to its then locale near the Orléans railway station. There were no more banquets in the refectory as there had been of yore. Each prisoner had his meals in his cell. Joseph Méry, Nestor Roqueplan, and I were admitted as the clock struck two, and had to leave exactly an hour afterwards. It was during this visit that Balzac enacted the scene for us which I have endeavoured to describe above, and reminded Méry of the last dinner he had given to Dumas, Jules Sandeau, and several others in the former prison, which dinner cost five hundred francs. Eugène Sue, who was as unwilling as Balzac to perform his civic duties, had had three of his own servants to wait upon him there, and some of his plate and silver brought to his cell.

Seeing that the name of the celebrated author of "Les Mystères de Paris" has presented itself in the course of these notes, I may just as well have done with him, for he forms part of the least agreeable of my recollections. He was also an *habitué* of the Café de Paris. A great deal has been written about him; what has never been sufficiently insisted upon was the *inveterate snobbishness of the man*. When I first knew him, about '42-'43, he was already in the zenith of his glory, but I had often heard others mention his name before then, and never very favourably. His dandyism was offensive, mainly because it did not sit naturally upon him. It did not spring from an innate refinement, but from a love of show, although his father, who had been known to some of the son's familiars, was a worthy man, a doctor, and, it appears, a very good doctor, but somewhat brusque, like our own Abernethy; still much more of a gentleman at heart than the son. He did not like Eugène's extravagance, and when the latter, about '24, launched out into a cabriolet, he shipped him off on one of the king's vessels, as a surgeon; to which fact French literature owed the first novels of the future author of "Les Mystères de Paris" and "Le Juif-Errant."

But the father was gathered to his fathers, and Eugène, who had never taken kindly to a seafaring life, returned to Paris, to spend his inheritance and to resume his old habits, which made one of his acquaintances say that "le père and le fils had *both* entered upon a better life." It appears that, though somewhat of a *poseur* from the very beginning, he was witty and amusing, and readily found access to the circle that frequented the gardens of the Tivoli and the Café de Paris.[6] They, in their turn, made him a member of the Jockey Club when it was founded, which kindness they unanimously regretted, as will be seen directly.

The Tivoli gardens, though utterly forgotten at present, was in reality the birthplace of the French Jockey Club. About the year 1833 a man named Bryon, one of whose descendants keeps, at the hour I write, a large livery stables near the Grand Café, opened a pigeon-shooting gallery in the Tivoli; the pigeons, from what I have heard, mainly consisting of quails, larks, and other birds. The pigeons shot at were wooden ones, poised up high in the air, but motionless, as we still see them at the suburban fairs around Paris. Seven years before, Bryon had started a "society of amateurs of races," to whom, for a certain consideration, he let a movable stand at private meetings, for there were no others until the Society for the Encouragement of breeding French Horses started operations in 1834. But the deliberations at first took place at Bryon's place in the Tivoli gardens, and continued there until, one day, Bryon asked the fourteen or fifteen members why they should not have a locale of their own; the result was that they took modest quarters in the Rue du Helder, or rather amalgamated with a small club located there under the name of Le Bouge (The Den); for Lord Seymour, the Duke de Nemours, Prince Demidoff, and the rest were sufficiently clear-sighted to perceive that a Jockey Club governed on the English principle was entirely out of the question. That was the origin of the French Jockey Club, which, after various migrations, is, at the time of writing, magnificently housed in one of the palatial mansions of the Rue Scribe. As a matter of course, some of the fashionable *habitués* of the Café de Paris, though not knowing a fetlock from a pastern, were but too pleased to join an institution which, with the mania for everything English in full swing, then conferred as it were upon its members a kind of patent of "good form," and, above all, of exclusiveness, for which some, even amidst the fleshpots of the celebrated restaurant, longed. Because, it must be remembered, though the majority of the company at the Café de Paris were very well from the point of view of birth and social position,

there was no possibility of excluding those who could lay no claim to such distinctions, provided they had the money to pay their reckoning, and most of them had more than enough for that. It appears that Eugène Sue was not so objectionable as he became afterwards, when the wonderful success of his "Mystères de Paris" and the "Juif-Errant" had turned his head; he was made an original member of the club. Election on the nomination by three sponsors was not necessary then. That article was not inserted in the rules until two years after the foundation of the Paris Jockey Club.

Of the success attending Sue's two best-known works, I can speak from personal experience; for I was old enough to be impressed by it, and foolish enough to rank him, on account of it, with Balzac and Dumas, perhaps a little higher than the former. After the lapse of many years, I can only console myself for my infatuation with the thought that thousands, of far greater intellectual attainments than mine, were in the same boat, for it must not be supposed that the *furore* created by "Les Mystères de Paris" was confined to one class, and that class the worst educated one. While it appeared in serial form in the *Débats*, one had to bespeak the paper several hours beforehand, because, unless one subscribed to it, it was impossible to get it from the news-vendors. As for the reading-rooms where it was supposed to be kept, the proprietors frankly laughed in your face if you happened to ask for it, after you had paid your two sous admission. "Monsieur is joking. We have got five copies, and we let them out at ten sous each for half an hour: that's the time it takes to read M. Sue's story. We have one copy here, and if monsieur likes to take his turn he may do so, though he will probably have to wait for three or four hours."

At last the guileless demoiselle behind the counter found even a more effective way of fleecing her clients. The cabinets de lecture altered their fees, and the two sous, which until then had conferred the right of staying as long as one liked, were transformed into the price of admission for one hour. Each reader received a ticket on entering, stating the time, and the shrewd caissière made the round every ten minutes. I may say without exaggeration that the days on which the instalment of fiction was "crowded out," there was a general air of listlessness about Paris. And, after the first few weeks, this happened frequently; for by that time the Bertins had become quite as clever as their formidable rival, the proprietor and editor of the *Constitutionnel*, the famous Dr. Véron, whom I have already mentioned, but of whom I shall have occasion to speak again and again, for he was one of the most notable characters in the Paris of my early manhood. But to return for a moment to "Les Mystères de Paris" and its author.

The serial, then, was frequently interrupted for one or two days, without notice, however, to the readers; on its resumption there was a nice little paragraph to assure the "grandes dames de par le monde," as well as their maids, with regard to the health of M. Sue, who was supposed to have been too ill to work. The public took all this *au grand sérieux*. They either chose to forget, or were ignorant of the fact, that a novel of that kind, especially in the early days of serial feuilleton, was not delivered to the editor bit by bit. Sue, great man as he was, would not have dared to inaugurate the system only adopted somewhat later by Alexandre Dumas the Elder, namely, that of writing "from hand to mouth." These paragraphs served a dual purpose—they whetted the lady and other readers' interest in the author, and informed the indifferent ones how great that interest was. For these paragraphs were, or professed to be,—I really believe they were,—the courteous replies to hundreds of kind inquiries which the author "could not acknowledge separately for lack of time."

But this was not all. There was really a good excuse for Eugène Sue "se prenant au sérieux," seeing that some of the most eminent magistrates looked upon him in that light and opened a correspondence with him, submitting their ideas about reforming such criminals as "le maître d'école," and praising Prince Rodolph, or rather Eugène Sue under that name, for "his laudable efforts in the cause of humanity." In reality, Sue was in the position of Molière's "bourgeois gentilhomme" who spoke prose without being aware of it; for there was not the smallest evidence from his former work that he intended to inaugurate any crusade, either socialistic or philanthropic, when he began his "Mystères de Paris." He simply wanted to write a stirring novel. But, unlike M. Jourdain, he did not plead ignorance of his own good motives when congratulated upon them. On the contrary, he gravely and officially replied in the *Débats* without winking. Some of the papers, not to be outdone, gravely recounted how whole families had been converted from their evil ways by the perusal of the novel; how others, after supper, had dropped on their knees to pray for their author; how one working man had exclaimed, "You may say what you like, it would be a good thing if Providence sent many men like M. Sue in this world to take up the cudgels of the honest and struggling artisan." Thereupon Béranger, who did not like to be forgotten in this chorus of praise, paid a ceremonious visit to Sue, and between the two they assumed the protectorship of the horny-handed son of toil.

It must not be supposed that I am joking or exaggerating, and that the *engoûment* was confined to the lower classes, and to provincial and metropolitan faddists. Such men as M. de Lourdoueix, the editor of the *Gazette de France*, fell into the trap. I have pointed out elsewhere that the republicans and socialists of those days were not necessarily godless folk, and M. de Lourdoueix fitly concluded that a socialistic writer like Sue might become a powerful weapon in his hands against the Jesuits. So he went to the novelist, and gave him a commission to that effect. The latter accepted, and conceived the plot of "The Wandering Jew." When it was sketched out, he communicated it to the editor; but whether that gentleman had reconsidered the matter in the interval, or whether he felt frightened at the horribly tragic conception with scarcely any relief, he refused the novel, unless it was modified to a great extent and its blood-curdling episodes softened. The author, taking himself *au sérieux* this time as a religious reformer, declined to alter a line. Dr. Véron got wind of the affair, bought the novel as it stood, and, by dint of a system of puffing and advertising which would even make a modern American stare, obtained a success with it in the *Constitutionnel* which equalled if it did not surpass

that of the *Débats* with the "Mystères."

"It is very amusing indeed," said George Sand one night, "but there are too many animals. I hope we shall soon get out of this ménagerie." Nevertheless, she frankly admitted that she would not like to miss an instalment for ever so much.

Meanwhile Sue posed and posed, not as a writer—for, like Horace Walpole, he was almost ashamed of the title—but as "a man of the world" who knew nothing about literature, but whose wish to benefit humanity had been greater than his reluctance to enter the lists with such men as Balzac and Dumas. After his dinner at the Café de Paris, he would gravely stand on the steps smoking his cigar and listen to the conversation with an air of superiority without attempting to take part in it. His mind was supposed to be far away, devising schemes for the social and moral improvement of his fellow-creatures. These philanthropic musings did not prevent him from paying a great deal of attention—too much perhaps—to his personal appearance, for even in those days of beaux, bucks, and dandies, of Counts d'Orsay and others, men could not help thinking Eugène Sue overdressed. He rarely appeared without spurs to his boots, and he would no more have done without a new pair of white kid gloves every evening than without his dinner. Other men, like Nestor de Roqueplan, Alfred de Musset, Major Fraser, all of whose names will frequently recur in these notes, did not mind having their gloves cleaned, though the process was not so perfect as it is now; Eugène Sue averred that the smell of cleaned gloves made him ill. Alfred de Musset, who could be very impertinent when he liked, but who was withal a very good fellow, said one day: "Mais enfin, mon ami, ça ne sent pas pire que les bouges que vous nous dépeignez. N'y seriez vous jamais allé?"

In short, several years before the period of which I now treat, Eugène Sue had begun to be looked upon coldly at the Jockey Club on account of the "airs he gave himself;" and three years before the startling success of his work, he had altogether ceased to go there, though he was still a member, and remained so nominally until '47, when his name was removed from the list in accordance with Rule 5. Owing to momentary pecuniary embarrassments, he had failed to pay his subscription. It may safely be asserted that this was merely a pretext to get rid of him, because such stringent measures are rarely resorted to at any decent club, whether in London or Paris, and least of all at the Jockey Clubs there. The fact was, that the members did not care for a fellow-member whose taste differed so materially from their own, whose daily avocations and pursuits had nothing in common with theirs; for though Eugène Sue as early as 1835 had possessed a race-horse, named Mameluke, which managed to come in a capital last at Maisons-sur-Seine (afterwards Maisons-Lafitte); though he had ridden his *haque* every day in the Bois, and driven his cabriolet every afternoon in the Champs-Élysées, the merest observer could easily perceive that all this was done for mere show, to use the French expression, "pose." As one of the members observed, "M. Sue est toujours trop habillé, trop carossé, et surtout trop éperonné."

M. Sue was all that, and though the Jockey Club at that time was by no means the unobtrusive body of men it is to-day, its excesses and eccentricities were rarely indulged in public, except perhaps in carnival time. A M. de Chateau-Villard might take it into his head to play a game of billiards on horseback, or M. de Machado might live surrounded by a couple of hundred parrots if he liked; none of these fancies attracted the public's notice: M. Sue, by his very profession, attracted too much of it, and brought a great deal of it into the club itself; hence, when he raised a violent protest against his expulsion and endeavoured to neutralize it by sending in his resignation, the committee maintained its original decision. A few years after this, Eugène Sue disappeared from the Paris horizon.

CHAPTER III.

Alexandre Dumas père — Why he made himself particularly agreeable to Englishmen — His way of silencing people — The pursuit he loved best next to literature — He has the privilege of going down to the kitchens of the Café de Paris — No one questions his literary genius, some question his culinary capacities — Dr. Véron and his cordon-bleu — Dr. Véron's reasons for dining out instead of at home — Dr. Véron's friend, the philanthropist, who does not go to the theatre because he objects to be hurried with his emotions — Dr. Véron, instigated by his cook, accuses Dumas of having collaborateurs in preparing his dishes as he was known to have collaborateurs in his literary work — Dumas' wrath — He invites us to a dinner which shall be wholly cooked by him in the presence of a delegate to be chosen by the guests — The lot falls upon me — Dr. Véron and Sophie make the *amende honorable* — A dinner-party at Véron's — A curious lawsuit in connection with Weber's "Freyschutz" — Nestor Roqueplan, who became the successor of the defendant in the case, suggests a way out of it — Léon Pillet virtually adopts it and wins the day — A similar plan adopted years before by a fireman on duty at the opéra, on being tried by court-martial for having fallen asleep during the performance of "Guido et Génevra" — Firemen not bad judges of plays and operas — They were often consulted both by Meyerbeer and Dumas — Dumas at work — How he idled his time away — Dumas causes the traffic receipts of the Chemin de Fer de l'Ouest to swell during his three years' residence at Saint-Germain — M. de Montalivet advises Louis-Philippe to invite Dumas to Versailles, to see what his presence will do for the royal city — Louis-Philippe does not act upon the advice

— The relations between Dumas and the d'Orléans family — After the Revolution of '48, Dumas becomes a candidate for parliament — The story of his canvass and his address to the electors at Joigny — Dumas' utter indifference to money matters — He casts his burdens upon others — Dumas and his creditors — Writs and distraints — How they are dealt with — Dumas' indiscriminate generosity — A dozen houses full of new furniture in half as many years — Dumas' frugality at table — Literary remuneration — Dumas and his son — "Leave me a hundred francs."

Among my most pleasant recollections of those days are those of Alexandre Dumas. To quote his own words, "whenever he met an Englishman he considered it his particular duty to make himself agreeable to him, as part of the debt he owed to Shakespeare and Walter Scott." I doubt whether Dumas ever made himself deliberately disagreeable to any one; even when provoked, he managed to disarm his adversary with an epigram, rather than wound him. One evening, a professor at one of the provincial universities had been dining at the Café de Paris, as the guest of Roger de Beauvoir. He had a magnificent cameo breastpin. It elicited the admiration of every one, and notably that of Dumas. He said at once that it was a portrait of Julius Cæsar.

"Are you an archæologist?" asked the professor.

"I," replied Dumas, "I am absolutely nothing."

"Still," insisted the visitor, "you perceived at once that it was a portrait of Julius Cæsar."

"That is not very wonderful. Cæsar is essentially a Roman type; and, besides, I know Cæsar as well as most people, and perhaps better."

To tell a professor of history—especially a provincial one—that one knows Cæsar as well as most people and perhaps better, is naturally to provoke the question, "In what capacity?" As a matter of course the question followed immediately.

"In the capacity of Cæsar's historian," said Dumas imperturbably.

We were getting interested, because we foresaw that the professor would, in a few minutes, get the worst of it. Dumas' eyes were twinkling with mischief.

"You have written a history of Cæsar?" asked the learned man.

"Yes; why not?"

"Well, you won't mind my being frank with you: it is because it has never been mentioned in the world of savans."

"The world of savans never mentions me."

"Still, a history of Cæsar ought to make somewhat of a sensation."

"Mine has not made any. People read it, and that was all. It is the books which it is impossible to read that make a sensation: they are like the dinners one cannot digest; the dinners one digests are not as much as thought of next morning." That was Dumas' way of putting a would-be impertinent opponent *hors de combat*, and his repartees were frequently drawn from the pursuit he loved as well, if not better than literature, namely, cooking. It may sound exaggerated, but I verily believe that Dumas took a greater pride in concocting a stew than in constructing a novel or a play. Very often, in the middle of the dinner, he would put down his knife and fork. "Ça, c'est rudement bon: il faut que je m'en procure la recette." And Guépet was sent for to authorize Dumas to descend to the lower regions and have a consultation with his chefs. He was the only one of the *habitués* who had ever been in the kitchens of the Café de Paris. As a rule these excursions were followed by an invitation to dine at Dumas' two or three days hence, when the knowledge freshly acquired would be put into practice.

There were few of us who questioned Dumas' literary genius; there were many who suspected his culinary abilities, and notably among them, Dr. Véron. The germs of this unbelief had been sown in the doctor's mind by his own cordon-bleu, Sophie. The erstwhile director of the opera lived, at that time, in a beautiful apartment on the first floor of a nice house in the Rue Taitbout, at the corner of which the Café de Paris was situated. Sophie had virtually a sinecure of it, because, with the exception of a dinner-party now and then, her master, who was a bachelor, took his dinners at the restaurant. And with regard to the déjeûner, there was not much chance of her displaying her talents, because the man, who was reputed to be a very Apicius, was frugality itself. His reasons for dining out instead of at home were perfectly logical, though they sounded paradoxical. One day, when I was remarking upon the seemingly strange habit of dining out, when he was paying "a perfect treasure" at home, he gave me these reasons. "My dear friend, depend upon it that it is man's stomach which found the aphorism, 'Qui va *piano* va *sano*, qui va *sano* va *lontano*.' In your own home the soup is on the table at a certain hour, the roast is taken off the jack, the dessert is spread out on the sideboard. Your servants, in order to get more time over their meals, hurry you up; they do not serve you, they gorge you. At the restaurant, on the contrary, they are never in a hurry, they let you wait. And, besides, I always tell the waiters not to mind me; that I like being kept a long while—that is one of the reasons why I come here.

"Another thing, at the restaurant the door is opened at every moment and something happens. A friend, a chum, or a mere acquaintance comes in; one chats and laughs: all this aids digestion. A man ought not to be like a boa-constrictor, he ought not to make digestion a business apart. He ought to dine and to digest at the same time, and nothing aids this dual function like good conversation. Perhaps the servant of Madame de Maintenon, when the latter was still Madame Scarron, was a greater philosopher than we suspect when he whispered to his mistress, 'Madame, the roast has run short; give them another story.'

"I knew a philanthropist," wound up Dr. Véron, "who objected as much to be hurried over his emotions as I object to be hurried over my meals. For that reason he never went to the theatre. When he wanted an emotional fillip, he wandered about the streets until he met some poor wretch evidently hungry and out of elbows. He took him to the nearest wine-shop, gave him something to eat and to drink, sat himself opposite to his guest, and told him to recount his misfortunes. 'But take your time over it. I am not in a hurry,' he recommended. The poor outcast began his tale; my friend listened attentively until he was thoroughly moved. If the man's story was very sad, he gave him a franc or two; if it was positively heart-rending and made him cry, he gave him a five-franc piece; after which, he came to see me, saying, 'I have thoroughly enjoyed myself, and made the intervals between each sensational episode last as long as I liked, and, what is more, it has just cost me seven francs, the price of a stall at the theatre.'"

To return to Dr. Véron's scepticism with regard to Dumas' culinary accomplishments, and how he was converted. Dumas, it appears, had got the recipe for stewing carp from a German lady, and, being at that moment on very friendly terms with Dr. Véron, which was not always the case, had invited him and several others to come and taste the results of his experiments. The dish was simply splendid, and for days and days Véron, who was really a frugal eater, could talk of nothing else to his cook.

"Where did you taste it?" said Sophie, getting somewhat jealous of this praise of others; "at the Café de Paris?"

"No, at Monsieur Dumas'," was the answer.

"Well, then, I'll go to Monsieur Dumas' cook, and get the recipe."

"That's of no use," objected her master. "Monsieur Dumas prepared the dish himself."

"Well, then, I'll go to Monsieur Dumas himself and ask him to give me the recipe."

Sophie was as good as her word, and walked herself off to the Chaussée d'Antin. The great novelist felt flattered, and gave her every possible information, but somehow the dish was not like that her master had so much enjoyed at his friend's. Then Sophie grew morose, and began to throw out hints about the great man's borrowing other people's feathers in his culinary pursuits, just as he did in his literary ones. For Sophie was not altogether illiterate, and the papers at that time were frequently charging Dumas with keeping his collaborateurs too much in the background and himself too much in front. Dumas had never much difficulty in meeting such accusations, but Sophie had unconsciously hit upon the tactics of the clever solicitor who recommended the barrister to abuse the plaintiff, the defendant's case being bad, and she put it into practice. "C'est avec sa carpe comme avec ses romans, les autres les font et il y met son nom," she said one day. "Je l'ai bien vu, c'est un grand diable de vaniteux."

Now, there was no doubt about it, to those who did not know him very well, Dumas was "un grand diable de vaniteux;" and the worthy doctor sat pondering his cook's remarks until he himself felt inclined to think that Dumas had a clever chef in the background, upon whose victories he plumed himself. Meanwhile Dumas had been out of town for more than a month, but a day or so after his return he made his appearance at the Café de Paris, and, as a matter of course, inquired after the result of Sophie's efforts. The doctor was reticent at first, not caring to acknowledge Sophie's failure. He had, however, made the matter public, alleging, at the same time, Sophie's suspicions as to Dumas' hidden collaborateur, and one of the company was ill advised enough to let the cat out of the bag. During the many years of my acquaintance with Dumas, I have never seen him in such a rage as then. But he toned down in a very few minutes. "Il n'y a qu'une réponse à une accusation pareille," he said in a grandiloquent tone, which, however, had the most comical effect, seeing how trifling the matter was in reality—"il n'y qu'une réponse; vous viendrez dîner avec moi demain, vous choissirez un délégué qui viendra à partir de trois heures me voir préparer mon dîner." I was the youngest, the choice fell upon me. That is how my lifelong friendship with Dumas began. At three o'clock next day I was at the Chaussée d'Antin, and was taken by the servant into the kitchen, where the great novelist stood surrounded by his utensils, some of silver, and all of them glistening like silver. With the exception of a soupe aux choux, at which, by his own confession, he had been at work since the morning, all the ingredients for the dinner were in their natural state—of course, washed and peeled, but nothing more. He was assisted by his own cook and a kitchen-maid, but he himself, with his sleeves rolled up to the elbows, a large apron round his waist, and bare chest, conducted the operations. I do not think I have ever seen anything more entertaining, though in the course of these notes I shall have to mention frequent vagaries on the part of great men. I came to the conclusion that when writers insisted upon the culinary challenges of Carême, Dugléré, and Casimir they were not indulging in mere metaphor.

At half-past six the guests began to arrive; at a quarter to seven Dumas retired to his dressing-room; at seven punctually the servant announced that "monsieur était servi." The dinner consisted of the

aforenamed soupe aux choux, the carp that had led to the invitation, a ragoût de mouton à la Hongroise, rôti de faisans, and a salade Japonaise. The sweets and ices had been sent by the patissier. I never dined like that before or after, not even a week later, when Dr. Véron and Sophie made the *amende honorable* in the Rue Taitbout.

I have spent many delightful evenings with all these men; I do not remember having spent a more delightful one than on the latter occasion. Every one was in the best of humours; the dinner was very fine; albeit that, course for course, it did not come up to Dumas'; and, moreover, during the week that had elapsed between the two entertainments, one of Dr. Véron's successors at the opera, Léon Pillet, had been served with the most ludicrous citation that was ever entered on the rolls of any tribunal. For nearly nineteen years before that period there had been several attempts to mount Weber's "Freyschutz," all of which had come to nought. There had been an adaptation by Castil-Blaze, under the title of "Robin des Bois," and several others; but until '41, Weber's work, even in a mutilated state, was not known to the French opera-goer. At that time, however, M. Émilien Paccini made a very good translation; Hector Berlioz was commissioned to write the recitatives, for it must be remembered that Weber's opera contains dialogue, and that dialogue is not admissible in grand opera. Berlioz acquitted himself with a taste and reverence for the composer's original scheme that did great credit to both; he sought his themes in Weber's work itself, notably in the "Invitation à la Valse;" but notwithstanding all this, the "Freyschutz" was miserably amputated in the performance lest it should "play" longer than midnight, though a ballet was added rather than deprive the public of its so-called due. Neither Paccini nor Berlioz had set foot in the opera-house since their objections to such a course had been overruled, and they made it known to the world at large that no blame attached to them; nevertheless, this quasi "Freyschutz" met with a certain amount of success. M. Pillet was rubbing his hands with glee at his own cleverness, until a Nemesis came in the shape of a visitor from the Fatherland, who took the conceit out of the director with one fell blow, and, what was worse still, with a perfectly legal one.

The visitor was no less a personage than Count Tyszkiewicz, one of the best musical critics of the time and the editor of the foremost musical publication in the world; namely, *Die Musikalische Zeitung*, of Leipzig. The count, having been attracted by the announcement of the opera on the bills, was naturally anxious to hear how French artists would acquit themselves of a work particularly German, and, having secured a stall, anticipated an enjoyable evening. But alack and alas! in a very little while his indignation at the liberties taken with the text and the score by the singers, musicians, and conductor got the upper hand, and he rushed off to the commissary of police on duty at the theatre to claim the execution of Weber's opera in its integrity, as promised on the bills, or the restitution of his money. Failing to get satisfaction either way, he required the commissary to draw up a verbatim report of his objections and his claim, determined to bring an action. Next morning, he sent a lithographed account of the transaction to all the papers, requesting its insertion, with which request not a single one complied. Finding himself baffled at every turn, he engaged lawyer and counsel and began proceedings.

It was at that stage of the affair that the dinner at Dr. Véron's took place. As a matter of course, the coming lawsuit gave rise to a great deal of chaff on the part of the guests, although the victim of this badinage and defendant in the suit was not there. It was his successor who took up the cudgels and predicted the plaintiff's discomfiture. "The counsel," said Roqueplan, "ought to be instructed to invite the president and assessors to come and hear the work before they deliver judgment: if they like it personally, they will not decide against Pillet; if they don't, they'll fall asleep and be ashamed to own it afterwards. But should they give a verdict for the plaintiff, Pillet ought to appeal on a question of incompetence; a person with the name of Tyszkiewicz has no right to plead in the interest of harmony."[7]

Among such a company as that gathered round Dr. Véron's table, a single sentence frequently led to a host of recollections. Scarcely had Roqueplan's suggestion to invite the president and assessors of the court to the performance of the "Freyschutz" been broached than our host chimed in: "I can tell you a story where the expedient you recommend was really resorted to, though it did not emanate from half as clever a man as you, Roqueplan. In fact, it was only a pompier that hit upon it to get out of a terrible scrape. He was going to be brought before a court-martial for neglect of duty. It happened under the management of my immediate successor, Duponchel, at the fourth or fifth performance of Halévy's 'Guido et Génevra.' Some of the scenery caught fire, and, but for Duponchel's presence of mind, there would have been a panic and a horrible catastrophe. Nevertheless, the cause of the accident had to be ascertained, and it was found that the brigadier fireman posted at the spot where the mischief began had been asleep. He frankly admitted his fault, at the same time pleading extenuating circumstances. 'What do you mean?' asked the captain, charged with the report. 'Such a thing has never happened to me before, mon capitaine, but it is impossible for any one to keep his eyes open during that act. You need not take my word, but perhaps you will try the effect yourself.' The captain did try; the captain sat for two or three minutes after the rise of the curtain, then he was seen to leave his place hurriedly. The brigadier and his men were severely reprimanded, but they were not tried. Out of respect for Halévy the matter was kept a secret.

"I may add," said our host, "that the pompier is by no means a bad judge of things theatrical, seeing that he is rarely away from the stage for more than three or four nights at a time. I remember perfectly well that, during the rehearsals of 'Robert le Diable,' Meyerbeer often had a chat with them. Curiously enough he now and then made little alterations after these conversations. I am not insinuating that the great composer acted upon their suggestions, but I should not at all wonder if he had done so."

Alexandre Dumas, in whose honour, it will be remembered, the dinner was given, had an excellent memory, and some years afterwards profited by the experiment. I tell the story as it was given to us subsequently by his son. Only a few friends and Alexandre the younger were present at the first of the final rehearsals of "The Three Musketeers," at the Ambigu Comique. They were not dress rehearsals proper, because there were no costumes, and the scenery merely consisted of a cloth and some wings. Behind one of the latter they had noticed, during the first six tableaux, the shining helmet of a fireman who was listening very attentively. The author had noticed him too. About the middle of the seventh tableau the helmet suddenly vanished, and the father remarked upon it to his son. When the act was finished, Dumas went in search of the pompier, who did not know him. "What made you go away?" he asked him. "Because it did not amuse me half as much as the others," was the answer. "That was enough for my father," said the younger Dumas. "There and then he went to Béraud's room, took off his coat, waistcoat, and braces, unfastened the collar of his shirt—it was the only way he could work—and sent for the prompt copy of the seventh tableau, which he tore up and flung into the fire, to the consternation of Béraud. 'What are you doing?' he exclaimed. 'You see what I am doing; I am destroying the seventh tableau. It does not amuse the pompier. I know what it wants.' And an hour and a half later, at the termination of the rehearsal, the actors were given a fresh seventh tableau to study."

I have come back by a roundabout way to the author of "Monte-Christo," because, tout chemin avec moi mène à Dumas; I repeat, he constitutes one of the happiest of my recollections. After the lapse of many years, I willingly admit that I would have cheerfully foregone the acquaintance of all the other celebrities, perhaps David d'Angers excepted, for that of Dumas père.

After the lapse of many years, the elder Dumas still represents to me all the good qualities of the French nation and few of their bad ones. It was absolutely impossible to be dull in his society, but it must not be thought that these contagious animal spirits only showed themselves periodically or when in company. It was what the French have so aptly termed "la joie de vivre," albeit that they rarely associate the phrase with any one not in the spring of life. With Dumas it was chronic until a very few months before his death. I remember calling upon him shortly after the dinner of which I spoke just now. He had taken up his quarters at Saint-Germain, and come to Paris only for a few days. "Is monsieur at home?" I said to the servant.

"He is in his study, monsieur," was the answer. "Monsieur can go in."

At that moment I heard a loud burst of laughter from the inner apartment, so I said, "I would sooner wait until monsieur's visitors are gone."

"Monsieur has no visitors; he is working," remarked the servant with a smile. "Monsieur Dumas often laughs like this at his work."

It was true enough, the novelist was alone, or rather in company with one of his characters, at whose sallies he was simply roaring.

Work, in fact, was a pleasure to him, like everything else he undertook. One day he had been out shooting, between Villers-Cotterets and Compiègne, since six in the morning, and had killed twenty-nine birds. "I am going to make up the score and a half, and then I'll have a sleep, for I feel tired," he said. When he had killed his thirtieth partridge he slowly walked back to the farm, where his son and friends found him about four hours later, toasting himself before the fire, his feet on the andirons, and twirling his thumbs.

"What are you sitting there for like that?" asked his son.

"Can't you see? I am resting."

"Did you get your sleep?"

"No, I didn't; it's impossible to sleep here. There is an infernal noise; what with the sheep, the cows, the pigs, and the rest, there is no chance of getting a wink."

"So you have been sitting here for the last four hours, twirling your thumbs?"

"No, I have been writing a piece in one act." The piece in question was "Romulus," which he gave to Régnier to have it read at the Comédie-Française, under a pseudonym, and as the work of a young unknown author. It was accepted without a dissentient vote.

It is a well-known fact, vouched for by the accounts of the Compagnie du Chemin de Fer de l'Ouest, that during the three years Dumas lived at Saint-Germain, the receipts increased by twenty thousand francs per annum. Of course, it has been objected that railways being then in their infancy the increment would have been just the same without Dumas' presence in the royal residence, but, curiously enough, from the day he left, the passenger traffic fell to its previous state. Dumas had simply galvanized the sleepy old town into life, he had bought the theatre where the artists of the Comédie-Française, previous to supping with him, came to play "Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle" or the "Demoiselles de Saint-Cyr," for the benefit of the poor. On such occasions, there was not a room to be had at the hotels. After supper, there were twice a week fireworks on the Terrace, which could be seen from Paris and from Versailles, to the great astonishment of Louis-Philippe, who really attributed the change to the beneficence of his reign, although he failed to account for the continued dulness of the latter royal borough, where he himself resided, and whose picture-galleries he had restored and

thrown open to the public, besides having the great fountains to play every first Sunday of the month.

One day the king sent for M. de Montalivet, and told him that, though gratified at the revived prosperity of Saint-Germain, he would like to see a little more gaiety at Versailles.

"You really mean it, sire?" asked the minister.

"Not only do I mean it, but I confess to you that it would give me great pleasure."

"Well, sire, Alexandre Dumas has lately been sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment for neglecting his duty in the National Guards: make an order for him to spend that fortnight in Versailles, and I guarantee your Majesty that Versailles will be lively enough."

Louis-Philippe did not act upon the suggestion. The only member of the d'Orléans' family who was truly sympathetic to Dumas was the king's eldest son, whose untimely death shortly afterwards affected the great novelist very much, albeit that he frankly acknowledged to regretting the man and not the future ruler; for while loudly professing his republican creed, he never pretended to overlook his indebtedness to Louis-Philippe, when Duc d'Orléans, for having befriended him; nay, I am inclined to think that Dumas' gratitude was far greater than the case warranted. When, in 1847, the fancy took him to go into parliament, he naturally turned to the borough he had benefited so much by his stay there—Saint-Germain, and Saint-Germain denied him. They thought him too immoral. Dumas waited patiently for another opportunity, which did not come until the following year, when Louis-Philippe had abdicated. Addressing a meeting of electors at Joigny, he was challenged by a M. de Bonnelière to reconcile his title of republican with his title of Marquis de la Pailleterie, and the fact of his having been a secretary to the Duc d'Orléans, although he had never occupied so important a position in the Duc d'Orléans' household. His reply was simply scathing, and I give it in full as the papers of the day reproduced it. "No doubt," he said, in an off-hand, bantering way, "I was formerly called the Marquis de la Pailleterie, which was my father's name, and of which I was very proud, being unable then to claim a glorious one of my own make. But at present, when I am somebody, I call myself Alexandre Dumas and nothing more; and everybody knows me, you among the rest—you, you absolute nobody, who have merely come to be able to boast to-morrow, after insulting me to-night, that you have known the great Dumas. If such was your ambition, you might have satisfied it without failing in the common courtesies of a gentleman."

When the applause which the reply provoked had subsided, Dumas went on: "There is also no doubt about my having been a secretary to the Duc d'Orléans, and that I have received all kinds of favours from his family. If you, citizen, are ignorant of the meaning of the term, 'the memory of the heart,' allow me at least to proclaim here in my loudest voice, that I am not, and that I entertain towards this royal family all the devotion an honourable man can feel."

It is, however, not my intention to sketch Alexandre Dumas as a politician, for which career I considered him singularly unfit; but the speech from which I extracted the foregoing contains a few lines which, more than thirty-five years after they were spoken, cannot fail to strike the reader with his marvellous foresight. "Geographically," he said, commenting upon the political state of Europe, "Prussia has the form of a serpent, and, like it, she seems to be asleep, and to gather her strength in order to swallow everything around her—Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and, when she shall have swallowed all that, you will find that Austria will be swallowed in its turn, and perhaps, alas, France also."

The last words, as may be imagined, provoked a storm of hisses; nevertheless, he kept his audience spellbound until midnight.

A parliamentary candidate, however eloquent, who flings his constituents into the river when they happen to annoy him, must have been a novelty even in those days, and that is what Dumas did to two brawlers after said meeting, just to show them that his "aristocratic grip" was worth their "plebeian one."

A few years later, at a dinner at Dumas', in the Rue d'Amsterdam, I met a Monsieur du Chaffault who had been an eye-witness of this, as well as of other scenes during that memorable day. Until the morning of that day, M. du Chaffault had never set eyes on the great novelist; in the evening, he was his friend for life. It only proves once more the irresistible fascination Dumas exercised over every one with whom he came in contact, because the beginning of that friendship cost M. du Chaffault six hundred francs, the expenses of that part of the electoral campaign. The story, as told by M. du Chaffault the following afternoon in the Café Riche to Dr. Véron, myself, and Joseph Méry, is too good to be missed. I give it as near as I can remember.

"I was about twenty-four then, with nothing particular to do, and a moderate private income. They were painting and whitewashing my place, a few miles away from Sens, and I had taken up my quarters in the principal hotel in the town. The first elections under the second republic were being held. There was a good deal of excitement everywhere, and I liked it, though not taking the slightest interest in politics. This was in May, 1848; and about six, one morning while I was still in bed, the door of my room was suddenly opened without knocking, and what seemed to me a big black monster stood before me. There was a pistol lying by the side of me, and I was reaching towards it, when he spoke. 'Don't alarm yourself,' he said; 'I am Alexandre Dumas. They told me you were a good fellow, and I have come to ask you a service.'

"I had never seen Dumas in the flesh, only a portrait of him, but I recognized him immediately. 'You have often afforded me a great deal of amusement, but I confess you frightened me,' I said. 'What, in Heaven's name, do you want at this unholy hour?'

"'I have slept here,' was the answer. 'I landed here at midnight, and am starting for Joigny by-and-by, to attend a political meeting. I am putting up as a member for your department.'

"I jumped out of bed at once, Dumas handed me my trousers, and, when I got as far as my boots, he says, 'Oh, while I think of it, I have come to ask you for a pair of boots; in stepping into the carriage, one of mine has come to utter grief, and there is no shop open.'

"As you may see for yourselves, I am by no means a giant, and Dumas is one. I pointed this out to him, but he did not even answer me. He had caught sight of three or four pair of boots under the dressing-table, and, in the twinkling of an eye, chose the best pair and pulled them on, leaving me his old ones, absolutely worn out, but which I have preserved in my library at home. I always show them to my visitors as the thousand and first volume of Alexandre Dumas.[8]

"By the time he got the boots on we were friends, as if we had known one another for years; as for Dumas, he was 'theeing' and 'thouing' me as if we had been at school together.

"'You are going to Joigny?' I said; 'I know a good many people there.'

"'All the better, for I am going to take you along with me.'

"Having to go no further than Joigny, and being taken thither in the conveyance of my newly-made friend, I did not think it necessary to provide myself with an extra supply of funds, the more that I had between five and six hundred francs in my pocket. In a short time we were on our road, and the first stage of three hours seemed to me as many minutes. Whenever we passed a country seat, out came a lot of anecdotes and legends connected with its owners, interlarded with quaint fancies and epigrams. At that first change of horses Dumas' secretary paid. At the second, Villevailles, Dumas says, 'Have you got twenty francs change?' Without a moment's hesitation, I took out my purse, paid the money, and put down in my pocket-book, 'Alexandre Dumas, twenty francs.' I might have saved myself the trouble, as I found out in a very short time, for the moment he got out at Joigny, he rushed off in a hurry without troubling about anything. The postilion turned to me for his money, and I paid, and put down once more, 'Alexandre Dumas, thirty francs.'

"The first meeting was fixed for four, at the theatre. They applied to me for the hire of the building, for the gas. I went on paying, but I no longer put down the items, saying to myself, 'When my six hundred francs are gone, my little excursion will be at an end, and I'll go back to Sens.' The little excursion did not extend to more than one day, seeing that I had to settle the dinner bill at the Duc de Bourgogne, Dumas having invited every one he met on his way. I am only sorry for one thing, that I did not have ten thousand francs in my pocket that morning in order to prolong my excursion for a week or so. But next morning my purse was empty, and 'our defeat was certain.' I had already identified myself with Dumas' aspirations, so I returned to Sens by myself, but overjoyed at having seen and spoken to this man of genius, who is richer than all the millionnaires in the world put together, seeing that he never troubles himself about paying, and has therefore no need to worry about money. Three months afterwards, the printer at Joigny drew upon me for a hundred francs for electioneering bills, which, of course, I could not have ordered, but which draft I settled as joyfully as I had settled the rest. I have preserved the draft with the boots; they are mementoes of my first two days' friendship with my dear friend."

At the first blush, all this sounds very much as if we were dealing with a mere Harold Skimpole, but no man was more unlike Dickens' creation than Alexandre Dumas. M. du Chaffault described him rightly when he said that he did not worry about money, not even his own. "My biographer," Dumas often said, "will not fail to point out that I was 'a panier percé,'[9] neglecting, as a matter of course, to mention that, as a rule, it was not I who made the holes."

The biographers have not been quite so unjust as that. Unfortunately, few of them knew Dumas intimately, and they were so intent upon sketching the playwright and the novelist that they neglected the man. They could have had the stories of Alexandra Dumas' improvidence with regard to himself and his generosity to others for the asking from his familiars. On the other hand, the latter have only told these stories in a fragmentary way; a complete collection of them would be impossible, for no one, not even Dumas himself, knew half the people whom he befriended. In that very apartment of the Rue d'Amsterdam which I mentioned just now, the board was free to any and every one who chose to come in. Not once, but a score of times, have I heard Dumas ask, after this or that man had left the table, "Who is he? what's his name?" Whosoever came with, or at the tail, not of a friend, but of a simple acquaintance, especially if the acquaintance happened to wear skirts, was immediately invited to breakfast or dinner as the case might be. Count de Cherville once told me that Dumas, having taken a house at Varenne-Saint-Hilaire, his second month's bill for meat alone amounted to eleven hundred francs. Let it be remembered that his household consisted of himself, two secretaries, and three servants, and that money went a great deal further than it does at present, especially in provincial France, in some parts of which living is still very cheap. In consequence of one of those financial crises, which were absolutely periodical with Alexandre Dumas, M. de Cherville had prevailed upon him to leave Paris for a while, and to take up his quarters with him. All went comparatively well as long as he was M. de Cherville's guest; but, having taken a liking to the neighbourhood, he rented a house of his own, and furnished it from garret to cellar in the most expensive way, as if he were going

to spend the remainder of his life in it. Exclusive of the furniture, he spent between fifteen thousand and eighteen thousand francs on hangings, painting, and repairs. The parasites and harpies which M. de Cherville had kept at bay came down upon him like a swarm of locusts. "And how long, think you, did Dumas stay in his new domicile? Three months, not a day more nor less. As a matter of course, the furniture did not fetch a quarter of its cost; the repairs, the decorating, etc., were so much sheer waste: for the incoming tenant refused to refund a cent for it, and Dumas, having made up his mind to go to Italy, would not wait for a more liberal or conscientious one, lest he should have the rent of the empty house on his shoulders also. Luckily, I took care that he should pocket the proceeds of the sale of the furniture."

This last sentence wants explaining. As a rule, when a man sells his sticks, he pockets the money. But the instance just mentioned was the only one in which Dumas had the disposal of his household goods. The presiding divinity invariably carried them away with her when she had to make room for a successor, and these successions generally occurred once, sometimes twice, a year. "La reine est morte, vive la reine." The new sovereign, for the first few days of her reign, had to be content with bare walls and very few material comforts; then the nest was upholstered afresh, and "il n'y avait rien de changé en la demeure, sauf le nom de la maîtresse."

Consequently, though for forty years Alexandre Dumas could not have earned less than eight thousand pounds per annum; though he neither smoked, drank, nor gambled; though, in spite of his mania for cooking, he himself was the most frugal eater—the beef from the soup of the previous day, grilled, was his favourite dish,—it rained writs and summonses around him, while he himself was frequently without a penny.

M. du Chaffault one day told me of a scene *à propos* of this which is worth reproducing. He was chatting to Dumas in his study, when a visitor was shown in. He turned out to be an Italian man of letters and refugee, on the verge of starvation. M. du Chaffault could not well make out what was said, because they were talking Italian, but all at once Dumas got up and took from the wall behind him a magnificent pistol, one of a pair. The visitor walked off with it, to M. du Chaffault's surprise. When he was gone, Dumas turned to his friend and explained: "He was utterly penniless, and so am I; so I gave him the pistol."

"Great Heavens, you surely did not recommend him to go and make an end of himself!" interrupted du Chaffault.

Dumas burst out laughing. "Of course not. I merely told him to go and sell or pawn it, and leave me the fellow one, in case some other poor wretch should want assistance while I am so terribly hard up."

And yet, in this very Rue d'Amsterdam, whether Dumas was terribly impecunious or not, the déjeûner, which generally began at about half-past eleven, was rarely finished before half-past four, because during the whole of that time fresh contingents arrived to be fed, and communication was kept up between the apartment and the butcher for corresponding fresh supplies of beefsteaks and cutlets.

Is it a wonder, then, that it rained summonses, and writs, and other law documents? But no one took much notice of these, not even one of the four secretaries, who was specially appointed to look after these things. If I remember aright, his name was Hirschler. The names of the other three secretaries were Rusconi, Viellot, and Fontaine. Unfortunately, Hirschler was as dilatory as his master, and, until the process-server claimed a personal interview, as indifferent. These "limbs of the law" were marvellously polite. I was present one day at an interview between one of these and Hirschler, for Dumas' dwelling was absolutely and literally the glass house of the ancient philosopher—with this difference, that no one threw any stones *from* it. There was no secret, no skeleton in the cupboard; the impecuniosity and the recurrent periods of plenty were both as open as the day.

The "man of law" and Hirschler began by shaking hands, for they were old acquaintances; it would have been difficult to find a process-server in Paris who was not an old acquaintance of Dumas. After which the visitor informed Hirschler that he had come to distrain.

"To distrain? I did not know we had got as far as that," said Hirschler. "Wait a moment. I must go and see." It meant that Hirschler repaired to the kitchen, where stood a large oaken sideboard, in a capacious drawer of which all the law documents, no matter by whom received, were indiscriminately thrown, to be fished out when the "mauvais quart d'heure" came, and not until then.

"You are right," said Hirschler, but not in the least worried or excited, "I really did not know we had got as far as that. I must ask you to wait another minute. I suppose a third or a fourth of the total amount will do for the present?"

"Well, I do not know," said the process-server with most exquisite politeness. "Try what you can do. I fancy that with a third I may manage to stop proceedings for a while."

The third or fourth part of the debt was rarely in the house; messengers had to be despatched for it to Cadot, the publisher, or to the cashier of the *Moniteur*, *Constitutionnel*, or *Siècle*. Meanwhile the process-server was feasted in a sumptuous way, and when the messenger returned with the sum in question, Hirschler and the process-server shook hands once more, with the most cordial *au revoir* possible.

As a matter of course, the same process-server reappeared upon the scene in a few months. The

comedy had often as many as a dozen representations, so that it may safely be said that a great number of Dumas' debts were paid six or seven times over. Even sixpence a line of sixty letters did not suffice to keep pace with such terrible improvidence, though the remuneration was much more frequently fourpence or fivepence. It rarely rose to sevenpence halfpenny, but in all cases a third went to Dumas' collaborateurs, another third to his creditors, and the rest to himself.

I have allowed my pen to run away with me. One more story, and then I leave Alexandre Dumas for the present. It is simply to show that he would have squandered the fortune of all the Rothschilds combined: I repeat, not on himself; he would have given it away, or allowed it to be taken. He had no notion of the value of money. About a year after I had made his acquaintance, he was ill at Saint-Germain, and I went to see him. His dog had bitten him severely in the right hand; he was in bed, and obliged to dictate. His son had just left him, and he told me, adding, "C'est un cœur d'or, cet Alexandre." Seeing that I did not ask what had elicited the praise, he began telling me.

"This morning I received six hundred and fifty francs. Just now Alexandre was going up to Paris, and he says, 'I'll take fifty francs.'

"I did not pay attention, or must have misunderstood; at any rate I replied, 'Don't take as much as that; leave me a hundred francs.'

"'What do you mean, father?' he asked. 'I am telling you that I am going to take fifty francs.'

"'I beg your pardon,' I said. 'I understood you were going to take six hundred.'"

He would have considered it the most natural thing in the world for his son to take six hundred and leave him fifty; just as he considered it the most natural thing to bare his arm and to have a dozen leeches put on it, because his son, when a boy of eight, having met with an accident, would not consent to blood-letting of that kind. In vain did the father tell him that the leeches did not hurt. "Well, put some on yourself, and then I will." And the giant turned up his sleeves, and did as he was told.

CHAPTER IV.

Dr. Louis Véron — The real man as distinguished from that of his own "Memoirs" — He takes the management of the Paris Opéra — How it was governed before his advent — Meyerbeer's "Robert le Diable" *underlined* — Meyerbeer and his doubts upon the merits of his work — Meyerbeer's generosity — Meyerbeer and the beggars of the Rue Le Peletier — Dr. Véron, the inventor of the modern newspaper puff — Some specimens of advertisements in their infancy — Dr. Véron takes a leaf from the book of Molière — Dr. Véron's love of money — His superstitions — His objections to travelling in railways — He quotes the Queen of England as an example — When Queen Victoria overcomes her objection, Véron holds out — "Queen Victoria has got a successor: the Véron dynasty begins and ends with me" — Thirteen at table — I make the acquaintance of Taglioni — The woman and the ballerina — Her adventure at Perth — An improvised performance of "Nathalie, la Laitière Suisse" — Another adventure in Russia — A modern Claude Du-Val — My last meeting with Taglioni — A dinner-party at De Morny's — A comedy scene between husband and wife — Flotow, the composer of "Martha" — His family — His father's objection to the composer's profession — The latter's interview with M. de Saint-Georges, the author of the libretto of Balfe's "Bohemian Girl" — M. de Saint-Georges prevails upon the father to let his son study in Paris for five years, and to provide for him during that time — The supplies are stopped on the last day of the fifth year — Flotow, at the advice of M. de Saint-Georges, stays on and lives by giving piano-lessons — His earthly possessions at his first success — "Rob Roy" at the Hôtel Castellane — Lord Granville's opinion of the music — The Hôtel Castellane and some Paris salons during Louis-Philippe's reign — The Princesse de Lieven's, M. Thiers', etc. — What Madame de Girardin's was like — Victor Hugo's — Perpetual adoration; very artistic, but nothing to eat or to drink — The salon of the ambassador of the Two Sicilies — Lord and Lady Granville at the English Embassy — The salon of Count Apponyi — A story connected with it — Furniture and entertainments — Cakes, ices, and tea; no champagne as during the Second Empire — The Hôtel Castellane and its amateur theatricals — Rival companies — No under-studies — Lord Brougham at the Hôtel Castellane — His bad French and his would-be Don Juanism — A French rendering of Shakespeare's "There is but one step between the sublime and the ridiculous," as applied to Lord Brougham — He nearly accepts a part in a farce where his bad French is likely to produce a comic effect — His successor as a murderer of the language — M. de Saint-Georges — Like Molière, he reads his plays to his housekeeper — When the latter is not satisfied, the dinner is spoilt, however great the success of the play in public estimation — Great men and their housekeepers — Turner, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Eugène Delacroix.

Next to Dumas, the man who is uppermost in my recollections of that period is Dr. Louis Véron, the founder of the *Revue de Paris*, which was the precursor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*; Dr Véron, under whose management the Paris Opéra rose to a degree of perfection it has never attained since; Dr. Véron, who, as some one said, was as much part and parcel of the history of Paris during the first half of the nineteenth century as was Napoléon I. of the history of France; Dr. Véron, than whom there has been no more original figure in any civilized community before or since, with the exception, perhaps, of Phineas Barnum, to whom, however, he was infinitely superior in education, tact, and manners.

Dr. Véron has written his own "Memoirs" in six bulky volumes, to which he added a seventh a few years later. They are full of interesting facts from beginning to end, especially to those who did not know intimately the author or the times of which he treats. Those who did are tempted to repeat the mot of Diderot when they gave him the portrait of his father. "This is my Sunday father; I want my everyday father." The painter, in fact, had represented the worthy cutler of Langres in his best coat and wig, etc.; not as his son had been in the habit of seeing him. The Dr. Véron of the "Memoirs" is not the Dr. Véron of the Café de Paris, nor the Dr. Véron of the *avant-scène* in his own theatre, snoring a duet with Auber, and "keeping better time than the great composer himself;" he is not the Dr. Véron full of fads and superstitions and uniformly kind, "because kindness is as a rule a capital investment;" he is not the cheerful pessimist we knew; he is a grumbling optimist, as the journalists of his time have painted him; in short, in his book he is a quasi-philanthropic illusion, while in reality he was a hard-hearted, shrewd business man who did good by stealth now and then, but never blushed to find it fame.

The event which proved the starting-point of Dr. Véron's celebrity was neither of his own making nor of his own seeking. Though it happened when I was a mere lad, I have heard it discussed in after-years sufficiently often and by very good authorities to be confident of my facts. In June, 1831, Dr. Véron took the management of the Paris Opéra, which up till then had been governed on the style of the old régime, namely, by three gentlemen of the king's household with a working director under them. The royal privy purse was virtually responsible for its liabilities. Louis-Philippe shifted the burden of that responsibility on the State, and limited its extent. The three gentlemen of the king's household were replaced by a royal commissioner, and the yearly subsidy fixed at £32,500; still a pretty round sum, which has been reduced since by £500 only.

At Dr. Véron's advent, Meyerbeer's "Robert le Diable" was, what they call in theatrical parlance, "underlined," or, if not underlined, at least definitely accepted. Only one work of his had at that time been heard in Paris, "Il Crociato in Egitto."

It is difficult to determine, after so many years, whether Dr. Véron, notwithstanding his artistic instincts, was greatly smitten with the German composer's masterpiece. It has often been argued that he was not, because he insisted upon an indemnity of forty thousand francs from the Government towards the cost of its production. In the case of a man like Véron, this proves nothing at all. He may have been thoroughly convinced of the merits of "Robert le Diable," and as thoroughly confident of its success with the public, though no manager, not even the most experienced, can be; it would not have prevented him from squeezing the forty thousand francs from the minister on the plea that the performance of the work was imposed upon him by a treaty of his predecessor. To Dr. Véron's credit be it said that he might have saved himself the hard tussle he had with the minister by simply applying for the money to Meyerbeer himself, who would have given it without a moment's hesitation, rather than see the success of "Robert le Diable" jeopardized by inefficient mounting, although up to the last Meyerbeer could never make up his mind whether magnificent scenery and gorgeous dresses were an implied compliment or the reverse to the musical value of his compositions. *À propos* of this there is a very characteristic story. At one of the final dress-rehearsals of "Robert le Diable," Meyerbeer felt much upset. At the sight of that beautiful set of the cloister of Sainte-Rosalie, where the nuns rise from their tombs, at the effect produced by the weird procession, Meyerbeer came up to Véron.

"My dear director," he said, "I perceive well enough that you do not depend upon the opera itself; you are, in fact, running after a spectacular success."

"Wait till the fourth act," replied Véron, who was above all logical.

The curtain rose upon the fourth act, and what did Meyerbeer behold? Instead of the vast, grandiose apartment he had conceived for Isabella, Princess of Sicily, he found a mean, shabby set, which would have been deemed scarcely good enough for a minor theatre.

"Decidedly, my dear director," said Meyerbeer, with a bitter twinge in his features and voice, "I perceive well enough that you have no faith in my score; you did not even dare go to the expense of a new set. I would willingly have paid for it myself."

And he would willingly have paid for it, because Meyerbeer was not only very rich, but very generous.

"It is a very funny thing," said Lord ——, as he came into the Café de Paris one morning, many years afterwards; "there are certain days in the week when the Rue Le Peletier seems to be swarming with beggars, and, what is funnier still, they don't take any notice of me. I pass absolutely scot-free."

"I'll bet," remarked Roger de Beauvoir, "that they are playing 'Robert le Diable' or 'Les Huguenots' to-night, and I can assure you that I have not seen the bills."

"Now that you speak of it, they are playing 'Les Huguenots' to-night," replied Lord ——; "but what has that to do with it? I am not aware that the Paris beggars manifest a particular predilection for Meyerbeer's operas, and that they are booking their places on the days they are performed."

"It's simply this," explained De Beauvoir: "both Rossini and Meyerbeer never fail to come of a morning to look at the bills, and when the latter finds his name on them, he is so overjoyed that he absolutely empties his pockets of all the cash they contain. Notwithstanding his many years of success, he is still afraid that the public's liking for his music is merely a passing fancy, and as every additional performance decreases this apprehension, he thinks he cannot be sufficiently thankful to Providence. His gratitude shows itself in almsgiving."

I made it my business subsequently to verify what I considered De Beauvoir's fantastical statement, and I found it substantially correct.

To return to Dr. Véron, who, there is no doubt, did the best he could for "Robert le Diable," to which and to the talent of Taglioni he owed his fortune. At the same time, it would be robbing him of part of his glory did we not state that the success of that great work might have been less signal but for him; both his predecessors and successors had and have still equally good chances without having availed themselves of them, either in the interest of lyrical art or in that of the public.

I compared Dr. Véron just now to Phineas Barnum, and the comparison was not made at random. Dr. Véron was really the inventor of the newspaper puff direct and indirect—of that personal journalism which records the slightest deed or gesture of the popular theatrical manager, and which at the present day is carried to excess. And all his subordinates and co-workers were made to share the advantages of the system, because their slightest doings also reflected glory upon him. An artist filling at a moment's notice the part of a fellow-artist who had become suddenly ill, a carpenter saving by his presence of mind the situation at a critical juncture, had not only his paragraph in next morning's papers, but a whole column, containing the salient facts of his life and career. It was the system of Frederick the Great and of the first Napoléon, acknowledging the daring deeds of their smallest as well as of their foremost aids—with this difference, that the French captain found it convenient to suppress them now and then, and that Dr. Véron never attempted to do so. When the idea of putting down these notes first entered my mind, I looked over some files of newspapers of that particular period, and there was scarcely one between 1831 and 1835 that did not contain a lengthy reference to the Grand Opéra and its director. I was irresistibly reminded of the bulletins the great Napoléon dictated on the battle-field. I have also seen a collection of posters relating to the same brilliant reign at the Opéra. Of course, compared to the eloquent effusions and ingenious attempts of the contemporary theatrical manager to bait the public, Véron's are mere child's play; still we must remember that the art of puffing was in its infancy, and, as such, some of them are worth copying. The public was not so *blasé* and it swallowed the bait eagerly. Here they are.

"To-morrow tenth performance of ..., which henceforth will only be played at rare intervals.

"To-morrow twentieth performance of ...; positively the last before the departure of M....

"To-morrow seventeenth performance of ...; reappearance of Madame ...

"To-morrow fifteenth performance of ... by all the principal artists who 'created' the parts.

"To-morrow thirtieth performance of ... The third scene of the second act will be played as on the first night.

"To-morrow twentieth performance of ..., which can only be played for a limited number of nights.

"To-morrow sixteenth performance of .... In the Ball-Room Scene a new pas de Châles will be introduced.

"To-morrow thirtieth performance of .... This successful work must be momentarily suspended owing to previous arrangements."

Childish as these lines may look to the present generation, they produced a fortune of £2000 a year to Dr. Véron in four years, and, but for the outbreak of the cholera in '32, when "Robert le Diable" was in the flush of its success, would have produced another £1000 per annum. At that time Dr. Véron had already been able to put aside £24,000, and he might have easily closed his theatre during those terrible months; but, like Molière, he asked himself what would become of all those who were dependent upon him, and had not put aside anything; so he made his savings into ten parcels, intending to hold out as many months without asking help of any one. Five of the parcels went. At the beginning of the sixth month the cholera abated; by the end it had almost disappeared.

Those who would infer from this that Dr. Véron was indifferent to money, would make a great mistake. But he would not allow his love of it to get the upper hand, to come between him and his conscience, to make him commit either a dishonest or a foolish act. By a foolish act he meant headlong speculation. When the shares of the Northern Railway were allotted, Dr. Véron owned the *Constitutionnel*; 150 shares were allotted to him, which at that moment represented a clear profit of 60,000 francs, they being 400 francs above par. Dr. Véron made up his mind to realize there and then. But it was already late; the Bourse was closed, the stockbrokers had finished business for the day. He, however, met one on the Boulevards, who gave him a cheque for 55,000 francs on the Bank of France, which could only be cashed next day. The shares were left meanwhile in Dr. Véron's possession. Three

minutes after the bargain was concluded Dr. Véron went back to his office. "I must have ready money for this, or decline the transaction," he said. The stockbroker, by applying to two of his colleagues, managed to scrape together 50,000 francs. Dr. Véron gave him a receipt in full, returned home, singing as he went the French version of "A bird in the hand," etc.

Véron was exceedingly superstitious, and had fads. He could never be induced to take a railway journey. It was generally known in France at that time that, in the early days of locomotion by steam, Queen Victoria had held a similar objection. Véron, when twitted with his objection, invariably replied, "I have yet to learn that the Queen of England is less enlightened than any of you, and she will not enter a railway carriage." But one day the report spread that the queen had made a journey from Windsor to London by the "iron horse," and then Véron was sorely pressed. He had his answer ready. "The Queen of England has got a successor: the Véron dynasty begins and ends with me. I must take care to make it last as long as possible." He stuck to his text till the end of his life.

On no consideration would Véron have sat down "thirteen at table." Once or twice when the guests and host made up that number, his coachman's son was sent for, dressed, and made presentable, and joined the party; at others he politely requested two or three of us to go and dine at the Café de Paris, and to have the bill sent to him. We drew lots as to who was to go.

It was through Dr. Véron that I became acquainted with most of the operatic celebrities—Meyerbeer, Halévy, Auber, Duprez, etc.; for though he had abdicated his directorship seven or eight years before we met, he was perhaps a greater power then in the lyrical world than at the date of his reign.

It was at Dr. Véron's that I saw Mdlle. Taglioni for the first time—off the stage. It must have been in 1844, for she had not been in Paris since 1840, when I had seen her dance at the Opéra. I had only seen her dance once before that, in '36 or '37, but I was altogether too young to judge then. I own that in 1840 I was somewhat disappointed, and my disappointment was shared by many, because some of my friends, to whom I communicated my impressions, told me that her three years' absence had made a vast difference in her art. In '44 it was still worse; her performances gave rise to many a spiteful epigram, for she herself invited comparison between her former glory and her decline, by dancing in one of her most successful creations, "L'Ombre." Those most leniently disposed towards her thought what Alfred de Musset so gracefully expressed when requested to write some verses in her album.

"Si vous ne voulez plus danser,
Si vous ne faites que passer
Sur ce grand théâtre si sombre,
Ne courez pas après votre ombre
Et tâchez de nous la laisser."

My disappointment with the ballerina was as nothing, however, to my disappointment with the woman. I had been able to determine for myself before then that Marie Taglioni was by no means a good-looking woman, but I did not expect her to be so plain as she was. That, after all, was not her fault; but she might have tried to make amends for her lack of personal charms by her amiability. She rarely attempted to do so, and never with Frenchmen. Her reception of them was freezing to a degree, and on the occasions—few and far between—when she thawed, it was with Russians, Englishmen, or Viennese. Any male of the Latin races she held metaphorically as well as literally at arm's length. Of the gracefulness, so apparent on the stage, even in her decline, there was not a trace to be found in private life. One of her shoulders was higher than the other; she limped slightly, and, moreover, waddled like a duck. The pinched mouth was firmly set; there was no smile on the colourless lips, and she replied to one's remarks in monosyllables.

Truly she had suffered a cruel wrong at the hands of men—of one man, bien entendu; nevertheless, the wonder to most people who knew her was not that Comte Gilbert de Voisins should have left her so soon after their marriage, but that he should have married her at all. "The fact was," said some one with whom I discussed the marriage one day, "that De Voisins considered himself in honour bound to make that reparation, but I cannot conceive what possessed him to commit the error that made the reparation necessary." And I am bound to say that it was not the utter lack of personal attractions that made every one, men and women alike, indifferent to Taglioni. She was what the French call "une *pimbêche*."[10] "Am I not a good-natured woman?" said Mdlle. Mars one day to Hoffman, the blood-curdling novelist. "Mademoiselle, you are the most amiable creature I know between the footlights and the cloth," he replied. No one could have paid Taglioni even such a left-handed compliment, for, if all I heard was true, she was not good-tempered either on or off the stage. Dr. Véron, who was really a very loyal friend, was very reticent about her character, and would never be drawn into revelations. "You know the French proverb," he said once, when I pressed him very closely. "'On ne hérite pas de ceux que l'on tue;' and, after all, she helped me to make my fortune."

That evening I was seated next to Mdlle. Taglioni at dinner, and when she discovered my nationality she unbent a little, so that towards the dessert we were on comparatively friendly terms. She had evidently very grateful recollections of her engagements in London, for it was the only topic on which I could get her to talk on that occasion. Here is a little story I had from her own lips, and which shows the Scotch of the early thirties in quite a new light. It may have been known once, but has been probably forgotten by now, except by the "oldest inhabitant" of Perth. In 1832 or 1833—I will not vouch for the exact year, seeing that it is two score of years since the story was told to me—the season in London had been a fatiguing one for Taglioni. A ballet her father had composed for her, "Nathalie, ou la Laitière Suisse," a very inane thing by all accounts, had met with great success in London. The

scene, however, had, as far as I could make out, been changed from Switzerland to Scotland, but of this I will not be certain. At the termination of her engagement Taglioni wanted rest, and she bethought herself to recruit in the Highlands. After travelling hither and thither for a little while, she arrived at Perth, and, as a matter of course, put down her name in the visitors' book of the hotel, then went out to explore the sights of the town. Meanwhile the report of her arrival had spread like wildfire, and on her return to the hotel she found awaiting her a deputation from the principal inhabitants, with the request to honour them with a performance. "The request was so graciously conveyed," said Taglioni, "that I could not but accept, though I took care to point out the difficulties of performing a ballet all by myself, seeing that there was neither a corps de ballet, a male dancer, nor any one else to support me. All these objections were overruled by their promise to provide all these in the best way they could, and before I had time to consider the matter fully, I was taken off in a cab to inspect the theatre, etc. Great heavens, what a stage and scenery! Still, I had given my promise, and, seeing their anxiety, would not go back from it. I cannot tell where they got their *personnel* from. There was a director and a stage-manager, but as he did not understand French, and as my English at that time was even worse than it is now, we were obliged to communicate through an interpreter. His English must have been bewildering, to judge from the manager's blank looks when he spoke to him, and his French was even more wonderful than my English. He was a German waiter from the hotel.

"Nevertheless, thanks to him, I managed to convey the main incidents of the plot of 'Nathalie' to the manager, and during the first act, the most complicated one, all went well. But at the beginning of the second everything threatened to come to a standstill. I must tell you that my father hit upon the novel idea of introducing a kind of dummy, or lay figure, on which this idiotic Nathalie lavishes all her caresses. The young fellow, who is in love with Nathalie, contrives to take the dummy's place; consequently, in order to preserve some semblance of truth, and not to make Nathalie appear more idiotic than she is already, there ought to be a kind of likeness between the dummy and the lover. I know not whether the interpreter had been at fault, or whether in the hurry-scurry I had forgotten all about the dummy, but a few minutes before the rise of the curtain I discovered that there was no dummy. 'You must do the dummy,' I said to Pierre, my servant, 'and I'll pretend to carry you on.' Pierre nodded a silent assent, and immediately began to don the costume, seeing which I had the curtain rung up, and went on to the stage. I was not very comfortable, though, for I heard a violent altercation going on behind the scenes, the cause of which I failed to guess. I kept dancing and dancing, getting near to the wings every now and then, to ask whether Pierre was ready. He seemed to me inordinately long in changing his dress, but the delay was owing to something far more serious than his careful preparation for the part. Pierre had a pair of magnificent whiskers, and the young fellow who enacted the lover had not a hair on his face. Pierre was ready to go on, when the manager noticed the difference. 'Stop!' he shouted; 'that won't do. You must have your whiskers taken off.' Pierre indignantly refused. The manager endeavoured to persuade him to make the sacrifice, but in vain, until at last he had him held down on a chair by two stalwart Scotchmen while the barber did his work.

"All this had taken time, but the public did not grow impatient. They would have been very difficult to please indeed had they behaved otherwise, for I never danced to any audience as I did to them. One of the few pleasant recollections in my life is that evening at Perth; and, curiously enough, Pierre, who is still with me, refers to it with great enthusiasm, notwithstanding the cavalier treatment inflicted upon him. It was his first and last appearance on any stage."

Here is another story Taglioni told me on a subsequent occasion. I have often wondered since whether Macaulay would not have been pleased with it even more than I was.

"The St. Petersburg theatrical season of '24-'25 had been particularly brilliant, and nowhere more so than at the Italian Opera. I came away laden with presents, among others one from the Czar—a magnificent necklet of very fine pearls. When the theatre closed at Lent, I was very anxious to get away, in spite of the inclement season, and notwithstanding the frequent warnings that the roads were not safe. Whenever the conversation turned on that topic, the name of Trischka was sure to crop up; he, in fact, was the leader of a formidable band of highwaymen, compared with whose exploits those of all the others seemed to sink into insignificance. Trischka had been steward to Prince Paskiwiecz, and was spoken of as a very intelligent fellow. Nearly every one with whom I came in contact had seen him while he was still at St. Petersburg, and had a good word to say for him. His manners were reported to be perfect; he spoke French and German very fairly; and, most curious of all, he was an excellent dancer. Some went even as far as to say that if he had adopted that profession, instead of scouring the highways, he would have made a fortune. By all accounts he never molested poor people, and the rich, whom he laid under contribution, had never to complain of violent treatment either in words or deeds—nay, more, he never took all they possessed from his victims, he was content to share and share alike. But papa n'écoutait pas de cet' oreille là; papa était très peu partageur; and, truth to tell, I was taking away a great deal of money from St. Petersburg—which was perhaps another reason why papa did not see the necessity of paying tithes to Trischka. If we had followed papa's advice, we should have either applied to the Czar for an armed escort, or else delayed our departure till the middle of the summer, though he failed to see that the loss of my engagements elsewhere would have amounted to a serious item also. But papa had got it into his head not to part with any of the splendid presents I had received; they were mostly jewels, and people who do not know papa can form no idea what they meant to him. However, as we were plainly told that Trischka conducted his operations all the year round, that we were as likely to be attacked by him in summer as in winter, papa reluctantly made up his mind to go in the beginning of April. Papa provided himself with a pair of large pistols that would not have hurt a cat, and were the laughing-stock of all those who accompanied us for the first dozen miles on our journey; for I had made many friends, and they

insisted on doing this. We had two very roomy carriages. My father, my maid, two German violinists, and myself were in the first; the second contained our luggage.

"At the first change of horses after Pskoff, the postmaster told us that Trischka and his band had been seen a few days previously on the road to Dunabourg, at the same time, he seemed to think very lightly of the matter, and, addressing himself particularly to me, opined that, with a little diplomacy on my part and a good deal of *sang-froid*, I might be let off very cheaply. All went well until the middle of the next night, when all of a sudden, in the thick of a dense forest, our road was barred by a couple of horsemen, while a third opened the door of our carriage. It was Trischka himself. 'Mademoiselle Taglioni?' he said in very good German, lifting his hat. 'I am Mademoiselle Taglioni,' I replied in French. 'I know,' he answered, with a deeper bow than before. 'I was told you were coming this way. I am sorry, mademoiselle, that I could not come to St. Petersburg to see you dance, but as chance has befriended me, I hope you will do me the honour to dance before me here.' 'How can I dance here, in this road, monsieur?' I said beseechingly. 'Alas, mademoiselle, I have no drawing-room to offer you,' he replied, still as polite as ever. 'Nevertheless,' he continued, 'if you think it cannot be done, I shall be under the painful necessity of confiscating your carriages and luggage, and of sending you back on foot to the nearest post-town.' 'But, monsieur,' I protested, 'the road is ankle-deep in mud.' 'Truly,' he laughed, showing a beautiful set of teeth, 'but your weight won't make any difference; besides, I dare say you have some rugs and cloths with you in the other carriage, and my men will only be too pleased to spread them on the ground.'

"Seeing that all my remonstrance would be in vain, I jumped out of the carriage. While the rugs were being laid down, my two companions, the violinists, tuned their instruments, and even papa was prevailed upon to come out, though he was sulky and never spoke a word.

"I danced for about a quarter of an hour, and I honestly believe that I never had such an appreciative audience either before or afterwards. Then Trischka led me back to the carriage, and, simply lifting his hat, bade me adieu. 'I keep the rugs, mademoiselle. I will never part with them,' he said. The last I saw of him, when our carriages were turning a bend in the road, was a truly picturesque figure on horseback, waving his hand."

More than eight years elapsed before I met Taglioni again, and then she looked absolutely like an old woman, though she was under fifty. It was at the Comte (afterwards Duc) de Morny's, in '52, and, if I remember rightly, almost immediately after his resignation as Minister of the Interior. Taglioni and Mdlle. Rachel were the only women present. Just as we were sitting down to dinner, Count Gilbert de Voisins came in, and took the next seat but one on my left which had been reserved for him. We were on friendly, though not on very intimate terms. He was evidently not aware of the presence of his wife, for after a few minutes he asked his neighbour, pointing to her, "Who is this governess-looking old maid?" He told him. He showed neither surprise nor emotion; but, if an artist could have been found to sketch his face there, its perfect blank would have been more amusing than either. He seemed, as it were, to consult his recollections; then he said, "Is it? It may be, after all;" and went on eating his dinner. His wife acted less diplomatically. She recognized him at once, and made a remark to her host in a sufficiently loud voice to be overheard, which was not in good taste, the more that De Morny, notwithstanding his many faults, was not the man to have invited both for the mere pleasure of playing a practical joke. In fact, I have always credited De Morny with the good intention of bringing about a reconciliation between the two; but the affair was hopeless from the very beginning, after Taglioni's exhibition of temper. I am far from saying that Count Gilbert would have been more tractable if it had not occurred, but his spouse shut the door at once upon every further attempt in that direction. Nevertheless, whether out of sheer devilry or from a wish to be polite, he went up to her after dinner, accompanied by a friend, who introduced him as formally as if he and she had never seen one another. It was at a moment when the Comte de Morny was out of the room, because I feel certain that he was already sorry then for what he had endeavoured to do, and had washed his hands of the whole affair. Taglioni made a stately bow. "I am under the impression," she said, "that I have had the honour of meeting you before, about the year 1832." With this she turned away. Let any playwright reproduce that scene in a farcical or comedy form, and I am sure that three-fourths of his audience would scout it as too exaggerated, and yet every incident of it is absolutely true.

Among my most pleasant recollections of those days is that connected with Von Flotow, the future composer of "Martha." In appearance he was altogether unlike the traditional musician; he looked more like a stalwart officer of dragoons. Though of noble origin, and with a very wealthy father, there was a time when he had a hard struggle for existence. Count von Flotow, his father, and an old officer of Blucher, was nearly as much opposed to his son becoming a musician as Frederick the Great's. Nevertheless, at the instance of Flotow's mother, he was sent to Paris at the age of sixteen, and entered the Conservatoire, then under the direction of Reicha. His term of apprenticeship was not to extend beyond two years, "for," said the count, "it does not take longer for the rawest recruit to become a good soldier." "That will give you a fair idea," remarked Von Flotow to me afterwards, "how much he understood about it. He had an ill-disguised contempt for any music which did not come up to his ideal. His ideal was that performed by the drum, the fife, and the bugle. And the very fact of Germany ringing a few years later with the names of Meyerbeer and Halévy made matters worse instead of mending them. His feudal pride would not allow of his son's entering a profession the foremost ranks of which were occupied by Jews. 'Music,' he said, 'was good enough for bankers' sons and the like,' and he considered that Weber had cast a slur upon his family by adopting it."

The two years grudgingly allowed by Count von Flotow for his son's musical education were interrupted by the revolution of 1830, and the young fellow had to return home before he was eighteen, because, in his father's opinion, "he had not given a sign of becoming a great musician;" in

other words, he had not written an opera or anything else which had attracted public notice. However, towards the beginning of 1831, the count took his son to Paris once more; "and though Meyerbeer nor Halévy were not so famous then as they were destined to become within the next three years, their names were already sufficiently well known to have made an introduction valuable. It would not have been difficult to obtain such." My father would not hear of it. 'I will not have my son indebted for anything to a Jew,' he said; and I am only quoting this instance of prejudice to you because it was not an individual but a typical one among my father's social equals. The remark about 'his son's entering a profession in which two Jews had carried off the highest prizes' is of a much later date. Consequently we landed in Paris, provided with letters of introduction to M. de Saint-Georges.[11] Clever, accomplished, refined as was M. de Saint-Georges, he was scarcely the authority a father with serious intentions about his son's musical career would have consulted; he was a charming, skilful librettist and dramatist, a thorough man of the world in the best sense of the word, but absolutely incapable of judging the higher qualities of the composer. Nevertheless, I owe him much; but for him I should have been dragged back to Germany there and then; but for him I should have been compelled to go back to Germany five years later, or starved in the streets of Paris.

"My father's interview with M. de Saint-Georges, and my first introduction to him," said Flotow on another occasion, "were perhaps the most comical scenes ever enacted off the stage. You know my old friend, and have been to his rooms, so I need not describe him nor his surroundings to you. You have never seen my father; but, to give you an idea of what he was like, I may tell you that he was an enlarged edition of myself. A bold rider, a soldier and a sportsman, fairly well educated, but upon the whole a very rough diamond, and, I am afraid, with a corresponding contempt for the elegant and artistic side of Paris life. You may, therefore, picture to yourself the difference between the two men—M. de Saint-Georges in a beautiful silk dressing-gown and red morocco slippers, sipping chocolate from a dainty porcelain cup; my father, who, contrary to German custom, had always refused to don that comfortable garment, and who, to my knowledge, had never in his life tasted chocolate. For the moment I thought that everything was lost. I was mistaken.

"'Monsieur,' said my father in French, which absolutely creaked with the rust of age, 'I have come to ask your advice and a favour besides. My son desires to become a musician. Is it possible?'

"'There is no reason why he should not be,' replied M. de Saint-Georges, 'provided he has a vocation.'

"'Vocation may mean obstinacy,' remarked my father. 'But let us suppose the reverse—that obstinacy means vocation: how long would it take him to prove that he has talent?'

"'It is difficult to say—five years at least.'

"'And two he has already spent at the Conservatoire will make seven. I hope he will not be like Jacob, who, after that period of waiting, found that they had given him the wrong goddess!' growled my father, who could be grimly humorous when he liked. 'Five years more be it, then, but not a single day longer. If by that time he has not made his mark, I withdraw his allowance. I thank you for your advice; and now I will ask a favour. Will you kindly supply my place—that is, keep an eye upon him, and do the best you can for him? Remember, he is but twenty. It is hard enough that I cannot make a soldier of him; from what I have heard and from what I can see, you will prevent him from becoming less than a gentleman.'

"M. de Saint-Georges was visibly moved. 'Let me hear what he can do,' he said, 'and then I will tell you.'

"I sat down to the piano for more than an hour.

"'I will see that your son becomes a good musician, M. le Comte,' said M. de Saint-Georges.

"Next morning my father went back to Germany. Nothing would induce him to stay a single day. He said the atmosphere of Paris was vitiated.

"I need not tell you that M. de Saint-Georges kept his word as far as he was able; he kept it even more rigorously than my father had bargained for, because when, exactly on the last day of the stipulated five years, I received a letter demanding my immediate return, and informing me that my father's banker had instructions to stop all further supplies, M. de Saint-Georges bade me stay.

"'I promised to make a musician of you, and I have kept my word. But between a musician and an acknowledged musician there is a difference. I say stay!' he exclaimed.

"'How am I to stay without money?'

"'You'll earn some.'

"'How?'

"'By giving piano-lessons, like many a poor artist has done before you.'

"I followed his advice, and am none the worse for the few years of hardships. The contrast between my own poverty and my wealthy surroundings was sufficiently curious during that time, and never more so than on the night when my name really became known to the general public. I am alluding to

the first performance of 'Le Duc de Guise,' which, as you may remember, was given in aid of the distressed Poles, and sung throughout by amateurs. The receipts amounted to thirty thousand francs, and the ladies of the chorus had something between ten and twelve millions of francs of diamonds in their hair and round their throats. All my earthly possessions in money consisted of six francs thirty-five centimes."

I was not at the Théâtre de la Renaissance that night, but two or three years previously I had heard the first opera Flotow ever wrote, at the Hôtel Castellane. I never heard "Rob Roy" since; and, curiously enough, many years afterwards I inquired of Lord Granville, who sat next to me on that evening in 1838, whether he had. He shook his head negatively. "It is a great pity," he said, "for the music is very beautiful." And I believe that Lord Granville is a very good judge.

The Hôtel Castellane, or "La Maison du Mouleur," as it was called by the general public on account of the great number of scantily attired mythological deities with which its façade was decorated, was one of the few houses where, during the reign of Louis-Philippe, the discussion of political and dynastic differences was absolutely left in abeyance. The scent of party strife—I had almost said miasma—hung over all the other salons, notably those of the Princesse de Lieven, Madame Thiers, and Madame de Girardin, and even those of Madame Le Hon and Victor Hugo were not free from it. Men like myself, and especially young men, who instinctively guessed the hollowness of all this—who, moreover, had not the genius to become political leaders and not sufficient enthusiasm to become followers—avoided them; consequently their description will find little or no place in these notes. The little I saw of Princesse de Lieven at the Tuileries and elsewhere produced no wish to see more. Thiers was more interesting from a social and artistic point of view, but it was only on very rare occasions that he consented to doff his political armour, albeit that he did not wear the latter with unchanging dignity. Madame Thiers was an uninteresting woman, and only the "feeder" to her husband, to use a theatrical phrase. Madame Le Hon was exceedingly beautiful, exceedingly selfish, and, if anything, too amiable. The absence of all serious mental qualities was cleverly disguised by the mask of a grande dame; but I doubt whether it was anything else but a mask. Madame Delphine de Girardin, on the other hand, was endowed with uncommon literary, poetical, and intellectual gifts; but I have always considered it doubtful whether even the Nine Muses, rolled into one, would be bearable for any length of time. As for Victor Hugo, no man not blessed with an extraordinary bump of veneration would have gone more than once to his soirées. The permanent entertainment there consisted of a modern version of the "perpetual adoration," and of nothing else, because, to judge by my few experiences, his guests were never offered anything to eat or to drink. As a set-off, the furniture and appointments of his apartments were more artistic than those of most of his contemporaries; but Becky Sharp has left it on record that "mouton aux navets," dished up in priceless china and crested silver, is after all but "mouton aux navets," and at Hugo's even that homely fare was wanting.

Among the few really good salons were those of the ambassadors of the Two Sicilies, of England, and of Austria. The former two were in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, the latter in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. The soirées of the Duc de Serra-Cabriola were very animated; there was a great deal of dancing. I cannot say the same of those of Lord and Lady Granville, albeit that both the host and hostess did the honours with charming and truly patrician grace and hospitality. But the English guests would not throw off their habitual reserve, and the French in the end imitated the manner of the latter, in deference, probably, to Lord and Lady Granville, who were not at all pleased at this sincerest form of French flattery of their countrymen.

There was no such restraint at Count Apponyi's, in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, the only house where the old French noblesse mustered in force. The latter virtually felt themselves on their own ground, for the host was known to have not much sympathy with parvenus, even titled ones, though the titles had been gained on the battle-field. Had he not during the preceding reign ruthlessly stripped Soult and Marmont, and half a dozen other dukes of the first empire, by giving instructions to his servants to announce them by their family names? Consequently, flirtation à la Marivaux, courtly *galanterie* à la Louis XV., sprightly and witty conversation, "minuetting" à la Watteau, was the order of the day as well as of the night there, for the déjeûner dansant was a frequent feature of the entertainment. No one was afraid of being mistaken for a financier anobli; the only one admitted on a footing of intimacy bore the simple name of Hope.

Nevertheless, it must not be thought that the entertainments, even at the three embassies, partook of anything like the splendour so noticeable during the second empire. The refreshments elsewhere partook of a simple character; ices and cake, and lukewarm but by no means strong tea, formed the staple of them. Of course there were exceptions, such as, for instance, at the above-named houses, and at Mrs. Tudor's, Mrs. Locke's, and at Countess Lamoyloff's; but the era of flowing rivers of champagne, snacks that were like banquets, and banquets that were not unlike orgies, had not as yet dawned. And, worse than all, in a great many salons the era of mahogany and Utrecht velvet was in full swing, while the era of white-and-gold walls, which were frequently neither white nor gold, was dying a very lingering death.

The Hôtel Castellane was a welcome exception to this, and politics were rigorously tabooed, the reading of long-winded poems was interdicted. Politicians were simply reminded that the adjacent Élysée-Bourbon, or even the Hôtel Pontalba, might still contain sufficiently lively ghosts to discuss such all-important matters with them;[12] poets who fancied they had something to say worth hearing, were invited to have it said for them from behind the footlights by rival companies of amateurs, each of which in many respects need not have feared comparison with the professional one of the Comédie-Française. Amateur theatricals were, therefore, the principal feature of the entertainments at the Hôtel Castellane; but there were "off nights" to the full as brilliant as the others. There was neither

acting nor dancing on such occasions, the latter amusement being rarely indulged in, except at the grand balls which often followed one another in rapid succession.

I have said rival companies, but only the two permanent ones came under that denomination; the others were what we should term "scratch companies," got together for one or two performances of a special work, generally a musical one, as in the case of Flotow's "Rob Roy" and "Alice." They vied in talent with the regular troupes presided over respectively by Madame Sophie Gay, the mother of Madame Émile de Girardin, and the Duchesse d'Abrantès. Each confined itself to the interpretation of the works of its manageress, who on such evening did the honours, or of those whom the manageress favoured with her protection. The heavens might fall rather than that an actor or actress of Madame Gay's company should act with Madame d'Abrantès, and *vice versâ*. Seeing that neither manageress had introduced the system of "under-studies," disappointments were frequent, for unless a member of the Comédie-Française could be found to take up the part at a moment's notice, the performance had necessarily to be postponed, the amateurs refusing to act with any but the best. Such pretensions may at the first blush seem exaggerated; they were justified in this instance, the amateurs being acknowledged to be the equals of the professionals by every unbiassed critic. In fact, several ladies among the amateurs "took eventually to the stage," notably Mdlles. Davenay and Mdlle. de Lagrange. The latter became a very bright star in the operatic firmament, though she was hidden in the musical world at large by her permanent stay in Russia. St. Petersburg has ever been a formidable competitor of Paris for securing the best histrionic and lyrical talent. Madame Arnould-Plessy, Bressant, Dupuis, and later on M. Worms, deserted their native scenes for the more remunerative, though perhaps really less artistic, triumphs of the theatre Saint-Michel; and when they returned, the delicate bloom that had made their art so delightful was virtually gone. "C'était de l'art Français à la sauce Tartare," said some one who was no mean judge.

The Comte Jules de Castellane, though fully equal, and in many respects superior, in birth to those who professed to sneer at the younger branch of the Bourbons, declined to be guided by these opponents of the new dynasty in their social crusade against the adherents to the latter; consequently the company was perhaps not always so select as it might have been, and many amusing incidents and *piquantes* adventures were the result. He put a stop to these, however, when he discovered that his hospitality was being abused, and that invitations given to strangers, at the request of some of his familiars, had been paid for in kind, if not in coin.

As a rule, though, the company was far less addicted to scandal-mongering and causing scandal than similarly composed "sets" during the subsequent reign. They were not averse to playing practical jokes, especially upon those who made themselves somewhat too conspicuous by their eccentricities. Lord Brougham, who was an assiduous guest at the Hôtel Castellane during his frequent visits to Paris, was often selected as their victim. He, as it were, provoked the tricks played upon him by his would-be Don-Juanesque behaviour, and by the many opportunities he lost of holding his tongue—in French. He absolutely murdered the language of Molière. His worthy successor in that respect was Lady Normanby, who, as some one said, "not only murdered the tongue, but tortured it besides." The latter, however, never lost her dignity amidst the most mirth-compelling blunders on her part, while the English statesman was often very near enacting the buffoon, and was once almost induced to accept a rôle in a vaudeville, in which his execrable French would no doubt have been highly diverting to the audience, but would scarcely have been in keeping with the position he occupied on the other side of the Channel. "Quant à Lord Brougham," said a very witty Frenchman, quoting Shakespeare in French, "il n'y a pour lui qu'un pas entre le sublime et le ridicule. C'est le pas de Calais, et il le traverse trop souvent."

In 1842, when the Comte Jules de Castellane married Mdlle. de Villontroys, whose mother had married General Rapp and been divorced from him, a certain change came over the spirit of the house; the entertainments were as brilliant as ever, but the two rival manageresses had to abdicate their sway, and the social status of the guests was subjected to a severer test. The new dispensation did not ostracize the purely artistic element, but, as the comtesse tersely put it, "dorénavant, je ne recevrai que ceux qui ont de l'art ou des armoiries." She strictly kept her word, even during the first years of the Second Empire, when pedigrees were a ticklish thing to inquire into.

I have unwittingly drifted away from M. de Saint-Georges, who, to say the least, was a curious figure in artistic and literary Paris during the reigns of Louis-Philippe and his successor. He was quite as fertile as Scribe, and many of his plots are as ingeniously conceived and worked out as the latter's, but he suffered both in reputation and purse from the restless activity and pushing character of the librettist of "Robert le Diable." Like those of Rivarol,[13] M. Saint-Georges' claims to be of noble descent were somewhat contested, albeit that, unlike the eighteenth-century pamphleteer, he never obtruded them; but there could be no doubt about his being a gentleman. He was utterly different in every respect from his rival. Scribe was not only eaten up with vanity, but grasping to a degree; he had dramatic instinct, but not the least vestige of literary refinement. M. de Saint-Georges, on the contrary, was exceedingly modest, very indifferent to money matters, charitable and obliging in a quiet way, and though perhaps not inferior in stagecraft, very elegant in his diction. When he liked, he could write verses and dialogue which often reminded one of Molière. It was not the only trait he had in common with the great playwright. Molière is said to have consulted his housekeeper, Laforêt, with regard to his productions; M. de Saint-Georges was known to do the same—with this difference, however, that he did not always attend to Marguerite's suggestions, in which case Marguerite grew wroth, especially if the piece turned out to be a success, in spite of her predictions of failure. On such occasions the popular approval scarcely compensated M. de Saint-Georges for his discomforts at home; for though Marguerite was an admirable manager at all times—when she liked, though there

was no bachelor more carefully looked after than the author of "La Fille du Régiment," he had now and then to bear the brunt of Marguerite's temper when the public's verdict did not agree with hers.

If under such circumstances M. de Saint-Georges ventured to give a dinner, the viands were sure to be cold, the Bordeaux iced, and the champagne lukewarm. M. de Saint-Georges, who, notwithstanding his courtly manners, was candour itself, never failed to state the reasons of his discomfiture as a host to his guests. "Que voulez vous, mes amis, la pièce n'a pas plu à Marguerite et le dîner s'en ressent. Si je lui faisais une observation, elle me répondrait comme elle m'a répondu déjà maintes fois. Le dîner était mauvais, vous dîtes? C'est possible, il était assez bien pour ceux qui ont eu le bon goût d'applaudir votre pièce hier-au-soir." Because Mdlle. Marguerite had a seat in the upper boxes reserved for her at all the first representations of her master's pieces. She did not always avail herself of the privilege at the Opéra, but she never missed a first night at the Opéra-Comique. I have quoted textually the words of M. de Saint-Georges on the morrow of the *première* of "Giselle," a ballet in two acts, written in collaboration with Théophile Gautier. "'Giselle' had been a great success; Marguerite had predicted a failure; hence we had a remarkably bad dinner."

I had had many opportunities of seeing Marguerite, and often wondered at the secret of the tyranny she exercised. She was not handsome—scarcely comely; she was not even as smart in her appearance as dozens of servants I have seen, and her mental attainments, as far as I could judge, were not above those of her own class. One can understand a Turner, a Jean Jacques Rousseau, submitting to the influence of such a low-born companion, because, after all, they, though men of genius, sprang from the people, and may have felt awkward, ill at ease, in the society of well-bred men and women, especially of women. Béranger sometimes gave me that idea. But, as I have already said, no one could mistake M. de Saint-Georges for anything but a well-bred man. Notwithstanding his little affectations, his inordinate love of scents, his somewhat effeminate surroundings, good breeding was patent at every sentence, at every movement. He was not a genius, certainly not, but the above remarks hold good of a man who *was* a genius, and who sprang, moreover, from the higher bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century—I am alluding to Eugène Delacroix.

CHAPTER V.

The Boulevards in the forties — The Chinese Baths — A favourite tobacconist of Alfred de Musset — The price of cigars — The diligence still the usual mode of travelling — Provincials in Paris — Parliamentary see-saw between M. Thiers and M. Guizot — Amenities of editors — An advocate of universal suffrage — Distribution of gratuitous sausages to the working man on the king's birthday — The rendezvous of actors in search of an engagement — Frédérick Lemaître on the eve of appearing in a new part — The Legitimists begin to leave their seclusion and to mingle with the bourgeoisie — Alexandre Dumas and Scribe — The latter's fertility as a playwright — The National Guards go shooting, in uniform and in companies, on the Plaine Saint-Denis — Vidocq's private inquiry office in the Rue Vivienne — No river-side resorts — The plaster elephant on the Place de la Bastille — The sentimental romances of Loïsa Puget — The songs of the working classes — Cheap bread and wine — How they enjoyed themselves on Sundays and holidays — Théophile Gautier's pony-carriage — The hatred of the bourgeoisie — Nestor Roqueplan's expression of it — Gavarni's — M. Thiers' sister keeps a restaurant at the corner of the Rue Drouot — When he is in power, the members of the Opposition go and dine there, and publish facetious accounts of the entertainment — All appearances to the contrary, people like Guizot better than Thiers — But few entries for the race for wealth in those days — The Rothschilds still live in the Rue Lafitte — Favourite lounges — The Boulevards, the Rue Le Peletier, and the Passage de l'Opéra — The Opéra — The Rue Le Peletier and its attractions — The Restaurant of Paolo Broggi — The Estaminet du Divan — Literary waiters and Boniface — Major Fraser — The mystery surrounding his origin — Another mysterious personage — The Passage de l'Opéra is invaded by the stockjobbers, and loses its prestige as a promenade — Bernard Latte's, the publisher of Donizetti's operas, becomes deserted — Tortoni's — Louis-Blanc — His scruples as an editor — A few words about duelling — Two tragic meetings — Lola Montès — Her adventurous career — A celebrated trial — My first meeting with Gustave Flaubert, the author of "Madame Bovary" and "Salambô" — Émile de Girardin — His opinion of duelling — My decision with regard to it — The original of "La Dame aux Camélias" — Her parentage — Alexandre Dumas gives the diagnosis of her character in connection with his son's play — L'Homme au Caméllia — M. Lautour-Mézerai, the inventor of children's periodical literature in France — Auguste Lireux — He takes the management of the Odéon — Balzac again — His schemes, his greed — Lireux more fortunate with other authors — Anglophobia on the French stage — Gallophobia on the English stage.

Even in those days "the Boulevards" meant to most of us nothing more than the space between the present opera and the Rue Drouot. But the Crédit Lyonnais and other palatial buildings which have

been erected since were not as much as dreamt of; if I remember rightly, the site of that bank was occupied by two or three "Chinese Baths." I suppose the process of steaming and cleansing the human body was something analogous to that practised in our Turkish baths, but I am unable to say from experience, having never been inside, and, curious to relate, most of my familiars were in a similar state of ignorance. We rarely crossed to that side of the boulevard except to go and dine at the Café Anglais. At the corner of the Rue Lafitte, opposite the Maison d'Or, was our favourite tobacconist's, and the cigars we used to get there were vastly superior to those we get at present in Paris at five times the cost. The assistant who served us was a splendid creature. Alfred de Musset became so enamoured of her that at one time his familiars apprehended an "imprudence on his part." Of course, they were afraid he would marry her.

In those days most of our journeys in the interior of France had still to be made by the mails of Lafitte-Caillard, and the people these conveyances brought up from the provinces were almost as great objects of curiosity to us as we must have been to them. It was the third lustre of Louis-Philippe's reign. "God," according to the coinage, "protected France," and when the Almighty seemed somewhat tired of the task, Thiers and Guizot alternately stepped in to do the safeguarding. Parliament resounded with the eloquence of orators who are almost forgotten by now, except by students of history; M. de Genoude was clamouring for universal suffrage; M. de Cormenin, under the *nom de plume* of "Timon," was the fashionable pamphleteer; the papers indulged in vituperation against one another, compared to which the amenities of the rival Eatanswill editors were compliments. Grocers and drapers objected to the participation of M. de Lamartine in the affairs of State. The *Figaro* of those days went by the title of *Corsaire-Satan*, and, though extensively read, had the greatest difficulty in making both ends meet. In order to improve the lot of the working man, there was a gratuitous distribution of sausages once a year on the king's fête-day. The ordinary rendezvous of provincial and metropolitan actors out of an engagement was not at the Café de Suède on the Boulevard Montmartre, but under the trees at the Palais-Royal. Frédérick Lemaître went to confession and to mass every time he "created" a new rôle. The Legitimists consented to leave their aristocratic seclusion, and to breathe the same air with the bourgeoisie and proletarians of the Boulevard du Crime, to see him play. The Government altered the title of Sue and Goubeaux's drama "Les Pontons Anglais" into "Les Pontons," short, and made the authors change the scene from England to Spain. Alexandre Dumas chaffed Scribe, and flung his money right and left; while the other saved it, bought country estates, and produced as many as twenty plays a year (eight more than he had contracted for). The National Guards went in uniform and in companies to shoot hares and rabbits on the Plaine Saint-Denis, and swaggered about on the Boulevards, ogling the women. Vidocq kept a private inquiry office in the Passage Vivienne, and made more money by blackmailing or catching unfaithful husbands than by catching thieves. Bougival, Asnières and Joinville-le-Pont had not become riparian resorts. The plaster elephant on the Place de la Bastille was crumbling to pieces. The sentimental romances of Madame Loïsa Puget proved the delight of every bourgeoise family, while the chorus to every popular song was "Larifla, larifla, fla, fla, fla."

Best of all, from the working man's point of view, was the low price of bread and wine; the latter could be had at four sous the litre in the wine-shops. He, the working man, still made excursions with his wife and children to the Artesian well at Grenelle; and if stranded perchance in the Champs-Élysées, stood lost in admiration at the tiny carriage with ponies to match, driven by Théophile Gautier, who had left off wearing the crimson waistcoats wherewith in former days he hoped to annoy the bourgeois, though he ceased not to rail at him by word of mouth and with his pen. He was not singular in that respect. Among his set, the hatred of the bourgeois was ingrained; it found constant vent in small things. Nestor Roqueplan wore jackboots at home instead of slippers, because the latter chaussure was preferred by the shopkeeper. Gavarni published the most biting pictorial satires against him. Here is one. A dissipated-looking loafer is leaning against a lamp-post, contemptuously staring at the spruce, trim bourgeois out for his Sunday walk with his wife. The loafer is smoking a short clay pipe, and some of the fumes of the tobacco come between the wind and the bourgeois' respectability. "Voyou!" says the latter contemptuously. "Voyou tant que vous voulez, pas épicier," is the answer.

In those days, when M. Thiers happened to be in power, many members of the Opposition and their journalistic champions made it a point of organizing little gatherings to the table-d'hôte kept by Mdlle. Thiers, the sister of the Prime Minister of France. Her establishment was at the entrance of the present Rue Drouot, and a signboard informed the passer-by to that effect. There was invariably an account of these little gatherings in next day's papers—of course, with comments. Thiers was known to be the most wretched shot that ever worried a gamekeeper, and yet he was very fond of blazing away. "We asked Mdlle. Thiers," wrote the commentators, "whether those delicious pheasants she gave us were of her illustrious brother's bagging. The lady shook her head. 'Non, monsieur; le Président du Conseil n'a pas l'honneur de fournir mon établissement; à quoi bon, je peux les acheter à meilleur marché que lui et au même endroit. S'il m'en envoyait, il me ferait payer un bénéfice, parcequ'il ne fait jamais rien pour rien. C'est un peu le défaut de notre famille.'" I have got a notion that, mercurial as was M. Thiers up to the last hour of his life, and even more so at that period, and sedate as was M. Guizot, the French liked the latter better than the former.

M. Guizot had said, "Enrichissez vous," and was known to be poor; M. Thiers had scoffed at the advice, and was known to be hoarding while compelling his sister to earn her own living. It must be remembered that at the time the gangrene of greed had not entered the souls of all classes of Frenchmen so deeply as it has now, that the race for wealth had as yet comparatively few votaries, and that not every stockjobber and speculator aspired to emulate the vast financial transactions of the Rothschilds. The latter lived, in those days, in the Rue Lafitte, where they had three separate

mansions, all of which since then have been thrown into one, and are at present exclusively devoted to business purposes. The Rue Lafitte was, however, a comparatively quiet street. The favourite lounges, in addition to the strip of Boulevards I have already mentioned, were the Rue Le Peletier and the galleries of the Passage de l'Opéra. Both owed the preference over the other thoroughfares to the immediate vicinity of the Opéra, which had its frontage in the last-named street, but was by no means striking or monumental. Its architect, Debret, had to run the gauntlet of every kind of satire for many a year after its erection; the bitterest and most scathing of all was that, perhaps, of a journalist, who wrote one day that, a provincial having asked him the way to the grand opéra, he had been obliged to answer, "Turn down the street, and it is the first large gateway on your right."

But if the building itself was unimposing, the company gathered around its entrance consisted generally of half a dozen men whose names were then already household words in the musical world—Auber, Halévy, Rossini and Meyerbeer, St. Georges, Adam. Now and then, though rarely together, all of these names will frequently reappear in these notes. The chief attractions, though, of the Rue Le Peletier were the famous Italian restaurant of Paolo Broggi, patronized by a great many singers, the favourite haunt of Mario, in the beginning of his career, and l'Estaminet du Divan, which from being a very simple café indeed, developed into a kind of politico-literary club under the auspices of a number of budding men of letters, journalists, and the like, whose modest purses were not equal to the charges of the Café Riche and Tortoni, and who had gradually driven all more prosaic customers away. I believe I was one of the few habitués who had no literary aspirations, who did not cast longing looks to the inner portals of the offices of the *National*, the bigwigs of which—Armand Marrast, Baron Dornés, Gérard de Nerval, and others—sometimes made their appearance there, though their restaurant in ordinary was the Café Hardi. The Estaminet du Divan, however, pretended to a much more literary atmosphere than the magnificent establishment on the boulevard itself. It is a positive fact that the waiters in the former would ask, in the most respectful way imaginable, "Does monsieur want Sue's or Dumas' feuilleton with his café?" Not once but a dozen times I have heard the proprietor draw attention to a remarkable article. Major Fraser, though he never dined there, spent an hour or two daily in the Estaminet du Divan to read the papers. He was a great favourite with every one, though none of us knew anything about his antecedents. In spite of his English name, he was decidedly not English, though he spoke the language. He was one of the best-dressed men of the period, and by a well-dressed man I do not mean one like Sue. He generally wore a tight-fitting, short-skirted, blue frock coat, grey trousers, of a shape which since then we have defined as "pegtops," but the fashion of which was borrowed from the Cossacks. They are still worn by some French officers in cavalry regiments, notably crack cavalry regiments.

Major Fraser might have fitly borrowed Piron's epitaph for himself: "Je ne suis rien, pas même Académicien." He was a bachelor. He never alluded to his parentage. He lived by himself, in an entresol at the corner of the Rue Lafitte and the Boulevard des Italiens. He was always flush of money, though the sources of his income were a mystery to every one. He certainly did not live by gambling, as has been suggested since; for those who knew him best did not remember having seen him touch a card.

I have always had an idea, though I can give no reason for it, that Major Fraser was the illegitimate son of some exalted personage, and that the solution of the mystery surrounding him might be found in the records of the scandals and intrigues at the courts of Charles IV. and Ferdinand VII. of Spain. The foreign "soldiers of fortune" who rose to high posts, though not to the highest like Richards and O'Reilly, were not all of Irish origin. But the man himself was so pleasant in his intercourse, so uniformly gentle and ready to oblige, that no one cared to lift a veil which he was so evidently anxious not to have disturbed. I only remember his getting out of temper once, namely, when Léon Gozlan, in a comedy of his, introduced a major who had three crosses. The first had been given to him because he had not one, the second because he had already one, and the third because all good things consist of three. Then Major Fraser sent his seconds to the playwright; the former effected a reconciliation, the more that Gozlan pledged his word that an allusion to the major was farthest from his thoughts. It afterwards leaked out that our irrepressible Alexandre Dumas had been the involuntary cause of all the mischief. One day, while he was talking to Gozlan, one of his secretaries came in and told him that a particular bugbear of his, and a great nonentity to boot, had got the Cross of the Legion of Honour.

"Grand Dieu," exclaimed Gozlan, "pourquoi lui a-t-on donné cette croix?"

"Vous ne savez pas?" said Alexandre, looking very wise, as if he had some important state secret to reveal.

"Assurément, je ne le sais pas," quoth Gozlan, "ni vous non plus."

"Ah, par exemple, moi, je le sais."

"Hé bien, dites alors."

"On lui a donné la croix parceque il n'en avait pas."

It was the most childish of all tricks, but Gozlan laughed at it, and, when he wrote his piece, remembered it. He amplified the very small joke, and, on the first night of his play, the house went into convulsions over it.

Major Fraser's kindness and gentleness extended to all men—except to professional politicians, and those, from the highest to the lowest, he detested and despised. He rarely spoke on the subject of

politics, but when he did every one sat listening with the raptest attention; for he was a perfect mine of facts, which he marshalled with consummate ability in order to show that government by party was of all idiotic institutions the most idiotic. But his knowledge of political history was as nothing to his familiarity with the social institutions of every civilized country and of every period. Curiously enough, the whole of his library in his own apartment did not exceed two or three scores of volumes. His memory was something prodigious, and even men like Dumas and Balzac confessed themselves his inferiors in that respect. The mere mention of the most trifling subject sufficed to set it in motion, and the listeners were treated to a "magazine article worth fifty centimes la ligne au moins," as Dumas put it. But the major could never be induced to write one. Strange to say, he often used to hint that his was no mere book-knowledge. "Of course, it is perfectly ridiculous," he remarked with a strange smile, "but every now and again I feel as if all this did not come to me through reading, but from personal experience. At times I become almost convinced that I lived with Nero, that I knew Dante personally, and so forth."

When Major Fraser died, not a single letter was found in his apartment giving a clue to his antecedents. Merely a file of receipts, and a scrap of paper attached to one—the receipt of the funeral company for his grave, and expenses of his burial. The memorandum gave instructions to advertise his demise for a week in the *Journal des Débâts*, the money for which would be found in the drawer of his dressing-table. His clothes and furniture were to be sold, and the proceeds to be given to the Paris poor. "I do not charge any one with this particular duty," the document went on; "I have so many friends, every one of whom will be ready to carry out my last wishes."

Another "mystery," though far less interesting than Major Fraser, was the Persian gentleman whom one met everywhere, at the Opéra, at the Bois de Boulogne, at the concerts of the Conservatoire, etc. Though invariably polite and smiling, he never spoke to any one. For ten years, the occupant of the stall next to his at the Opéra had never heard him utter a syllable. He always wore a long white silk petticoat, a splendidly embroidered coat over that, and a conical Astrakan cap. He was always alone; and though every one knew where he lived, in the Passage de l'Opéra, no one had ever set foot in his apartment. As a matter of course, all sorts of legends were current about him. According to some, he had occupied a high position in his own country, from which he had voluntarily exiled himself, owing to his detestation of Eastern habits; according to others, he was simply a dealer in Indian shawls, who had made a fortune. A third group, the spiteful ones, maintained that he sold dates and pastilles, and that the reason why he did not speak was because he was dumb, though not deaf. He died during the Second Empire, very much respected in the neighbourhood, for he had been very charitable.

Towards the middle of the forties the Passage de l'Opéra began to lose some of its prestige as a lounge. The outside stockjobbers, whom the police had driven from the Boulevards and the steps of Tortoni, migrated thither, and the galleries that had resounded with the sweet warblings—in a very low key—of the clients of Bernard Latte, the publisher of Donizetti's operas, were made hideous and unbearable with the jostling and bellowing of the money-spinners. Bernard Latte himself was at last compelled to migrate.

In the house the ground-floor of which was occupied by Tortoni, and which was far different in aspect from what it is now, lived Louis Blanc. Toward nine in the morning he came down for his cup of café au lait. It was the first cup of coffee of the day served in the establishment. I was never on terms of intimacy with Blanc, and least of all then, for I shared with Major Fraser a dislike to politic-mongers, and, rightly or wrongly, I have always considered the author of "L'Histoire de Dix Ans" as such. Though Louis Blanc was three or four and thirty then, he looked like a boy of seventeen—a fact not altogether owing to his diminutive stature, though he was one of the smallest men, if not the smallest man, I ever saw. Of course I mean a man not absolutely a dwarf. I have been assured, however, that he was a giant compared to Don Martinoz Garay, Duke of Altamira, and Marquis of Astorga, a Spanish statesman, who died about the early part of the twenties. These notes do not extend beyond the fall of the Commune, and it was only after that event that I met M. Blanc once or twice in his old haunts. Hence my few recollections of him had better be jotted down here. They are not important. The man, though but sixty, and apparently not in bad health, looked *désillusionné*. They were, no doubt, the most trying years to the Third Republic, but M. Blanc must have perceived well enough that, granting all the existing difficulties, the men at the head of affairs were not the Republicans of his dreams. He had, moreover, suffered severe losses; all his important documents, such as the correspondence between him and George Sand and Louis-Napoléon while the latter was at Ham, and other equally valuable matter, had been destroyed at the fire of the Northern Goods Station at La Villette, a fire kindled by the Communists. He was dressed almost in the fashion of the forties, a wide-skirted, long, brown frock coat, a shirt innocent of starch, and a broad-brimmed hat. A few years later, he founded a paper, *L'Homme-Libre*, the offices of which were in the Rue Grange-Batelière. The concern was financed by a Polish gentleman. Blanc gave his readers to understand that he would speak out plainly about persons and things, whether past or present; that he would advance nothing except on documentary proofs; but that, whether he did or not, he would not be badgered into giving or accepting challenges in defence of his writings. "I am, first of all, too old," he said; "but if I were young again, I should not repeat my folly of '47, when I wanted to fight with Eugène Pelletan on account of a woman whose virtue, provided she had any, could make no difference to either of us. It does not matter to me that we were not the only preux chevaliers of that period, ready to do battle for or against the charms of a woman whose remains had crumbled to dust by then."[14]

M. Blanc's boast that he would advance nothing except on proof positive was not an idle one, as his contributors found out to their cost. Every afternoon, at three, he arrived at the office to read the paper in proof from the first line to the last. Not the slightest inaccuracy was allowed to pass. Kind as

he was, his reporters' lives became a burden. One of the latter told me a story which, though it illustrates the ridiculousness of M. Blanc's scruples when carried too far, is none the less valuable. A dog had been run over on the Boulevards, and the reporter, with a hankering after the realistic method, had endeavored to reproduce onomatopœically the sounds uttered by the animal in pain.

"Are you quite sure, monsieur, about your sounds?" asked Blanc.

"Of course, I am as sure as a non-scientific man can be," was the answer.

"Then strike them out; one ought to be scientifically sure. By-the-by, I see you have made use of the word 'howl' (*hurler*). Unless I am mistaken, a dog when in pain yelps (*glapit*). Please alter it."

On another occasion, on going through the advertisements, he found a new one relating to a cough mixture, setting forth its virtues in the most glowing terms. Immediately the advertisement canvasser was sent for, M. Blanc having refused to farm out that department to an agency, as is frequently done in Paris, in order to retain the absolute control over it.

"Monsieur, I see that you have a new advertisement, and it seems to me a profitable one; still, before inserting it, I should like to be certain that the medicine does all it professes to do. Can you personally vouch for its efficiency?"

"Mon Dieu, monsieur, I believe it does all it professes to do, but you can scarcely expect me to run the risk of bronchitis in order to test it upon myself!"

"Heaven forbid that I should be so exacting and indifferent to other people's health, but until you can bring me some one who has been cured, we will not insert it."

Let me come back for a moment to that sentence of Louis Blanc, about the practice of duelling, in connection with one of the most tragic affairs of that kind within my recollection. I am alluding to the Dujarrier-Beauvallon duel. I have been in the habit for years, whenever an important meeting took place in France, to read every shade of English opinion on the subject; and while recognizing the elevated sentiments of the writers, I have no hesitation in saying that not a single one knew what he was writing about. They could not grasp the fact that for a man of social standing to refuse a challenge or to refrain from sending one, save under very exceptional circumstances, was tantamount to courting social death. They knew not that every door would henceforth be closed against him; that his wife's best friends would cease to call upon her, by direction of their husbands; that his children at school would be shunned by their comrades; that no young man of equal position to his, were he ever so much in love with his daughter, would ask her to become his wife, that no parents would allow their daughter to marry his son. That is what backing out of a duel meant years ago; that is what it still means to-day—of course, I repeat, with certain classes. Is it surprising, then, that with such a prospect facing him, a man should risk death rather than become a pariah? Would the English leader-writer, if he be a man of worth, like to enter his club-room without a hand held out to welcome him from those with whom he was but a few weeks ago on the most friendly footing, without a voice to give him the time of day? I think not; and that is what would happen if he were a Frenchman who neglected to ask satisfaction for even an imaginary insult.

I knew M. Dujarrier, the general manager of *La Presse*, and feel convinced that he was not a bit more quarrelsome or eager "to go out" than Louis Blanc. It is, moreover, certain that he felt his inferiority, both as a swordsman and as a marksman, to such a practised shot and fencer as M. de Beauvallon; and well he might, seeing that subsequent evidence proved that he, Dujarrier, had never handled either weapon. Yet he not only strenuously opposed all attempts on the part of his friends to effect a reconciliation, but would not afford a hint to his adversary of his want of skill, lest the latter should make him a present of his life. The present would not have been worth accepting. It would have been a Nessus-shirt, and caused the moral death of the recipient. Consequently, Dujarrier literally went like a lamb to the slaughter rather than be branded as a coward, and he made no secret of his contemplated sacrifice. "I have no alternative but to fight," he said, two days before the meeting, to Alexandre Dumas, who taxed all his own ingenuity, and that of his son, to prevent, at any rate, a fatal issue. The only way to effect this, according to the very logical reasoning of the two Dumases, was to induce Dujarrier, who, as the offended party, had the choice of weapons, to choose the sword. They counted upon the generosity of Beauvallon, who, as a gentleman, on discovering his adversary's utter lack of skill, would disarm, or inflict a slight wound on him. Unfortunately, young Dumas, with the best intentions, unburthened himself to that effect among those most interested in the affair, namely, the staffs of *La Presse* and *Le Globe*. These two journals were literally at daggers drawn, and some writers connected with the latter went hinting, if not saying openly, that Dujarrier was already showing the white feather. Whether Dujarrier heard of the comments in that shape, or whether he instinctively guessed what they would be, has never been clearly made out, but it is certain that from that moment he insisted upon the use of pistols. "I do not intend my adversary to show me the slightest favour, either by disarming me or by wounding me in the arm or leg. I mean to have a serious encounter," he said. Young Dumas, frightened perhaps at his want of reticence in the matter, begged his father to go and see Grisier,[15] and claim his intervention. Alexandre Dumas, than whom no stauncher friend ever existed who would have willingly risked his own life to save that of Dujarrier, had to decline the mission suggested by his son. "I cannot do it," he said; "the first and foremost thing is to safeguard Dujarrier's reputation, which is the more precious because it is his first duel."

"His first duel,"—here is the key-note to the whole of the proceedings as far as Dujarrier and his

personal friends were concerned. Had Dujarrier been in the position of the editor of his paper, Émile de Girardin,—had he been out before and killed or severely wounded his man, as the latter killed Armand Carrel nine years before,—he might have openly announced his determination "never to go out again" under no matter what provocation. Unfortunately, Dujarrier was not in that position; in fact, it is no exaggeration to say that Dujarrier paid the penalty of M. de Girardin's decision. A great deal of mawkish sentiment has been wasted upon the tragic fate of Armand Carrel; in reality, he had what he deserved, albeit that no one more than M. de Girardin himself regretted his untimely end. Most writers will tell one that Carrel fell a victim to his political opinions; nothing is farther from the truth. Armand Carrel fell a victim to a "question of shop" of which he allowed himself, though perhaps not deliberately, to become the champion. After many attempts, more or less successful, in the way of popular journalism, M. de Girardin, in 1836, started *La Presse*, a serious journal of the same size as the then existing ones, but at half the subscription of the latter, all of which absolutely banded at once against him. Armand Carrel, who was a soldier, and a valiant soldier, a writer of talent, and a gentleman to boot, ought to have stood aloof from that kind of polemics. Émile de Girardin was not the likely man to submit to open or implied insult. His best, albeit his least-known book, "Émile," which is as it were an autobiography, had given the measure of his thoughts on the subject of duelling. "Émile" goes into society as a soldier would go into an enemy's country. Not that he is by nature cruel or bloodthirsty, but he knows that, to hold his own, he must be always ready, not only for defence, but for attack.

"The secret one is bound to preserve with regard to the preparations for a meeting, and those preparations themselves are simply horrible. The care, the precautions to be taken, the secret which is not to leak out, all these are very like the preparations for a crime," he says. "Nevertheless," he goes on, "the horror of all this disappears, when the man, impelled by hatred or resentment, is thirsting for revenge; but when the heart is absolutely without gall, and when the imagination is still subject to all the softer emotions, then, in order not to recoil with fear at the ever horrible idea of a duel, a man must be imbued with all the force of a prejudice which resists the very laws that condemn it."

It was under the latter circumstances that M. de Girardin confronted his adversary. The two men had probably never exchanged a word with one another, they felt no personal animosity; nay, more, the duel was not an *inevitable* one; and yet it cost one man his life, and burthened the other with lifelong regrets.

Had the issue been different, *La Presse* would probably have disappeared, and all recrimination ceased. As it was, unable to goad M. de Girardin into a reversal of his decision "never to go out again," and that in spite of nine years of direct insult from a so-called political party, of every kind of quasi-legal vexation, M. de Beauvallon constituted himself a second Armand Carrel, selecting Dujarrier as his victim, the chief not being available. But here all resemblance to Armand Carrel ceased, and the law itself was anxious to mark the difference. In the one case it had been set at nought by two men of undoubted courage and undoubted honour, meeting upon equal terms; in the other, it was proved that, not content with Dujarrier's well-known inferiority, De Beauvallon's pistols had been tried before the encounter. The court could take no cognizance of this, but it marked its disapproval by sentencing Beauvallon to eight years', and one of his seconds, M. d'Ecquevilley, to ten years' imprisonment for perjury. Both had declared on oath that the pistols had not been tried. The Dujarrier duel caused a deep and painful sensation. I have dwelt upon it at greater length than was absolutely necessary, because it inspired me with a resolution from which I have never departed since. I was twenty-seven at the time, and, owing to circumstances which I need not relate here, foresaw that the greater part of my life would be spent in France. I am neither more courageous nor more cowardly than most persons, but I objected to be shot down like a mad dog on the most futile pretext because some one happened to have a grudge against me. To have declined "to go out" on the score of my nationality would not have met the case in the conditions in which I was living, so from that moment I became an assiduous client at Gosset's shooting-gallery, and took fencing lessons of Grisier. I do not know that I became very formidable with either weapon, only sufficiently skilled not to be altogether defenceless. I took care at the same time to let it go forth that a duel to me not only meant one or both parties so severely wounded as not to be able to continue the struggle, but the resumption of the combat, when he or they had recovered, until one was killed. Of course, it implied that I would only go out for a sufficiently weighty reason, but that, if compelled to do so for a trifling one, I would still adhere to my original resolution. Only once, more than twelve years afterwards, I had a quarrel fastened upon me, arising out of the excitement consequent upon the attempt of Orsini. I was the offended party, and, as such, could dictate the conditions of the meeting. I declined to modify in the least the rules I had laid down for my own guidance, and stated as much to those who were to act for me—General Fleury and Alexandre Dumas. My adversary's friends refused to accept the terms. I was never molested afterwards, though an Englishman had not always a pleasant life of it, even under the Second Empire.

In connection with Dujarrier's duel, I may say a few words here of that quasi-wonderful woman, Lola Montès. I say "quasi," because really there was nothing wonderful about her, except perhaps her beauty and her consummate impudence. She had not a scrap of talent of any kind; education she had none, for, whether she spoke in English, French, or Spanish, grammatical errors abounded, and her expressions were always those of a pretentious housemaid, unless they were those of an excited fishwife. She told me that she had been at a boarding-school in Bath, and that she was a native of Limerick, but that when quite a child she was taken to Seville by her parents. Her father, according to her account, was a Spaniard, her mother a Creole. "But I scandalized every one at school, and would not learn." I could quite believe that; what I could not believe was that a girl of her quick powers—for she undoubtedly possessed those—could have spent, however short a time in the society of decent

girls of her own age, let alone of presumedly refined school-mistresses, without having acquired some elementary notions of manner and address. Her gait and carriage were those of a duchess, for she was naturally graceful, but the moment she opened her lips, the illusion vanished—at least to me; for I am bound to admit that men of far higher intellectual attainments than mine, and familiar with very good society, raved and kept raving about her, though all those defects could not have failed to strike them as they had struck me. I take it that it must have been her beauty, for, though not devoid of wit, her wit was that of the pot-house, which would not have been tolerated in the smoking-room of a club in the small hours.

When Dujarrier was carried home dying to the Rue Lafitte, a woman flung herself on the body and covered his face with kisses. That woman was Lola Montès. In his will he left her eighteen shares in the Palais-Royal Theatre, amounting in value to about 20,000 francs. She insisted afterwards in appearing as a witness at the trial in Rouen, although her evidence threw not the slightest light upon the matter. She wanted to create a sensation; and she accomplished her aim. I was there, and though the court was crowded with men occupying the foremost ranks in literature, art, and Paris society, no one attracted the attention she did. Even the sober president and assessors sat staring at her open-mouthed when she took her stand behind the little rail which does duty for a witness-box in France. She was dressed in mourning—not the deepest, but soft masses of silk and lace—and when she lifted her veil and took off her glove to take the prescribed oath, a murmur of admiration ran through the court. That is why she had undertaken the journey to Rouen, and verily she had her reward.

It was on that occasion that I became acquainted, though quite by accident, with the young man who, ten or eleven years later, was to leap into fame all of a sudden with one novel. I have already said that the court was very crowded, and next to me was standing a tall, strapping fellow, somewhat younger than myself, whom, at the first glance, one would have taken to be an English country gentleman or well-to-do farmer's son. Such mistakes are easily made in Normandy. When Lola Montès came forward to give her evidence, some one on the other side of him remarked that she looked like the heroine of a novel.

"Yes," he replied; "but the heroines of the real novels enacted in everyday life do not always look like that."

Then he turned to me, having seen me speak to several people from Paris and in company of Alexandre Dumas and Berryer, whom everybody knew. He asked me some particulars about Lola Montès, which I gave him. I found him exceedingly well-informed. We chatted for a while. When he left he handed me his card, and hoped that we should see one another again. The card bore the simple superscription of "Gustave Flaubert." I was told during the evening that he was the son of a local physician of note. Twelve years later the whole of France rang with his name. He had written "Madame Bovary," and laid the foundation of what subsequently became the ultra-realistic school of French fiction.

To return for a moment to Lola Montès. The trial was really the starting-point of her notoriety, for, in spite of her beauty, she had been at one time reduced to sing in the streets in Brussels. That was after she had fled from Calcutta, whither her first husband, a captain or lieutenant James, in the service of the East India Company, had taken her. She landed at Southampton, and, during her journey to London, managed to ingratiate herself with an English nobleman, by pretending that she was the wife a Spanish soldier who had been shot by the Carlists. She told me all this herself, because she was not in the least reticent about her scheming, especially after her scheming had failed. She would, however, not divulge the name of her travelling companion, who tried to befriend her by introducing her to some of his acquaintances, with the view of obtaining singing lessons for her. "But I did not make my expenses, because you English are so very moral and my patron was suspected of not giving himself all that trouble for nothing. Besides, they managed to ferret out that I was not the widow of a Spanish officer, but the wife of an English one; and then, as you may imagine, it was all up. I got, however, an engagement at the Opera House in the ballet, but not for long; of course, I could not dance much, but I could dance as well as half your wooden ugly women that were there. But they told tales about me, and the manager dismissed me."[16]

She fostered no illusions with regard to her choregraphic talents; in fact, she fostered no illusions about anything, and her candour was the best trait in her character. She had failed as a dancer in Warsaw, whither she had gone from London, by way of Brussels. In the Belgian capital, according to her own story, she had been obliged to sing in the streets to keep from starvation. I asked her why she had not come from London to Paris, "where for a woman of her attractions, and not hampered by many scruples," as I pointed out to her, "there were many more resources than elsewhere." The answer was so characteristic of the daring adventuress, who, notwithstanding her impecuniosity, flew at the highest game to be had, that I transcribe it in full. I am often reluctant to trust to my memory: in this instance I may; I remember every word of it. This almost illiterate schemer, who probably had not the remotest notion of geography, of history, had pretty well "the Almanach de Gotha" by heart, and seemed to guess instinctively at things which said Almanach carefully abstained from mentioning, namely, the good understanding or the reverse between the married royal couples of Europe, etc.

"Why did I not come to Paris!" she replied. "What was the good of coming to Paris where there was a king, bourgeois to his finger-nails, tight-fisted besides, and notoriously the most moral and best father all the world over; with princes who were nearly as much married as their dad, and with those who were single far away? What was the good of coming to a town where you could not bear the title of 'la maîtresse du prince' without the risk of being taken to the frontier between two gendarmes, where you could not have squeezed a thousand louis out of any of the royal sons for the life of you?

What was the good of trying to get a count, where the wife of a grocer or a shoemaker might have objected to your presence at a ball, on the ground of your being an immoral person? No, I really meant to make my way to the Hague. I had heard that William II. whacked his wife like any drunken labourer, so that his sons had to interfere every now and then. I had heard this in Calcutta, and from folk who were likely to know. But as I thought that I might have the succession of the whacks, as well as of the lord, I wanted to try my chance at Brussels first; besides, I hadn't much money."

"But King Leopold is married, and lives very happily with his wife," I interrupted.

"Of course he does—they all do," was the answer; "mais ça n'empêche pas les sentiments, does it?" I am very ignorant, and haven't a bit of memory, but I once heard a story about a Danish or Swedish king—I do not know the difference—who married an adventuress like myself, though the queen and the mother of his heir was alive. He committed bigamy, but kings and queens may do things we mayn't. One day, he and his lawful wife were at one of their country seats, and, leaning out of the window, when a carriage passed with a good-looking woman in it, 'Who is this lady?' asked the queen. 'That's my wife,' replied the king. 'Your wife! what am I, then?' said the queen. 'You? well, you are my queen.'[17]

"Never mind, whatever my intentions on Leopold's money or affections may have been, they came to nothing; for before I could get as much as a peep at him, my money had all been spent, and I was obliged to part with my clothes first, and then to sing in the streets to get food. I was taken from Brussels to Warsaw by a man whom I believe to be a German. He spoke many languages, but he was not very well off himself. However, he was very kind, and, when we got to Warsaw, managed to get me an engagement at the Opéra. After two or three days, the director told me that I couldn't dance a bit. I stared him full in the face, and asked him whether he thought that, if I could dance, I would have come to such a hole as his theatre. Thereupon he laughed, and said I was a clever girl for all that, and that he would keep me on for ornament. I didn't give him the chance for long. I left after about two months, with a Polish gentleman, who brought me to Paris. The moment I get a nice round lump sum of money, I am going to carry out my original plan; that is, trying to hook a prince. I am sick of being told that I can't dance. They told me so in London, they told me in Warsaw, they told me at the Porte Saint-Martin where they hissed me. I don't think the men, if left to themselves, would hiss me; their wives and their daughters put them up to it: a woman like myself spoils their trade of honest women. I am only waiting my chance here; for though you are all very nice and generous and all that kind of thing, it is not what I want."

Shortly after this conversation, the death of Dujarrier and his legacy to her gave her the chance she had been looking for. She left for London, I heard, with an Englishman; but I never saw him, so I cannot say for certain. But, it appears, she did not stay long, because, a little while after, several Parisians, on their return from Germany, reported that they had met her at Wiesbaden, at Homburg, and elsewhere, punting in a small way, not settling down anywhere, and almost deliberately avoiding both Frenchmen and Englishmen. The rumour went that her husband was on her track, and that her anxiety to avoid him had caused her to leave London hurriedly. In spite of her chequered career, in spite of the shortcomings at Brussels, Lola Montès was by no means anxious for the "sweet yoke of domesticity." In another six months, her name was almost forgotten by all of us, except by Alexandre Dumas, who now and then alluded to her. Though far from superstitious, Dumas, who had been as much smitten with her as most of her admirers, avowed that he was glad she had disappeared. "She has 'the evil eye,'" he said; "and sure to bring bad luck to any one who closely links his destiny with hers, for however short a time. You see what has occurred to Dujarrier. If ever she is heard of again, it will be in connection with some terrible calamity that has befallen a lover of hers." We all laughed at him, except Dr. Véron, who could have given odds to Solomon Eagle himself at prophesying. Fortunately he was generally afraid to open his lips, for he was thoroughly sincere in his belief that he could prevent the event by not predicting it—at any rate aloud. For once in a way, however, Alexandre Dumas proved correct. When we did hear again of Lola Montès, it was in connection with the disturbances that had broken out at Munich, and the abdication of her royal lover, Louis I. of Bavaria, in favour of his eldest son, Maximilian.

The substance of the following notes relating to said disturbances was communicated to me by a political personage who played a not inconsiderable part in the events themselves. As a rule it is not very safe to take interested evidence of that kind, "but in this instance," as my informant put it, "there was really no political reputation to preserve, as far as he was concerned." Lola Montès had simply tried to overthrow him as Madame Dubarry overthrew the Duc de Choiseul, because he would not become her creature; and she had kept on repeating the tactics with every succeeding ministry, even that of her own making. But it should be remembered that revolution was in the air in the year '48, and that if Lola Montès had been the most retiring of favourites, or Louis I. the most moral of kings, the uprising would have happened just the same, though the upshot might have been different with regard to Louis himself.

Here is a portrait of him, which, in my literary ignorance, I think sufficiently interesting to reproduce.

"Louis was a chip of the old Wittelsbach block; that is, a Lovelace, with a touch of the *minnesinger* about him. Age had not damped his ardour; for, though he was sixty-one when Lola Montès took up her quarters at Munich, any and every 'beauty' that came to him was sure of an enthusiastic welcome. And Heaven alone knows how many had come to him during his reign; they seemed really directed to him from every quarter of the globe. The new arrival had her portrait painted almost immediately; it was added to the collection for which a special gallery had been set apart, and whither Louis went to

meditate by himself at least once a day. He averred that he went thither for poetic inspiration, for he took himself au sérieux as a poet, and, above all, as a classical poet modelling his verse upon those of ancient times. He had published a volume of poems, entitled 'Walhalla's Genossen';[18] but his principal study of antiquity was mainly confined to the rites connected with the worship of Venus. He was very good-natured and pleasant in his dealings with every one; he had not an ounce of gall in the whole of his body. He was, moreover, very religious in his own way, and consequently the tool of the Jesuits, who really governed the kingdom, but who endeavoured to make his own life sweet and pleasant to him. They liked him to take part in the religious processions, as any burgher of devout tendencies might, but being aware of his tendency to be attracted by the first pretty face he caught sight of, they took care to relegate all the handsome maidens and matrons to the first and second floors. In that way Louis's eyes were always lifted heavenwards, and religious appearances were preserved.

"Under such conditions, it was not difficult for a woman of Lola Montès' attractions and daring to gain her ends. She was not altogether without means when she came to Munich, though the sum in her possession was far from a hundred thousand francs, as she afterwards alleged it was. At any rate, she was not the penniless adventuress she had formerly been, and when, in her beautiful dresses, she applied to the director of the Hof-Theatre for an engagement, the latter was fairly dazzled, and granted her request without a murmur. She did, however, not want to dance, and, before her first appearance, she managed to set tongues wagging about her beauty, and, as a matter of course, the rumours reached the king's ears. I am afraid I shall have to prefer a grave charge, but I am not doing so without foundation. It is almost certain by now that the Jesuits, seeing in her a tool for the further subjugation of the superannuated royal troubadour, countenanced, if they did not assist her in her schemes; they, the Jesuits, did many things of which a Catholic, like myself, however firm in his allegiance to Rome, could not but disapprove. At any rate, three or four days after the king's first meeting with her, Lola Montès was presented at court, and introduced to the royal family and corps diplomatique by the sovereign himself, as 'his best friend.' Events proceeded apace. In August, '47, the king granted her patents of 'special naturalization,' created her Baroness von Rosenthal, and, almost immediately afterwards, Countess von Landsfeld. She received an annuity of twenty thousand florins, and had a magnificent mansion built for her. At the instance of the king, the queen was compelled to confer the order of St. Thérèse upon her. I, and many others, had strenuously opposed all this, though not unaware that, up till then, the Jesuits were on her side, rather than on ours. We paid the penalty of our opposition with our dismissal from office, and then Lola Montès confronted the Jesuits by herself. She was absolutely mad to invade Wurtemberg, not for any political reason; she could no more have accounted for any such than the merest hind, but simply because, a few months before her appearance at Munich, she had been, in her opinion, slighted by the old king. The fact was, old William, sincerely attached to Amalia Stubenrauch, the actress, had not fallen a victim to Lola Montès' charms, and had taken little or no notice of her. The contemplated invasion of Wurtemberg was an act of private revenge. But mad as she was, there was some one more mad still—King Louis I. of Bavaria.

"The most ill-advised thing she did, perhaps, was to change her supporters. Like the ignorant, overbearing woman she was, she would not consent to share her power over the king with the Jesuits; she tried to form an opposition against them among the students at the University, and she succeeded to a certain extent. These adherents constituted the nucleus of a corps which soon became known under the title of 'Allemanen.' But the more noble-minded and patriotic youths at the Munich University virtually ostracized the latter, and several minor disturbances had already broken out in consequence of this, when, in the beginning of February, '48, a more than usually serious manifestation against 'Lola's creatures,' as they were called, took place. The woman did not lack pluck, and she insisted upon defying the rioters by herself. But they proved too much for her; and, after all, she was a woman. She endeavoured to escape from their violence, but every house was shut against her; the Swiss on guard at the Austrian Embassy refused her shelter. A most painful scene happened; the king himself, the moment the news reached him, rushed to her rescue, and, having elbowed his way through the threatening, yelling crowd, offered her his arm, and conducted her to the church of the Theatines, hard by. As a matter of course, several officers had joined him, and all might have been well, if she had taken the lesson to heart. But her violent, domineering, vindictive temper got the better of her. No sooner did she find herself in comparative safety, than, emboldened by the presence of the officers, she snatched a pistol from one of them, and, armed with it, leapt out of the building, confronting the crowd, and threatening to fire. Heaven alone knows what would have been the result of this mad act, but for the timely arrival of a squadron of cuirassiers, who covered her retreat.

"The excitement might have died out in a week or a fortnight, though the year '48 was scarcely a propitious one for a display of such quasi-feudal defiance, if she had merely been content to forego the revenge for the insults she herself had provoked; but on the 10th of February she prevailed upon the king to issue a decree, closing the University for a twelvemonth. The smouldering fire of resentment against her constant interference in the affairs of the country blazed forth once more, and this time with greater violence than ever. The working men, nay, the commercial middle classes, hitherto indifferent to the king's vagaries, which, after all, brought grist to their mill, espoused the students' cause. Barricades were erected; the cry was not 'Long live the Constitution,' or 'Long live the Republic,' but 'Down with the concubine.' It was impossible to mistake the drift of that insurrection, but, in order to leave no doubt about it in the sovereign's mind, a deputation of the municipal council and one of the Upper House waited upon Louis, and insisted upon the dismissal of Lola Montès, who, in less than an hour, left Munich, escorted by a troop of gendarmes, who, however, had all their work to do to prevent her from being torn to pieces by the mob. Her departure was the signal for the

pillaging of her mansion, at which the king looked on—as he thought—incognito. It is difficult to determine what prompted him to commit so rash an act. Was it a feeling of relief at having got rid of her—for there was a good deal of cynicism about that semi-philosophical, semi-mystical troubadour—or a desire to chew the cud of his vanished happiness? Whatever may have been the reason, he paid dearly for it, for some one smashed a looking-glass over his head, and he was carried back to the palace, unconscious, and bleeding profusely. It was never ascertained who inflicted the wounds, though there is no doubt that the assailant knew his victim. Meanwhile Lola Montès had succeeded in slipping away from her escort, and three hours later she re-entered Munich disguised, and endeavoured to make her way to the palace. But the latter was carefully guarded, and for the next month all her attempts in that direction proved fruitless, though, audacious as she was, she did not dare stop for a single night in the capital itself. Besides, I do not believe that a single inhabitant would have given her shelter. Unlike a good many royal favourites of the past, she had no personal adherents, no faithful servants who would have stood by her through thick and thin, because she never treated any one kindly in the days of her prosperity: she could only bribe; she was incapable of inspiring disinterested affection among those who were insensible to the spell of her marvellous beauty."

So far the narrative of my informant. The rest is pretty well known by everybody. A few years later, she committed bigamy with another English officer, named Heald, who was drowned at Lisbon about the same time that her real husband died. Alexandre Dumas was right—she brought ill-luck to those who attached themselves to her for any length of time, whether in the guise of lovers or husbands.

These notes about Lola Montès remind me of another woman whom public opinion would place in the same category, though she vastly differed in character. I am alluding to Alphonsine Plessis, better known to the world at large as "La Dame aux Camélias." I frequently met her in the society of some of my friends between '43 and '47, the year of her death. Her name was as I have written it, and not Marie or Marguerite Duplessis, as has been written since.

The world at large, and especially the English, have always made very serious mistakes, both with regard to the heroine of the younger Dumas' novel and play, and the author himself. They have taxed him with having chosen an unworthy subject, and, by idealizing it, taught a lesson of vice instead of virtue; they have taken it for granted that Alphonsine Plessis was no better than her kind. She was much better than that, though probably not sufficiently good to take a housemaid's place and be obedient to her pastors and masters, to slave from morn till night for a mere pittance, in addition to her virtue, which was ultimately to prove its own reward—the latter to consist of a home of her own, with a lot of squalling brats about her, where she would have had to slave as she had slaved before, without the monthly pittances hitherto doled out to her. She was not sufficiently good to see her marvellously beautiful face, her matchless graceful figure set off by a cambric cap and a calico gown, instead of having the first enhanced by the gleam of priceless jewels in her hair and the second wrapped in soft laces and velvets and satins; but, for all that, she was not the common courtesan the goody-goody people have thought fit to proclaim her—the common courtesan, who, according to these goody-goody people, would have descended to her grave forgotten, but for the misplaced enthusiasm of a poetical young man, who was himself corrupted by the atmosphere in which he was born and lived afterwards.

The sober fact is that Dumas *fils* did not idealize anything at all, and, least of all, Alphonsine Plessis' character. Though very young at the time of her death, he was then already much more of a philosopher than a poet. He had not seen half as much of Alphonsine Duplessis during her life as is commonly supposed, and the first idea of the novel was probably suggested to him, not by his acquaintance with her, but by the sensation her death caused among the Paris public, the female part of which—almost without distinction—went to look at her apartment, to appraise her jewels and dresses, etc. "They would probably like to have had them on the same terms," said a terrible cynic. The remark must have struck young Dumas, in whose hearing it was said, or who, at any rate, had it reported to him; for if we carefully look at *all* his earlier plays, we find the spirit of that remark largely pervading them.

Alphonsine Plessis had probably learned even less in her girlhood than Lola Montès, but she had a natural tact, and an instinctive refinement which no education could have enhanced. She never made grammatical mistakes, no coarse expression ever passed her lips. Lola Montès could not make friends; Alphonsine Plessis could not make enemies. She never became riotous like the other, not even boisterous; for amidst the most animated scenes she was haunted by the sure knowledge that she would die young, and life, but for that knowledge, would have been very sweet to her. Amidst these scenes, she would often sit and chat to me: she liked me, because I never paid her many compliments, although I was but six years older than the most courted woman of her time. The story of her being provided for by a foreign nobleman because she was so like his deceased daughter, was not a piece of fiction on Dumas' part; it was a positive fact. Alphonsine Plessis, after this provision was made for her, might have led the most retired existence; she might, like so many demi-mondaines have done since, bought herself a country-house, re-entered "the paths of respectability," have had a pew in the parish church, been in constant communication with the vicar, prolonged her life by several years, and died in the odour of sanctity: but, notwithstanding her desperate desire to live, her very nature revolted at such self-exile. When Alexandre Dumas read the "Dame aux Camélias" to his father, the latter wept like a baby, but his tears did not drown the critical faculty. "At the beginning of the third act," he said afterwards, "I was wondering how Alexandre would get his Marguerite back to town without lowering her in the estimation of the spectator. Because, if such a woman as he depicted was to remain true to nature—to her nature—and consequently able to stand the test of psychological analysis, she could not

have borne more than two or three months of such retirement. This does not mean that she would have severed her connection with Armand Duval, but he would have become 'un plat dans le menu' after a little while, nothing more. The way Alexandre got out of the difficulty proves that he is my son every inch of him, and that, at the very outset of his career, he is a better dramatist than I am ever likely to be. But depend upon it, that if, in real life and with such a woman, le père Duval had not interfered, la belle Marguerite would have taken the 'key of the street' on some pretext—and that, notwithstanding the sale of her carriages, the pledging of her diamonds and her furs—in order not to worry the man she loved, for the time being, with money matters. Honestly speaking, it wanted my son's cleverness to make a piece out of Alphonsine Plessis' life. True, he was fortunate in that she died, which left him free to ascribe that death to any cause but the right one, namely, consumption. I know that he made use of it, but he took care to show the malady aggravated by Armand Duval's desertion of her, and this is the only liberty he took with the psychological, consequently scientific and logical, development of the play. People have compared his Marguerite Gautier to Manon Lescaut, to Marion Delorme, and so forth: it just shows what they know about it. They might just as well compare Thiers to Cromwell. Manon Lescaut, Marion Delorme, Cromwell, knew what they wanted: Marguerite Gautier and Thiers do not; both are always in search of *l'inconnu*, the one in experimental politics, the other in experimental love-making. Still, my son has been true to Nature; but he has taken an episode showing her at her best. He was not bound to let the public know that the frequent recurrence of these love episodes, but always with a different partner, constitutes a disease which is as well known to specialists as the disease of drunkenness, and for which it is impossible to find a cure. Messalina, Catherine II., and thousands of women have suffered from it. When they happen to be born in such exalted stations as these two, they buy men; when they happen to be born in a lowly station and are attractive, they sell themselves; when they are ugly and repulsive they sink to the lowest depths of degradation, or end in the padded cells of a madhouse, where no man dares come near them. Nine times out of ten the malady is hereditary, and I am certain that if we could trace the genealogy of Alphonsine Plessis, we should find the taint either on the father's side or on the mother's, probably on the former's, but more probably still on both."[19]

There were few of us who, during Alphonsine Plessis' lifetime, were so interested in her as to have gone to the length of such a psychological analysis of her pedigree. Nevertheless, most men were agreed that she was no ordinary girl. Her candour about her early want of education increased the interest. "Twenty or twenty-five years ago," said Dr. Véron, one day, after Alphonsine Plessis had left the dinner table, "a woman of her refinement would not have been phenomenal in her position, because at that period the grisette, promoted to the rank of femme entretenue, had not made her appearance. The expression 'femme entretenue' was not even known. Men chose their companions, outside marriage, from a different class; they were generally women of education and often of good family who had made a faux pas, and, as such, forfeited the society and countenance of their equals who had not stumbled in that way, at any rate not in the sight of the world. I confess, Alphonsine Plessis interests me very much. She is, first of all, the best-dressed woman in Paris; secondly, she neither flaunts nor hides her vices; thirdly, she is not always talking or hinting about money; in short, she is a wonderful courtesan."

The result of all this admiration was very favourable to Alexandre Dumas *fils* when he brought out his book about eighteen months after her death. It was in every one's hands, and the press kept whetting the curiosity of those who had not read it as yet with personal anecdotes about the heroine. In addition to this, the title was a very taking one, and, moreover, absolutely new; for, though it was obvious enough from Alphonsine Plessis' habit of wearing white camellias the greater part of the year, no one had ever thought of applying it to her while she was alive; hence, the credit of its invention belongs decidedly to Dumas *fils*.

I may return to the subject of "La Dame aux Camélias" in connection with the play; meanwhile, I will say a few words of the only man among our set who objected to the title, "because it injures my own," as he put it; namely, M. Lautour-Mézerai, who had been surnamed "L'Homme au Camélia;" in the singular, from his habit of never appearing in public without that flower in his button-hole. And be it remembered that in those days, the flower was much more rare than it is at present, and consequently very expensive. The plagiarist, if there was one, must have been Alphonsine Plessis, for Dr. Véron, who was one of his oldest friends, did not remember having ever seen him *minus* the camellia, and their friendship dated from the year 1831. It is computed that during the nineteen years Mézerai was in Paris, previous to his departure for the South of France and afterwards for Algeria, in both of which provinces he fulfilled the functions of prefect, he must have spent no less than fifty thousand francs on his favourite floral ornament, for he frequently changed it twice a day, and its price, especially in the thirties and earlier part of the forties, was not less than five francs. It is, therefore, not surprising that he resented the usurpation of his title. M. Lautour-Mézerai was one of the most elegant men I knew. He not only belonged to a very good provincial stock, but his family on both sides counted some eminent names in literature.[20] He was a most charming companion, exceedingly generous; but he would not have parted with the flower in his button-hole for any consideration, not even to oblige his greatest friend, male or female. It was more than an ornament to him, he looked upon it as a talisman. He always occupied the same place at the Opéra, in the balcony, or what we call the "dress-circle," and many a covetous glance from the brightest eyes was cast at the dazzling white camellia, standing out in bold relief against the dark blue coat, but neither glances nor direct requests had any effect upon him. He became absolutely savage in his refusal when too hardly pressed, because, by his own admission, he was superstitious enough to believe that, if he went home without it, something terrible would happen to him during the night.

M. Lautour-Mézerai was, however, something more than a mere man of fashion. To him belongs the

credit of having founded—at any rate in France—the children's periodical. For the comparatively small subscription of six francs per annum, thousands of little ones received every month a number of the *Journal des Enfants*, stitched in blue paper, and with their own name on the wrapper. It flattered their pride to be treated like their elders by having their literature despatched to them in that way, and there is no doubt that this ingenious device contributed, to a certain extent, to the primary and enormous success of the undertaking. But M. Lautour-Mézerai was too refined a littérateur to depend upon such a mere trick, and a look at even the earlier numbers of the *Journal des Enfants*, would prove conclusively that, in the way of amusing children while instructing them a little, nothing better has been done since, whether in France, England, or Germany. The editor and manager succeeded in grouping around him such men as Paul Lacroix (*le bibliophile Jacob*) and Charles Nodier, both of whom have never been surpassed in making history attractive to young minds. Émile Souvestre, Léon Gozlan, Eugène Sue, and even Alexandre Dumas told them the most wonderful stories. The men who positively kept the adult population of France spellbound by their stirring romances seemed to take a delight in competing with women like Virginie Ancelot, the Duchesse d'Abrantès, and others on the latter's ground. As a consequence, it became the fashion to present the young ones on New Year's Day with a receipt for a twelvemonth's subscription, made out in their names, instead of the everlasting bag of sweets. At one time the circulation of *Le Journal des Enfants* was computed at 60,000, and M. Lautour-Mézerai was said to make 100,000 francs per annum out of it.

In a former note, I incidentally mentioned Auguste Lireux. He is scarcely remembered by the present generation of Frenchmen; I doubt whether there are a hundred students of French literature in England who know his name, let alone his writings: yet he is worthy of being remembered by both. He had—what a great many French writers of talent, far greater than his own, essentially lack—humour. True, the latter was not subtle; but it was rarely, if ever, coarse. The nearest approach to him among the journalists of the present day is M. Francisque Sarcey; but the eminent dramatic critic has had a better education. Nevertheless, if Lireux had finished as he began, he would not be so entirely forgotten. Unfortunately for his fame, if not for his material welfare, he took it into his head to become a millionnaire, and he almost succeeded; at any rate, he died very well off, in a beautiful villa at Bougival.

I remember meeting with Lireux almost immediately after he landed in Paris, at the end of '40 or the beginning of '41. He came, I believe, from Rouen; though, but for his accent, he might have come from Marseilles. Tall, well-built, with brown hair and beard and ruddy complexion, a pair of bright eyes behind a pair of golden spectacles, very badly dressed, though his clothes were almost new, very loud and very restless, his broad-brimmed hat cocked on one side, he gave one the impression of what in Paris we used to call a "departemental oracle." He was that to a certain extent, still he was not really pompous, and the feeling of discomfort one experienced at first soon wore off. He was not altogether unknown among the better class of journalists in the capital, for it appears that he frequently contributed to the Paris papers from the provinces. He had a fair knowledge of the French drama theoretically, for he had never written a piece, and openly stated his intention never to do so. But in virtue of his dramatic criticisms in several periodicals—which, in spite of the difference in education between the two men, read uncommonly like the articles of M. Sarcey in the *Temps*—and his unwavering faith in his lucky star, he considered himself destined not only to lift the Odéon from the slough in which it had sunk, but to make it a formidable rival to the house in the Rue de Richelieu. He had no ambition beyond that. The Odéon was really at its lowest depth. Harel had enjoyed a subsidy of 130,000 francs, M. d'Epagny eleven years later had to content himself with less than half, and yet the authorities were fully cognizant of the necessity of a second Théâtre-Français. Whether from incapacity or ill-luck, M. d'Epagny did not succeed in bringing back the public to the old house. The direction was offered then to M. Hippolyte Lucas, the dramatic critic of *Le Siècle*, and one of the best English scholars I have ever met with among the French, and, on his declining the responsibility, given to Lireux, who for the sake of making a point, exclaimed, "Directeur!... au refus d'Hippolyte Lucas!"[21]

It was a piece of bad taste on Lireux's part, because M. Lucas was his superior in every respect, though he would probably have failed where the other succeeded—at least for a while. Save for this mania of saying smart things in and out of season, Lireux was really a good-natured fellow, and we were all glad that he had realized his ambition. The venture looked promising enough at the start. He got an excellent company together, comprising Bocage, Monrose, Gil-Pères, Maubant, Mdlles. Georges and Araldi, Madame Dorval, etc.; and if, like young Bonaparte's troops, they were badly paid and wanted for everything, they worked with a will, because, like Bonaparte, Lireux inspired them with confidence. He, on the other hand, knew their value, and on no pretext would allow them to be ousted from the positions they had honourably won by their talents and hard work. Presumptuous mediocrity, backed either by influence or intrigue, found him a stern adversary; the intriguer got his answer in such a way as to prevent him from returning to the charge. One day an actor of reputed incapacity, Machanette, claimed the title-rôle in Molière's "Misanthrope."

"You have no one else to play Alceste," he said.

"Yes, I have. I have got one of the checktakers," replied Lireux.

Auguste Lireux was one of those managers the race of which began with Harel at the Porte Saint-Martin and Dr. Véron at the Opéra. Duponchel, at the latter house, Montigny at the Gymnase, Buloz and Arsène Houssaye at the Comédie-Francaise, endeavoured as far as possible to follow their traditions of liberality towards the public and their artists, and encouragement given to untried dramatists. It was not Lireux's fault that he did not succeed for any length of time. Of course, there is a ridiculous side to everything. During the terrible cholera visitation of 1832, Harel published a kind

of statistics, showing that not a single one of the spectators had been attacked by the plague; but all this cannot blind us to the support given to the struggling playwright, Dumas, in the early part of his career. During the winter of 1841-'42, which was a severe one, Lireux sent foot-warmers to the rare audience that patronized him on a bitterly cold night, "when tragedy still further chills the house"; the little bit of charlatanism cannot disturb the fact of his having given one of the foremost dramatists of the day a chance with "La Cigue." I am alluding to the first piece of Émile Augier.

This kind of thing tells with a general public, more so still with a public composed of generous-minded, albeit somewhat riotous youths like those of the Quartier-Latin in the early forties. Gradually the latter found their way to the Odéon, "sinon pour voir la pièce, alors pour entendre Lireux, qui est toujours amusant"; which, in plain language, meant that come what may they would endeavour to provoke Lireux into giving them a speech.

Flattering as was this resolve on their part to Lireux's eloquence, the means they employed to encompass their end would have made the existence of an ordinary manager a burden to him. But Lireux was not an ordinary manager; he possessed "the gift of the gab" to a marvellous degree: consequently he made it known that he would be happy at any time to address MM. les étudiants without putting them to the expense of apples and eggs on the evening of the performance, and voice-lozenges the next day, if they, MM. les étudiants, would in return respect his furniture and the dresses of his actors. The arrangement worked exceedingly well, and for four years the management and the student part of the audience lived in the most perfect harmony.

Lireux did more than that, he forestalled their possible objections to a doubtful episode in a play. I remember the first night of "Jeanne de Naples." The piece had dragged fearfully. Lireux had made three different speeches during the evening, but he foresaw a riot at the end of the piece which no eloquence on his part would be able to quell. It appears—for we only found this out the next day—that the condemned woman, previous to being led to execution, had to deliver a monologue of at least a hundred and fifty or two hundred lines. The unhappy queen had scarcely begun, when a herculean soldier rushed on the stage, took her into his arms and carried her off by main force, notwithstanding her struggles. It was a truly sensational ending, and the curtain fell amidst deafening applause. It redeemed the piece!

Next day Lireux made his appearance at Tortoni's in the afternoon, and, as a matter of course, the production of the previous evening was discussed.

"I cannot understand," said Roger de Beauvoir, "how a man with such evident knowledge of stagecraft as the author displayed in that dénoûment, could have perpetrated such an enormity as the whole of the previous acts."

Lireux was fairly convulsed with laughter. "Do you really think that was his own invention?" he asked.

"Of course I do," was the reply.

"Well, it is not. His dénoûment was a speech which would have taken about twenty minutes, at the end of which the queen is tamely led off between the soldiers. I know what would have been the result: the students would have simply torn up the benches and Heaven knows what else. You know that if the gas is left burning, if only a moment, after twelve, there is an extra charge irrespective of the quantity consumed. I looked at my watch when she began to speak her lines. It was exactly thirteen minutes to twelve; she might have managed to get to the end by twelve, but it was doubtful. What was not doubtful was the row that would have ensued, and the time it would have taken me to cope with it. My mind was made up there and then. I selected the biggest of the supers, told him to go and fetch her, and you know the rest."

There were few theatrical managers in those days who escaped the vigilance of Balzac. Among the many schemes he was for ever hatching for benefiting mankind and making his own fortune, there was one which can not be more fitly described than in the American term of "making a corner"; only that particular "corner" was to be one in plays.

About two years before the advent of Lireux, and when the house at Ville d'Avray, of which I have spoken elsewhere, was completed, a party of literary men received an invitation to spend the Sunday there. It was not an ordinary invitation, but a kind of circular-letter, the postscriptum to which contained the following words: "M. de Balzac will make an important communication." Léon Gozlan, Jules Sandeau, Louis Desnoyers, Henri Monnier, and those familiar with Balzac's schemes, knew pretty well what to expect; and when Lassailly, one of the four men whose nose vied with the legendary one of Bouginier, confirmed their apprehensions that it was a question of making their fortunes, they resigned themselves to their fate. Jules Sandeau, who was gentleness itself, merely observed with a sigh that it was the fifteenth time Balzac had proposed to make him a millionnaire; Henri Monnier offered to sell his share of the prospective profits for 7 francs, 50 centimes; Léon Gozlan suggested that their host might have discovered a diamond mine, whereupon Balzac, who had just entered the room, declared that a diamond mine was nothing to it. He was simply going to monopolize the whole of the Paris theatres. He exposed the plan in a magnificent speech of two hours' duration, and would have continued for two hours more had not one of the guests reminded him that it was time for dinner.

"Dinner," exclaimed Balzac; "why, I never thought of it."

Luckily there was a restaurant near, and the future millionnaires and their would-be benefactor were enabled to sit down to "a banquet quite in keeping, not only with the magnificent prospects just disclosed to them, but with the splendour actually surrounding them," as Méry expressed it.

For it should be added that the sumptuous dwelling which was to be, was at that moment absolutely bare of furniture, save a few deal chairs and tables. The garden was a wilderness, intersected by devious paths, sloping so suddenly as to make it impossible to keep one's balance without the aid of an Alpenstock or the large stones imbedded in the soil, but only temporarily, by the considerate owner. One day, Dutacq, the publisher, having missed his footing, rolled as far as the wall inclosing the domain, without his friends being able to stop him.

The garden, like everything else connected with the schemes of Balzac, was eventually to become a gold-mine. Part of it was to be built upon, and converted into a dairy; another part was to be devoted to the culture of the pineapple and the Malaga grape, all of which would yield an income of 30,000 francs annually "at least"—to borrow Balzac's own words.

The apartments had been furnished in the same grandiose way—theoretically. The walls were, as I have already remarked, absolutely bare, but on their plaster, scarcely dry, were magnificent inscriptions of what was to be. They were mapped out regardless of expense. On that facing the north there was a splendid piece of thirteenth-century Flemish tapestry—in writing, of course, flanked by two equally priceless pictures by Raphael and Titian. Facing these, one by Rembrandt, and, underneath, a couch, a couple of arm-chairs, and six ordinary ones, Louis XV., and upholstered in Aubusson tapestry—subjects, Lafontaine's Fables. Opposite again, a monumental mantelpiece in malachite (a present of Czar Nicholas, who had expressed his admiration of Balzac's novels), with bronzes and clock by De Gouttières. The place on the ceiling was marked for a chandelier of Venetian glass, and in the dining-room a square was drawn on the carpetless floor for the capacious sideboard, whereon would be displayed "the magnificent family plate."

Pending the arrival of the furniture, the building of the dairy, hothouses, and vineries, the guests had to sit on hard wooden chairs, to eat a vile dinner, supplemented, however, by an excellent dessert. Balzac was very fond of fruit, and especially of pears, of which he always ate an enormous quantity. The wine was, as a rule, very inferior, but on that particular occasion Balzac's guests discovered that their host's imagination could even play him more cruel tricks in the selection of his vintages than it played him in his pursuit of financial schemes and the furnishing of his house.

When the fruit was placed upon the table, Balzac assumed a most solemn air. "Gentlemen," he said, "I am going to give you some Château-Lafitte, such as you have never tasted—such as it has been given to few mortals to taste. I wish you to sip it carefully—I might almost say reverently, because the opportunity may not repeat itself in our lives."

Wherewith the guests' glasses were filled; all of them made horrible faces, for it was abominable stuff, but one more outspoken than the rest gave his opinion there and then—

"This may be 'Château de la Rue Lafitte,' but it is enough to give one the colic."

Any one else but Balzac would have been horribly disconcerted; he, on the contrary, did not budge. "Yes," he said proudly, "you are right in one respect; this ambrosial nectar comes in a straight line from the Rue Lafitte, for it is Baron James de Rothschild who made me a present of two barrels, for which I am profoundly grateful. Drink, gentlemen, drink, and be thankful also."

Those who would consider this a clever piece of acting on Balzac's part, would be greatly mistaken. His imagination at times affected his palate as well as his other organs, and at that moment he was under the distinct impression that he was offering his guests one of the rarest vintages on record.

I have endeavoured hitherto to digress as little as possible in my recollections, though their very nature made it difficult. In this instance, digression was absolutely necessary to convey an idea of the shock which would naturally result from the contact of two such brains as those of Balzac and Lireux; for it was not long after the young manager's advent to the Odéon that Balzac found his way to his sanctum. The play he offered him was "Les Ressources de Quinola." Strange as it may seem to us, even as late as '42, Balzac's name as a novelist did not rank first in the list with the general public, still it is very doubtful whether any young manager would have refused a stage play by him; consequently, Lireux accepted "Les Ressources de Quinola" almost without fear. It is not to the purpose to say that it was a bad play, and that he ought to have known better; it has been amply proved by now that the most experienced manager is not infallible; but it is a moot point whether the greatest masterpiece would have succeeded with the tactics adopted by Balzac to insure its success. The following may appear like a scene from a farcical comedy; I can vouch for the truth of every word of it, because I had it from the lips of Lireux himself, who, after all, was the heaviest sufferer by Balzac's incurable greed, or, to put it as leniently as one can, by his constant chase after a capital stroke of business. His resolve to pack the house on the first night was not due to a desire to secure a favourable reception from a friendly audience, but to the determination to secure "a lump sum," let come what might. In Balzac are found the two contradictory traits of the money-grubber and the spendthrift.

The scene alluded to just now, took place when the rehearsals were far advanced; the author and the manager were discussing the invitations to be sent out, etc. All at once Balzac declared that he would have none but Knights of the Order of Saint-Louis in the pit. "I am agreeable," replied Lireux,

"provided you ferret them out."[22]

"I'll see to that," said Balzac. "Pray go on. What is the next part of the house?"

"Orchestra stalls."

"Nothing but peers of France there."

"But the orchestra stalls will not hold them all, Monsieur de Balzac."

"Those who cannot find room in the house will have to stand in the lobbies," said Balzac, imperturbably.

"Stage boxes?" continued Lireux.

"They will be reserved for the Court."

"Stage boxes on the first tier?"

"For the ambassadors and plenipotentiaries."

"The open boxes on the ground floor?"

"For the wives and families of the ambassadors."

"Upper circle?" enumerated Lireux, not a muscle of his face moving.

"For the deputies and grand officers of State."

"Third circle?" enumerated Lireux.

"The heads of the great banking and financial establishments."

"The galleries and amphitheatre?"

"A carefully selected, but varied, bourgeoisie," wound up Balzac.

Lireux, who was a capital mimic, re-enacted the scene for us four-and-twenty hours after it had been enacted in his own room, and while he was still under the impression that it was merely a huge joke on Balzac's part. He soon discovered, however, that the latter was terribly in earnest, when, a few days later, Balzac claimed the whole of the seats for the first three nights, on the penalty of withdrawing his piece there and then. Lireux foolishly submitted, the box office was closed; every one applying for tickets was referred to Balzac himself, or rather to the shady individual who had egged him on to this speculation. The latter, at the first application, had run up the prices; the public felt disgusted, and when the curtain rose upon "Les Ressources de Quinola," the house was almost empty. Thereupon a batch of nondescripts was sent into the streets to dispose of the tickets at any price; the bait was indignantly rejected, and the curtain fell amidst violent hisses. I repeat, a masterpiece would have failed under such circumstances; but the short run of the revival, almost a quarter of a century later at the Vaudeville, proved that the piece was not even an ordinary money-drawing one. It only kept the bills for about nine or ten days.

Lireux was more fortunate with several other pieces, notably with that of Léon Gozlan, known to students of the French drama as "La Main Droite et la Main Gauche," but which originally bore the title of "Il était une Fois un Roi et une Reine." There could be no doubt about its tendency in its original form; it was nothing less than an indictment for bigamy both against Queen Victoria and her Consort; and the authorities had to insist not only upon the change of title and the names of the *dramatis personæ*, but upon the action being shifted from London to Stockholm. The author and manager had to comply; but the public, who had got wind of the affair, crowded the house every night in order to read between the lines.

One of my great sources of amusement for many years has been the perusal of political after-dinner speeches, and political leaders in the English papers, especially when the speakers and writers have endeavoured to lay stress upon the cordial relations between the French and the English, upon the friendly feelings guiding their actions on both sides. I am putting together these notes nearly fourteen years after the conclusion of the Franco-German War, nearly three quarters of a century after Waterloo. There is not a single Frenchman, however Chauvinistic, who ever thinks, let alone talks, of avenging Napoléon's defeat by Wellington; while, on the other hand, there is not a single Frenchman, however unpatriotic, who does not dream now and then of wiping out the humiliation suffered at Sedan. Well, in spite of the almost entire oblivion of the one disaster, and the poignant recollection of the other, the French of to-day hate the English more than the Germans; or—let me put it more correctly—they hate the Germans, they despise us. Nothing that we can do will ever remove this dislike of us.

It has been thus as long as I can remember; no royal visits, no exchange of so-called international courtesies will alter the feeling. It is ready to burst forth, the smallest provocation or fancied one will set it ablaze. During the forties there were a good many real or imaginary provocations on the part of England, and, as a consequence, the hostile feeling against her broke forth where it is almost always sure to break forth first in France—on the stage and in song. After "La Main Droite et la Main

Gauche," came Halévy's opera of "Charles VI." It is but fair to say that the Government did all it could to stem the tide, but, notwithstanding its positive orders to modify the chorus of the famous war song in the first act, the song was henceforth regarded as a patriotic hymn. Nor did the visit of the Queen to Louis-Philippe at Eu, in 1843, effect much improvement in this state of things; and, as a matter of course, we on the English side of the Channel retaliated the skits, etc., though I do not think we took them au grand sérieux. When, in January, '44, I went to London for a few days, I found the Christmas pantomime of "King Pippin" in full swing at Drury Lane. I well remember a scene of it, laid in the shop of a dealer in plaster figures. Two of these represented respectively the King of France and the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. At a given moment, the two statues became animated, drew close to one another, and exchanged the most profuse salutations. But meanwhile, at the back of the stage, the Gallic cock and the British lion (or leopard) assumed a threatening attitude, and at each mark of affection between the two royal personages, shook their heads violently and seemed to want desperately to come to close quarters. The audience applauded vociferously, and it was very evident to me that neither in Paris nor in London the two nations shared the entente cordiale of their rulers.

CHAPTER VI.

Rachel and some of her fellow-actors — Rachel's true character — Her greediness and spitefulness — Her vanity and her wit — Her powers of fascination — The cost of being fascinated by her — Her manner of levying toll — Some of her victims, Comte Duchâtel and Dr. Véron — The story of her guitar — A little transaction between her and M. Fould — Her supposed charity and generosity — Ten tickets for a charity concert — How she made them into twenty — How she could have made them into a hundred — Baron Taylor puzzled — Her manner of giving presents — Beauvallet's precaution with regard to one of her gifts — Alexandre Dumas the younger, wiser or perhaps not so wise in his generation — Rachel as a raconteuse — The story of her *début* at the Gymnase — What Rachel would have been as an actor instead of an actress — Her comic genius — Rachel's mother — What became of Rachel's money — Mama Félix as a pawnbroker — Rachel's trinkets — Two curious bracelets — Her first appearance before Nicholas I. — A dramatic recital in the open air — Rachel's opinion of the handsomest man in Europe — Rachel and Samson — Her obligations to him — How she repays them — How she goes to Berryer to be coached in the fable of "The Two Pigeons" — An anecdote of Berryer — Rachel's fear of a "warm reception" on the first night of "Adrienne Lecouvreur" — How she averts the danger — Samson as a man and as an actor — Petticoat-revolts at the Comédie-Française — Samson and Régnier as buffers — Their different ways of pouring oil upon the troubled waters — Mdlle. Sylvanie Plessy — A parallel between her and Sarah Bernhardt — Samson and Régnier's pride in their profession — The different character of that pride — "Apollo with a bad tailor, and who dresses without a looking-glass" — Samson gives a lesson in declamation to a procureur-impérial — The secret of Régnier's greatness as an actor — A lesson at the Conservatoire — Régnier on "make-up" — Régnier's opinion of genius on the stage — A mot of Augustine Brohan — Giovanni, the wigmaker of the Comédie-Française — His pride in his profession — M. Ancessy, the musical director, and his three wigs.

There were few authors of my time who came in contact with Rachel without writing about her; there were absolutely none who have represented her in her true character. Either her genius blinded them to her faults, or else they were content to perpetuate the popular belief in her amiability, good nature, generosity, etc. The fact is, that Rachel off the stage was made of very ordinary clay. She had few of the good qualities of her race, and a good many of the bad ones; she was greedy to a degree, and could be very spiteful. All these drawbacks, in the eyes of most of her biographers, were redeemed by her marvellous tragic abilities on the stage, by a wonderful "gift of the gab," by a "happy-go-lucky," "hail-fellow, well-met" manner off the stage to those whom she liked to propitiate. Nevertheless, there were times when she had not a single friend at the Comédie-Française, and though her champions attributed this hostility to jealousy of her great gifts, a moment's consideration would show us that such a feeling could scarcely have influenced the men who to a great extent shared her histrionic triumphs, viz., Beauvallet, Régnier, Provost, Samson, and least of all the latter. Still, all these would have willingly kept her out of the Comédie-Française after she had left it in a huff. She was difficult to get on with; her modesty, assumed in everyday life, was a sham, for woe to the host who, deceived by it, did not at once make her the queen of the entertainment! And, in reality, nothing in her warranted such a temporary elevation. She was witty in her way and after her kind—that is, she had the quick-wittedness of the French woman who is not an absolute fool, and who has for many years rubbed elbows with everything distinguished in art and literature. Notwithstanding this intimacy, I am doubtful whether she had ever read, let alone appreciated, any of the masterpieces by the writers of her own days that did not directly bear upon her profession. I exclude fiction—I mean narrative fiction, and especially that of a sensational kind, of which she was probably as fond as the meanest concierge and most romantic milliner-girl.

Nevertheless, provided one did not attempt to analyze it, the power of fascinating the coldest

interlocutor was there. To their honor be it said, her contemporaries, especially the men, rarely made such an attempt at analysis. They applauded all she said (off and on the stage), they tolerated all she did, albeit that they paid the cost of many of her so-called "amiable tricks," which were mainly so many instances of greed and nothing else. One evening she was dining at Comte Duchâtel's, the minister of Louis-Philippe. The table was positively laden with flowers, but Rachel did not care much about them; what she wanted was the splendid silver centre-piece. But she was too clever to unmask her batteries at once, so she began by admiring the contents, then at last she came to the principal point. The host was either in one of his generous or foolish moods, and made her a present of it there and then. Rachel knew, though, that even with a grand seigneur like Comte Duchâtel, there are "les lendemains de l'enthousiasme," especially when he is a married man, whose wife does not willingly submit to have her home stripped of its art-treasures. The tragédienne came in a hackney cab; the comte offered to send her back in his carriage. She struck the iron while it was hot. "Yes, that will do admirably; there will be no fear of my being robbed of your present, which I had better take with me." "Perfectly, mademoiselle," replied the comte; "but you will send me back my carriage, won't you?"

Dr. Véron was despoiled with even less ceremony. Having taken a fancy to some silver saucers or cups in which the proprietor of the *Constitutionnel* offered ices to his visitors, she began by pocketing one, and never rested until she had the whole of the set. In short, everything was fish to her net. She made her friends give her bibelots and knickknacks of no particular value, to which she attached some particular legend—absolute inventions for the greatest part—in order to sell them for a thousand times their original cost. One day she noticed a guitar at the studio of one of her familiars. "Give me that guitar; people will think it is the one with which I earned my living on the Place Royale and on the Place de la Bastille." And as such it was sold by her to M. Achille Fould for a thousand louis. The great financier nearly fell into a fit when the truth was told to him at Rachel's death; he, in his turn, having wanted to "do a bit of business." In this instance no Christian suffered, because buyer and vendor belonged to the same race. Of course the panegyrists of Rachel, when the story came to their ears, maintained that the thousand louis were employed for some charitable purpose, without, however, revealing the particular quarter whither they went; but those who judged Rachel dispassionately could not even aver that her charity began at home, because, though she never ceased complaining of her brother's and her sisters' extravagance, both brother and sisters could have told very curious tales about the difficulty of making her loosen her purse-strings for even the smallest sums. As for Rachel's doing good by stealth and blushing to find it fame, it was all so much fudge. Contrary to the majority of her fellow-professionals, in the past as well as the present, she even grudged her services for a concert or a performance in aid of a deserving object, although she was not above swelling her own hoard by such entertainments.

The following instance, for the absolute truth of which I can vouch, is a proof of what I say. One day the celebrated Baron Taylor, who had been the director of the Comédie-Française, came to solicit her aid for a charity concert; I am not certain of the object, but believe it was in aid of the Christians in Persia or China. The tickets were to be a hundred francs each. Sontag, Alboni, Rosine Stoltz, Mario, Lablache, Vieuxtemps, and I do not know how many more celebrated artists had promised their services.

It was in 1850 when M. Arsène Houssaye was her director, and I am particular about giving the year, because Rachel refused on the pretext that her director would never give her leave to appear on any other stage. Now, it so happened that no woman ever had a more devoted friend and chivalrous champion than Rachel had in Arsène Houssaye. His friendship for her was simply idolatry, and I verily believe that if she had asked him to stand on his head to please her, he would have done so, at the risk of making himself supremely ridiculous—he who feared ridicule above everything, who was one of the most sensible men of his time, who was and is the incarnation of good-nature, to whom no one in distress or difficulties ever appealed in vain.

Baron Taylor argued all this, but Rachel remained inflexible. "I am very sorry," he said at last, rising to go, "because I am positive that your name on the bill would have made a difference of several thousand francs in the receipts."

"Oh, if you only want my name," was the answer, "you may have it; you can make an apology at the eleventh hour for my absence on the score of sudden indisposition—the public at charity concerts are used to that sort of thing; besides, you will have so many celebrities that it will make very little difference. By-the-by"—as he was at the door—"I think my name is worth ten or twenty tickets." Taylor knew Rachel too well to be in the least surprised at the demand, and left ten tickets on the mantelpiece.

That same afternoon he met Count Walewski, and as a matter of course asked him to take some tickets.

"Very sorry, cher baron, but I have got ten already. You see, poor Rachel did not know very well how to get rid of the two hundred you burdened her with as a lady patroness; so she wanted me to have twenty, but I settled the matter with ten. As it is, it cost me a thousand francs."

Taylor did not say another word—he probably could not; he was struck dumb with astonishment at the quickness with which Rachel had converted the tickets into money. But what puzzled him still more was the fact of her having offered Walewski double the quantity of tickets he had given her. Where had she got the others from? He was coming to the conclusion that she had offered twenty in order to place ten, when he ran against Comte Le Hon, the husband of the celebrated Mdlle. Musselmans, the erstwhile Belgian ambassador to the court of Louis-Philippe, who averred frankly

that he was the father of a family, though he had no children of his own.

Taylor thought he would try another chance, and was met with the reply, "Cher baron, I am very sorry, but I have just taken five tickets from Mdlle. Rachel. It appears that she is a lady patroness, and that they burdened her with two hundred; fortunately, she told me, people were exceedingly anxious to get them, and these were the last five."

"Then she had two hundred tickets after all," said Baron Taylor to himself, making up his mind to find out who had been before him with Rachel. But no one had been before him. The five tickets sold to Comte Le Hon were five of the ten she had sold to Comte Walewski. When the latter had paid her, she made him give her five tickets for herself and family, or rather for her four sisters and herself. Of Comte Le Hon she only took toll of one, which, wonderful to relate, she did not sell. This was Rachel's way of bestirring herself in the cause of charity.

"Look at the presents she made to every one," say the panegyrists. They forget to mention that an hour afterwards she regretted her generosity, and from that moment she never left off scheming how to get the thing back. Every one knew this. Beauvallet, to whom she gave a magnificent sword one day, instead of thanking her, said, "I'll have a chain put to it, mademoiselle, so as to fasten it to the wall of my dressing-room. In that way I shall be sure that it will not disappear during my absence." Alexandre Dumas the younger, to whom she made a present of a ring, bowed low and placed it back on her finger at once. "Allow me to present it to you in my turn, mademoiselle, so as to prevent you asking for it." She did not say nay, but carried the matter with one of her fascinating smiles. "It is most natural to take back what one has given, because what one has given was dear to us," she replied.

Between '46 and '53 I saw a great deal of Rachel, generally in the green-room of the Comédie-Française, which was by no means the comfortable or beautiful apartment people imagine, albeit that even in those days the Comédie had a collection of interesting pictures, busts, and statues worthy of being housed in a small museum. The chief ornament of the room was a large glass between the two windows, but if the apartment had been as bare as a barn, the conversation of Rachel would have been sufficient to make one forget all about its want of decoration; for, with the exception of the elder Dumas, I have never met any one, either man or woman, who exercised the personal charm she did. I have been told since that Bismarck has the same gift. I was never sufficiently intimate with the great statesman to be able to judge, having only met him three or four times, and under conditions that did not admit of fairly testing his powers in that respect, but I have an idea that the charm of both lay in their utter indifference to the effect produced, or else in their absolute confidence of the result of their simplicity of diction. Rachel's art of telling a story, if art it was, reminded one of that of the chroniclers of the *Niebelungen*; for notwithstanding her familiarity with Racine and Corneille, her vocabulary was exceedingly limited, and her syntax, if not her grammar, off the stage, not always free from reproach.

I do not pretend, after the lapse of so many years, to give these stories in her own language, or all of them; there are a few, however, worth the telling, apart from the fascination with which she invested them.

One evening she said to me, "Do you know Poirson?"

I had known Poirson when he was director of the Gymnase. He afterwards always invited me to his soirées, one of which, curiously enough, was given on the Sunday before the Revolution of '48. So I said, "Yes, I know Poirson."

"Has he ever told you why he did not re-engage me?"

"Never."

"I'll tell you. People said it was because I did not succeed in 'La Vendéenne' of Paul Duport; but that was not the cause. It was something much more ridiculous; and now that I come to think of it, I am not sure that I ought to tell you, for you are an Englishman, and you will be shocked."

I was not shocked, I was simply convulsed with laughter, for Rachel, not content with telling the story, got up, and, gradually drawing to the middle of the room, enacted it. It was one of those ludicrous incidents that happen sometimes on the stage, which no amount of foresight on the part of the most skilful and conscientious manager or actor can prevent, but which almost invariably ruins the greatest masterpiece. There were about eight or nine actors and actresses in the room—Régnier, Samson, Beauvallet, etc. It was probably the most critical audience in Europe, but every one shook, and Mdlle. Anaïs Aubert went into a dead faint. Régnier often averred that if Rachel had been a man, she would have been the greatest comic actor that ever lived; and it is not generally known that she once played Dorine in "Tartuffe," and set the whole of the house into a perfect roar; but on that evening I became convinced that Rachel, in addition to her tragic gifts, was the spirit of Aristophanesque comedy personified. I am afraid, however, that I cannot tell the story, or even hint at it, beyond mentioning that Poirson is reported to have said that Rachel did not want a stage-manager, but a nurse to take care of her. The criticism was a cruel one, though justified by appearances. It was Mama Félix, and not her daughter, who was to blame. The child—she was scarcely more than that—had hurt herself severely, and instead of keeping her at home, she sent her to the theatre, "poulticed all over," as Rachel expressed it afterwards.

Mama Félix was the only one who was a match for her famous daughter in money matters. What the latter did with the enormous sums of money she earned has always been a mystery. As I have already said, they were not spent in charity. Nowadays, whatever other theatres may do, the Comédie-Française dresses its pensionnaires as well as its sociétaires from head to foot; it pays the bootmaker's as well as the wigmaker's bill, and the laundress's also. Speaking of the beginning of her career, which coincided with the end of Rachel's, Madeleine Brohan, whose language was often more forcible than elegant, remarked, "Dans ma jeunesse, on nous mettait toutes nues sur la scène; nous étions assez jolies pour cela." But Rachel's costumes varied so little throughout her career as to have required but a small outlay on her part. Nor could her ordinary dresses and furniture, which I happened to see in April, 1858, when they were sold by public auction at her apartments in the Place Royale, have made a considerable inroad on her earnings. The furniture was commonplace to a degree; such pictures and knickknacks as were of value had been given to her, or acquired in the manner I have already described; the laces and trinkets were, undoubtedly, not purchased with her own money. It is said that her brother Raphael was a spendthrift. He may have been, but he did not spend his celebrated sister's money; of that I feel certain. Then what became of it? I am inclined to think that Mdlle. Rachel dabbled considerably in stocks, and that, notwithstanding her shrewdness and sources of information, she was the victim of people cleverer than she was. At any rate, one thing is certain—she was nearly always hard up; and, after having exhausted the good will of all her male acquaintances and friends, compelled to appeal to her mother, who had made a considerable hoard for her other four sisters, and perhaps also for her scapegrace son; for, curiously enough, with Mama Félix every one of her children was a goddess or god, except *the goddess*. This want of appreciation on the mother's part reminds me of a story told to me by Meissonier. His granddaughter, on her fifteenth or sixteenth birthday, had a very nice fan given to her. The sticks were exquisitely carved in ivory, and must have cost a pretty tidy sum, but the fan itself, of black gauze, was absolutely plain. The donor probably intended the grandfather's art to enhance the value of the present, and the latter was about to do so, when the young lady stopped him with the cry, "Voilà qu'il va me gâter mon éventail avec ses mannequins!" The irony of non-appreciation by one's nearest and dearest could no further go.

Mama Félix, then, was very close-fisted, and would never lend her daughter any money, except on very good security, namely, on her jewels. In addition to this, she made her sign an undertaking that if not redeemed at a certain date they would be forfeited; and forfeited they were, if the loan and interest were not forthcoming at the stipulated time, notwithstanding the ravings of Rachel. This would probably account for the comparatively small quantity of valuable jewelery found after her death.

Some of the ornaments I have seen her wear had an artistic value utterly apart from their cost, others were so commonplace and such evident imitations as to have been declined by the merest grisette. One day I noticed round her wrist a peculiar bracelet. It was composed of a great number of rings, some almost priceless, others less valuable but still very artistic, others again possessing no value whatsoever, either artistically or otherwise. I asked her to take it off and found it to be very heavy, so heavy that I remarked upon it. "Yes," she replied, "I cannot wear two of the same weight, so I am obliged to wear the other in my pocket." And out came the second, composed of nearly double the number of rings of the first. I was wondering where all those rings came from, but I refrained from asking questions. I was enabled to form my own conclusions a little while afterwards, in the following way:

While we were still admiring the bracelet, Rachel took from her finger a plain gold hoop, in the centre of which was an imperial eagle of the same metal. "This was given to me by Prince Louis Napoléon," she said, "on the occasion of my last journey to London. He told me that it was a souvenir from his mother, and that he would not have parted with it to any one else but me."

I cannot remember the exact date of this conversation, but it must have been shortly after the Revolution, when the future emperor had just landed in France. About three or four weeks afterwards we were talking to Augustine Brohan, who had just returned from London, where she had fulfilled an engagement of one or two months. Rachel was not there that night, but some one asked her if she had seen Prince Louis in London. "Yes," she replied; "he was going away, and he gave me a present before he went." Thereupon she took from her finger a ring exactly like that of Rachel's. "He told me it was a souvenir from his mother, and that he would not have parted with it to any one but me."

We looked at one another and smiled. The prince had evidently a jeweller who manufactured "souvenirs from his mother" by the dozen, and which he, the prince, distributed at that time, "in remembrance of certain happy hours." The multiplicity of the rings on Rachel's wrist was no longer a puzzle to me. I was thinking of the story in the "Arabian Nights," where the lady with the ninety-eight rings bewitches the Sultans Shariar and Shahzenan, in spite of the jealousy and watchfulness of the monster to whom she belongs, and so makes the hundred complete.

Among the many stories Rachel told me there is one not generally known—that of her first appearance before Nicholas I. Though she was very enthusiastically received in London, and though she always spoke gratefully of the many acts of kindness shown her there, I am inclined to think that she felt hurt at the want of cordiality on the part of the English aristocracy when they invited her to recite at their entertainments. This may be a mere surmise of mine; I have no better grounds for it than an expression of hers one day when we were discussing London society. "Oui, les Anglais, ils sont très aimables, mais ils paraissent avoir peur des artistes, comme des bêtes sauvages, car ils vous parquent comme elles au Jardin des Plantes." I found out afterwards that it was a kind of grudge she bore the English for having invariably improvised a platform or enclosure by means of silken ropes.

Certain is it that, beyond a few casual remarks at long intervals upon London, she seemed reluctant to discuss the subject with me. Not so with regard to Potsdam after her return whence in August, '51. In the beginning of July of that year she told me that she had a special engagement to appear before the court on the 13th of that month. I did not see her until a few weeks after she came back, and then she gave me a full account of the affair. I repeat, after the lapse of so many years, I cannot reproduce her own words, and I could not, even half an hour after her narrative, have reproduced the manner of her telling it; but I can vouch for the correctness of the facts.

"About six o'clock, Raphael [her brother], who was to give me my cues, and I arrived at Potsdam, where we were met by Schneider, who had made the engagement with me. You know, perhaps, that Schneider had been an actor himself, that afterwards he had been promoted to the directorship of the Royal Opera House, and that now he is the private reader to the king, with the title of privy or aulic councillor.

"Schneider is a very nice man, and I have never heard a German speak our language so perfectly. Perhaps it was as well, because I dread to contemplate what would have been the effect upon my nerves and ears of lamentations in Teutonized French."

"Why lamentations?"? I asked.

"Ah, nous voilà!" she replied. "You remember I was in mourning. The moment I stepped out of the carriage, he exclaimed, 'But you are all in black, mademoiselle.' 'Of course I am,' I said, 'seeing that I am in mourning.' 'Great Heaven! what am I to do? Black is not admitted at court on such occasions.' I believe it was the birthday of the Czarina, but of course I was not bound to know that.

"There was no time to return to Berlin, and least of all to get a dress from there, so Raphael and he put their heads together; the result of which conference was my being bundled rather than handed into a carriage, which drove off at full speed to the Château de Glinicke. I could scarcely catch a glimpse of the country around Potsdam, which seemed to me very lovely.

"When we got to Glinicke, which belongs to Prince Charles, I was handed over to some of the ladies-in-waiting of the princess. Handed over is the only word, because I felt more like a prisoner than anything else, and they tried to make 'little Rachel' presentable according to their lights. One of them, after eyeing me critically, suggested my wearing a dress of hers. In length it would have done very well, only I happen to be one of the lean kine, and she decidedly was not, so that idea had to be abandoned. They may be very worthy women, these German ladies, but their inventiveness with regard to dress is absolutely *nil*. When the idea suggested by the first lady turned out to be impracticable, they were à bout de ressources. You may gather from this, mon ami, that the beginning and the end of their stratégie de la toilette are not far apart. There was one thing that consoled me for this sudden exhaustion of their limited ingenuity. Between the half-dozen—for they were half a dozen—they could not find a single word when the first and only device proved impossible of realization. Had there been the same number of French women assembled, it would have been a kind of little madhouse; in this instance there was a deep silence for at least ten minutes, eventually broken by the knocking at the door of one of the maids, with Herr Schneider's compliments, and wishing to know what had been decided upon. The doleful answer brought him to the room, and what six women could not accomplish, he, like the true artist, accomplished at once. 'Get Mdlle. Rachel a black lace mantilla, put a rose in her hair, and give her a pair of white gloves.' In less than ten minutes I was ready, and in another ten, Raphael, Schneider, and I embarked on a pretty little steam-yacht lying ready at the end of the magnificent garden for 'l'Île des Pâons' (Pfauen-Insel, Peacock Island), where we landed exactly at eight. But my troubles and surprises were not at an end. I made sure that there would be at least a tent, an awning, or a platform for me to stand under or upon. Ah, oui! not the smallest sign of either. 'Voilà votre estrade,' said Schneider, pointing to a small lawn, separated from the rest of the gardens by a gravelled walk three or four feet wide. I declined at once to act under such conditions, and insisted upon being taken back immediately to the station, and from thence to Berlin. Poor Schneider was simply in despair. In vain did he point out that to any one else the total absence of scenery and adjuncts might prove a drawback, but that to me it would only be an additional advantage, as it would bring into greater relief my own talent; I would not be persuaded. Finding that it was fruitless to play upon my vanity as an artist, he appealed to me as a femme du monde. 'The very absence of all preparations,' he said, 'proves that their majesties have not engaged Mdlle. Rachel of the Comédie-Française to give a recitation, but invited Mdlle. Rachel Félix to one of their soirées. That Mdlle. Rachel Félix should be kind enough, after having partaken of a cup of tea, to recite something, would only be another proof of her well-known readiness to oblige;' and so forth. Let me tell you, mon cher, that I have rarely met with a cleverer diplomatist, and Heaven knows I have seen a lot who imagined themselves clever. They could not hold a candle to this erstwhile actor; nevertheless I remained as firm as a rock, though I was sincerely distressed on Schneider's account."

"What made you give in at last?" I inquired. "Was it the idea of losing the magnificent fee?"

"For once you are mistaken," she laughed, "though Schneider himself brought that argument to bear as a big piece of artillery. 'Remember this, mademoiselle,' he said, when he could think of nothing else; 'remember this—that this soirée may be the means of putting three hundred thousand or four hundred thousand francs into your pocket. You yourself told me just now on board the yacht that you were very anxious for an engagement at St. Petersburg. I need scarcely tell you that, if you refuse to appear before their majesties to-night, I shall be compelled to state the reason, and Russia will be for ever closed to you. Apart from pecuniary considerations, it will be said by your enemies—and your very eminence in your profession causes you to have many—that you have failed to please the

Empress. After all, the fact that all the ordinary surroundings of the actress have been neglected proves that you are not looked upon as an actress by them, but as une femme du monde.'"

"That persuaded you?" I remarked.

"Not at all."

"Then it was the money."

"Of course you would think so, even if I swore the contrary a hundred times over; but if you were to guess from now till to-morrow, you would never hit upon the real reason that made me stay."

"Well, then, I had better not try, and you had better tell me at once."

"Strange as it may seem to you, it was neither the gratification of being treated en femme du monde nor the money that made me stay; it was the desire to see what I had been told was the handsomest man in Europe. I did see him, and for once in a way rumour had not exaggerated the reality. I had scarcely given my final consent to Schneider, when the yacht carrying the imperial and royal families came alongside the island, and the illustrious passengers landed, amidst an avalanche of flowers thrown from the other vessels. Schneider presented me to the King, who was also good-looking, and the latter presented me to the Czar.

"Immediately afterwards the recital began. At the risk of taxing your credulity still further, I may tell you that I, Rachel, who never knew what 'stage-fright' meant, felt nervous. That man to me looked like a very god. Fortunately for my reputation, the shadows of night were gathering fast; in another twenty minutes it would be quite dark, and I felt almost rejoiced that my audience could scarcely distinguish my features. On the other hand, Raphael, who only knew the part of Hippolyte by heart, and who was obliged to read the others, declared that he could not see a line, and candles had to be brought in. It was a glorious evening, but there was a breeze nevertheless, and as fast as the candles were lighted, they were extinguished by the wind. To put ordinary lamps on the lawn at our feet was not to be thought of for a moment; luckily one of the functionaries remembered that there were some candelabra with globes inside, and by means of these a kind of 'float' was improvised. Still the scene was a curious one. Raphael close to me on the edge of the lawn, with one of these candelabra in his left hand. Behind, to the left and right of us, a serried crowd of generals, court dignitaries in magnificent uniforms. In front, and separated by the whole width of a gravel walk, the whole group of sovereigns and their relations, and behind them the walls of the mansion, against which the tea-table had been set, and around which stood the ladies-in-waiting of the Queen of Prussia and the Empress of Russia. A deep silence around, only broken by the soft soughing of the wind in the trees, and the splashing of a couple of fountains near, playing a dirge-like accompaniment to Raphael's and my voice.

"The recital lasted for nearly an hour; if I had liked I could have kept them there the whole night, for never in my career have I had such an attentive, such a religiously attentive, audience. The King was the first to notice my fatigue, and he gave the signal for my leaving off by coming up and thanking me for my efforts. The Emperor followed his example, and stood chatting to me for a long while. In a few minutes I was the centre of a circle which I am not likely to forget as long as I live. Then came the question how Raphael and I were to get back to Berlin. The last train was gone. But Schneider simply suggested a special, and a mounted messenger was despatched then and there to order it. After everything had been arranged for my comfortable return, the sovereigns departed as they had come, only this time the yacht, as well as the others on the lake, were splendidly illuminated. This was my first appearance before Nicholas I."

There was no man to whom Rachel owed more than to Samson, or even as much; but for him, and in spite of her incontestable genius, the Comédie-Français might have remained closed to her for many years, if not forever. Frédérick Lemaître and Marie Dorval were undoubtedly, in their own way, as great as she, yet the blue riband of their profession never fell to their lot. And yet, when she had reached the topmost rung of the ladder of fame, Rachel was very often not only ungrateful to him, but her ingratitude showed itself in mean, spiteful tricks. When Legouvé's "Adrienne Lecouvreur" was being cast, Samson, who had forgiven Rachel over and over again, was on such cool terms with her that the authors feared he would not accept the part of the Prince de Bouillon. Nevertheless, Samson, than whom there was not a more honourable and conscientious man, on or off the stage, accepted; he would not let his resentment interfere with what he considered his duty to the institution of which he was so eminent a member. This alone ought to have been sufficient to heal the breach between the tutor and the pupil; any woman with the least spark of generosity, in the position of Rachel towards Samson, would have taken the first step towards a reconciliation. Rachel, as will be seen directly, was perfectly conscious of what she ought to do under the circumstances; she was too great an actress not to have studied the finer feelings of the human heart, and yet she did not do it. On the contrary, she aggravated matters. Every one knows the fable of "The Two Pigeons" which Adrienne recites at the soirée of the Princesse de Bouillon. Now, it so happened that the great barrister and orator, Berryer, was considered a most charming reciter of that kind of verse. Berryer, a most simple-minded man, took special delight in sharing the most innocent games of young children. He was especially fond of the game of "forfeits"; and so great was his fame as a diseur, that the penalty generally imposed upon him was the reciting of a fable. But great diseur as he was, he himself acknowledged that Samson could have given him a lesson.

At every new part she undertook, Rachel was in the habit of consulting with her former tutor; this time she went to consult Berryer instead, and, what was worse, took pains that every one should hear

of it. "Then my heart smote me," she said afterwards, when by one of those irresistible tricks of hers she had obtained her tutor's pardon once more. It was as deliberate a falsehood as she ever uttered in her life, which in Rachel's case means a good deal. The fact was, the affair, as I have already said, had been bruited about, mainly by herself at first; the public showed a disposition to take Samson's part, and she felt afraid of a "warm reception" on the first night.

Under these circumstances she had recourse to one of her wiles, which, for being theatrical, was not less effective. At the first rehearsal, when Adrienne has to turn to Michonnet, saying, "This is my true friend, to whom I owe everything," she turned, not to Régnier, who played Michonnet, and to whom the words are addressed, but to Samson, at the same time holding out her hand to him. Samson, who, notwithstanding all their disagreements, very felt proud of his great pupil, who was, moreover, of a very affectionate disposition, notwithstanding his habitual reserve, fell into the trap. He took her proffered hand; then she flung herself into his arms, and the estrangement was at an end, for the time being. Rachel took great care to make the reconciliation as public as possible.

I was never very intimate with Samson, but the little I knew of him I liked. I repeat, he was essentially an honourable and honest man, and very tolerant with regard to the foibles of the fair sex. There was need for such tolerance in those days. Augustine Brohan, Sylvanie Plessy, Rachel, and half a dozen other women, all very talented, but all very wayward, made Buloz' life (he was the director of the Comédie-Française, as well as the editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*) a burden to him. He who could, and often did, dictate his will to men who already then were famous throughout Europe, frequently found himself powerless against women, who, however celebrated, were, with the exception of Rachel, nothing in comparison with the former. He was, it is true, overbearing to a degree, and disagreeable besides, but his temper proved of no avail with them; it only made matters worse. "Après tout," he said one day to Madame Allan, who was the most amenable of all, "je suis le maître ici." "Ça se peut, monsieur," was the answer, "mais nous sommes les contres maître."[23]

In nearly all such troubles Régnier and Samson had to act as buffers between the two contending parties; but, as Augustine Brohan explained once, the two were utterly different in their mode of casting oil upon the troubled waters. "Régnier," she said, "c'est le bon Dieu des Chrétiens, qui se fait très souvent mener par le nez par des mots. Du reste son nez s'y prête.[24] Samson c'est le Dieu juste, mais vengeur des Juifs, qui veut bien pardonner, mais seulement après soumission complète et entière. Samson ne vous promet pas le ciel, il vous offre des compensations solides ici bas."

It would be difficult to paint the contrast between two characters in fewer words. In 1845, when Mdlle. Sylvanie Plessy seceded from the Comédie-Française, Régnier wrote a kind epistle, recommending her to come and explain matters either personally or by letter. "Let your letter be kind and affectionate, and be sure that things will right themselves better than you expect."

Samson also wrote, but simply to say that if she did not come back *at once* all the terrors of the law would be invoked against her. Which was done. The Comédie-Française instituted proceedings, claiming two hundred thousand francs damages, and twenty thousand francs "à titre de provision."[25] The court cast Mdlle. Plessy in six thousand francs *provision*, deferring judgment on the principal claim. Two years later Mdlle. Plessy returned and re-entered the fold. Thanks to Samson, she did not pay a single farthing of damages, and the Comédie bore the costs of the whole of the lawsuit.[26]

Both Samson and Régnier were very proud of their profession, but their pride showed itself in different ways. Régnier would have willingly made any one an actor—that is, a good actor; he was always teaching a great many amateurs, staging and superintending their performances. Samson, on the other hand, had no sympathy whatsoever with that kind of thing, and could rarely be induced to give it aid, but he was very anxious that every public speaker should study elocution. "Eloquence and elocution are two different things," he said; "and the eloquent man who does not study elocution, is like an Apollo with a bad tailor, and who dresses without a looking-glass. I go further still, and say that every one ought to learn how to speak, not necessarily with the view of amusing his friends and acquaintances, but with the view of not annoying them. I am a busy man, but should be glad to devote three hours a week to teach the rising generation, and especially the humbler ones, how to speak."

In connection with that wish of Samson, that every man whose duties compelled him, or who voluntarily undertook to speak in public, should be a trained elocutionist, I remember a curious story of which I was made the recipient quite by accident. It was in the year '60, one morning in the summer, that I happened to meet Samson in the Rue Vivienne. We exchanged a few words, shook hands, and each went his own way. In the afternoon I was sitting at Tortoni's, when a gentleman of about thirty-five came up to me. "Monsieur," he said, "will you allow me to ask you a question?" "Certainly, monsieur, if it be one I can answer," I replied. "I believe," he said, "that I saw you in the Rue Vivienne this morning talking to some one whose name I do not know, but to whom I am under great obligations. I was in a great hurry and in a cab, and before I could stop the cabman both of you had disappeared. Will you mind telling me his name?" "I recollect being in the Rue Vivienne and meeting with M. Samson of the Comédie-Française," I answered. "I thought so," remarked my interlocutor. "Allow me to thank you, monsieur." With this he lifted his hat and went out.

The incident had slipped my memory altogether, when I was reminded of it by Samson himself, about three weeks afterwards, in the green-room of the Comédie-Française. I had been there but a few moments when he came in. "You are the man who betrayed me," he said with a chuckle. "I have been cudgelling my brain for the last three weeks as to who it could have been, for I spoke to no less than half a dozen friends and acquaintances in the Rue Vivienne on the morning I met you, and they all wear imperials and moustaches. A nice thing you have done for me; you have burdened me with a

grateful friend for the rest of my life!"

And then he told me the story, how two years before he had been at Granville during the end of the summer; how he had strolled into the Palais de Justice and heard the procureur-impérial make a speech for the prosecution, the delivery of which would have disgraced his most backward pupil at the Conservatoire. "I was very angry with the fellow, and felt inclined to write him a letter, telling him that there was no need to torture the innocent audience, as well as the prisoner in the dock. I should have signed it. I do not know why I did not, but judge of my surprise when, the same evening at dinner, I found myself seated opposite him. I must have scowled at him, and he repaid scowl for scowl. It appears that he was living at the hotel temporarily, while his wife and child were away. I need not tell you the high opinion our judges have of themselves, and I dare say he thought it the height of impertinence that I, a simple mortal, should stare at him. I soon came to the conclusion, however, that if I wanted to spare my fellow-creatures such an infliction as I had endured that day, I ought not to arouse the man's anger. So I looked more mild, then entered into conversation with him. You should have seen his face when I began to criticize his tone and gestures. But he evidently felt that I was somewhat of an authority on the subject, and at last I took him out on the beach and gave him a lesson in delivering a speech, and left him there without revealing my name. Next morning I went away, and never set eyes on him again until three weeks ago, when he left his card, asking for an interview. He is a very intelligent man, and has profited by the first lesson. During the three days he remained in Paris I gave him three more. He says that if ever I get into a scrape, he'll do better than defend me—prosecute me, and I'm sure to get off."

I have never seen Samson give a lesson at the Conservatoire, but I was present at several of Régnier's, thanks to Auber, whom I knew very well, and who was the director, and to Régnier himself, who did not mind a stranger being present, provided he felt certain that the stranger was not a scoffer. I believe that Samson would have objected without reference to the stranger's disposition; at any rate, Auber hinted as much, so I did not prefer my request in a direct form.

I doubt, moreover, whether a lesson of Samson to his pupils would have been as interesting to the outsider as one of Régnier's. Of all the gifts that go to the making of a great actor, Régnier had naturally only two—taste and intelligence; the others were replaced by what, for want of a better term, one might call the tricks of the actor; their acquisition demanded constant study. For instance, Régnier's appearance off the stage was absolutely insignificant; his voice was naturally husky and indistinct, and, moreover, what the French call nasillarde, that is, produced through the nose. His features were far from mobile; the eyes were not without expression, but these never twinkled with merriment nor shone with passion. Consequently, the smallest as well as largest effect necessary to the interpretation of a character had to be thought out carefully beforehand, and then to be tried over and over again materially. Each of his inflections had to be timed to a second; but when all this was accomplished, the picture presented by him was so perfect as to deceive the most experienced critic, let alone an audience, however intelligent. In fact, but for his own frank admission of all this, his contemporaries and posterity would have been never the wiser, for, to their honour be it said, his fellow-actors were so interested in watching him "manipulate himself," as they termed it, as to never breathe a word of it to the outside world. They all acknowledged that they had learned something from him during rehearsal. For instance, in one of his best-known characters, that of the old servant in Madame de Girardin's "La Joie fait peur,"[27] there is a scene which, as played by Régnier and Delaunay, looked to the spectator absolutely spontaneous. The smallest detail had been minutely regulated. It is where the old retainer, while dusting the room, is talking to himself about his young master, Lieutenant Adrien Desaubiers, who is reported dead.

"I can see him now," says Noël, who cannot resign himself to the idea; "I can see him now, as he used to come in from his long walks, tired, starving, and shouting before he was fairly into the house. 'Here I am, my good Noël; I am dying with hunger. Quick! an omelette.'" At that moment the young lieutenant enters the room, and having heard Noël's last sentence, repeats it word for word.

Short as was the sentence, it had been arranged that Delaunay should virtually cut it into four parts.

At the words, "*It is I*," Régnier shivered from head to foot; at "*Here I am, my good Noël*," he lifted his eyes heavenwards, to make sure that the voice did not come from there, and that he was not labouring under a kind of hallucination; at the words, "*I am dying with hunger*," he came to the conclusion that it was a real human voice after all; and at the final, "*Quick! an omelette*," he turned round quickly, and fell like a log into the young fellow's arms.

I repeat, the whole of the scene had been timed to the fraction of a second; nevertheless, on the first night, Régnier, nervous as all great actors are on such occasions, forgot all about his own arrangements, and, at the first sound of Delaunay's voice, was so overcome with emotion that he literally tumbled against the latter, who of course was not prepared to bear him up, and had all his work to do to keep himself from falling also. Meanwhile Régnier lay stretched at full length on the stage, and the house broke into tumultuous applause.

"That was magnificent," said Delaunay after the performance. "Suppose we repeat the thing to-morrow?"

But Régnier would not hear of it; he stuck to his original conception in four tempi. He preferred trusting to his art rather than to the frank promptings of nature.

That is why a lesson of Régnier to his pupils was so interesting to the outsider. The latter was, as it

were, initiated into all the resources the great actor has at his command wherewith to produce his illusion upon the public. Among Régnier's pupils those were his favourites who never allowed themselves to be carried away by their feelings, and who trusted to these resources as indicated to them by their tutor. He was to a certain extent doubtful of the others. "Feelings vary; effects intelligently conceived, studied, and carried out ought never to vary," he said. Consequently it became one of his theories that those most plentifully endowed with natural gifts were not likely to become more perfect than those who had been treated niggardly in that respect, provided the vocation and the perseverance were there. The reverse of Samson, who was proudest of Rachel, Régnier was never half as proud of M. Coquelin as of others who had given him far more trouble. Augustine Brohan explained the feeling in her own inimitable way: "Régnier est comme le grand seigneur qui s'énamourache d'une paysanne à qui il faut tout enseigner; si moi j'étais homme, j'aimerais mieux une demoiselle de bonne famille, qui n'aurait pas besoin de tant d'enseignement."

Mdlle. Brohan exaggerated a little bit. Régnier's pupils were not peasant children, to whom he had to teach everything; a great many, like Coquelin, required very little teaching, and all the others had the receptive qualities which make teaching a pleasure. The latter, boys and girls, had to a certain extent become like Régnier himself, "bundles of tricks," and, what is perhaps not so surprising to students of psychology and physiology, their features had contracted a certain likeness to his. At the first blush one might have mistaken them for his children. And they might have been, for the patience he had with them. It was rarely exhausted, but he now and then seemed to be waiting for a new supply. At such times there was a frantic clutch at the shock, grey-haired head, or else a violent blowing of the perky nose in a large crimson chequered handkerchief, its owner standing all the while on one leg; the attitude was irresistibly comic, but the pupils were used to it, and not a muscle of their faces moved.

Those who imagine that Régnier's courses were merely so many lessons of elocution and gesticulation would be altogether mistaken. Régnier, unlike many of his great fellow-actors of that period, had received a good education: he had been articled to an architect, he had even dabbled in painting, and there were few historical personages into whose characters he had not a thorough insight. He was a fair authority upon costume and manners of the Middle Ages, and his acquaintance with Roman and Greek antiquities would have done credit to many a professor. He was called "le comédien savant" and "le savant comédien." As such, whenever a pupil failed to grasp the social or political importance of one of the *dramatis personæ* of Racine's or Corneille's play, there was sure to be a disquisition, telling the youngster all about him, but in a way such as to secure the attention of the listener—a way that might have aroused the envy of a university lecturer. The dry bones of history were clothed by a man with an eye for the picturesque.

"Who do you think Augustus was?" he said one day when I was present, to the pupil, who was declaiming some lines of "Cinna." "Do you think he was the concierge or le commissionnaire du coin?" And forthwith there was a sketch of Augustus. Absolutely quivering with life, he led his listener through the streets of Rome, entered the palace with him, and once there, became Augustus himself. After such a scene he would frequently descend the few steps of the platform and drop into his armchair, exhausted.

Every now and then, in connection with some character of Molière or Regnard, there would be an anecdote of the great interpreter of the character, but an anecdote enacted, after which the eyes would fill with tears, and the ample chequered handkerchief come into requisition once more.

Régnier was a great favourite with most of his fellow-actors and the employés of the Comédie-Française, but he was positively worshipped by Giovanni, the wigmaker of the establishment. They were in frequent consultation even in the green-room, the privilege of admission to which had been granted to the Italian Figaro. The consultations became most frequent when one of the members undertook a part new to him. It was often related of Balzac that he firmly believed in the existence of the characters his brain had created. The same might be said of Régnier with regard to the characters created by the great playwrights of his own time and those of the past. Of course, I am not speaking of those who had an historical foundation. But Alceste, Harpagon, Georges Dandin, Sganarelle, and Scapin were as real to him as Orestes and Œdipus, as Augustus and Mohammed. He would give not only their biographies, but describe their appearance, their manners, their gait, and even their complexion. The first time I heard him do so, I made sure that he was trying to mystify Giovanni; but Rachel, who was present, soon undeceived me. And the Italian would sit listening reverently, then start up, and exclaim, "Ze sais ce qu'il vous faut, Monsu Régnier, ze vais faire oune parruque à étonner Molière lui-même." And he kept his word, because he considered that the wig contributed as much to, or detracted from, the success of an actor as his diction, and more than his clothes. When Delaunay became a sociétaire his first part was that of the lover in M. Viennet's "Migraine." "Voilà Monsu Delaunay, oune véritable parruque di sociétaire. Zouez à présent, vous êtes sour de votre affaire."

One day Beauvallet found him standing before the window of Brandus, the music-publisher in the Rue de Richelieu. He was contemplating the portrait of Rossini, and he looked sad.

"What are you standing there for, Giovanni?" asked Beauvallet.

"Ah, Monsu Bouvallet, I am looking at the portrait of Maëstro Giovanni Rossini, and when I think that his name is Giovanni like mine, when I see that abominable wig which looks like a grass-plot after a month of drought, I feel ashamed and sad. But I will go and see him, and make him a wig for love or money that will take twenty years off his age." He went, but Rossini would not hear of it, or rather

Madame Rossini put a spoke in his wheel. Giovanni never mentioned his name again. It was Ligier who brought Giovanni to Paris, and for a quarter of a century he worked unremittingly for the glory of the Comédie-Française, and when one of the great critics happened to speak favourably of the "make-up" of an actor, as Paul de St. Victor did when Régnier "created Noël," Giovanni used to leave his card at his house. It was Giovanni who made the wigs for M. Ancessy, the musical director at the Odéon, who, under the management of M. Edouard Thierry, occupied the same position at the Comédie-Française. M. Ancessy was not only a good chef d'orchestre, but a composer of talent; but he had one great weakness—he was as bald as a billiard-ball and wished to pass for an Absalom. Giovanni helped him to carry out the deception by making three artistic wigs. The first was of very short hair, and was worn from the 1st to the 10th of the month; from the 11th to the 20th M. Ancessy donned one with hair that was so visibly growing as to cover his ears. From the 20th to the last day of the month his locks were positively flowing, and he never failed to say on that last evening in the hearing of every one, "What a terrible nuisance my hair is to me! I must have it cut to-morrow."

CHAPTER VII.

Two composers, Auber and Félicien David — Auber, the legend of his youthful appearance — How it arose — His daily rides, his love of women's society — His mot on Mozart's "Don Juan" — The only drawback to Auber's enjoyment of women's society — His reluctance to take his hat off — How he managed to keep it on most of the time — His opinion upon Meyerbeer's and Halévy's genius — His opinion upon Gérard de Nerval, who hanged himself with his hat on — His love of solitude — His fondness of Paris — His grievance against his mother for not having given him birth there — He refuses to leave Paris at the commencement of the siege — His small appetite — He proposes to write a new opera when the Prussians are gone — Auber suffers no privations, but has difficulty in finding fodder for his horse — The Parisians claim it for food — Another legend about Auber's independence of sleep — How and where he generally slept — Why Auber snored in Véron's company, and why he did not in that of other people — His capacity for work — Auber a brilliant talker — Auber's gratitude to the artists who interpreted his work, but different from Meyerbeer's — The reason why, according to Auber — Jealousy or humility — Auber and the younger Coquelin — "The verdict on all things in this world may be summed up in the one phrase, 'It's an injustice'" — Félicien David — The man — The beginnings of his career — His terrible poverty — He joins the Saint-Simoniens, and goes with some of them to the East — Their reception at Constantinople — M. Scribe and the libretto of "L'Africaine" — David in Egypt at the court of Mehemet-Ali — David's description of him — Mehemet's way of testing the educational progress of his sons — Woe to the fat kine — Mehemet-Ali suggests a new mode of teaching music to the inmates of the harem — Félicien David's further wanderings in Egypt — Their effect upon his musical genius — His return to France — He tells the story of the first performance of "Le Désert" — An ambulant box-office — His success — Fame, but no money — He sells the score of "Le Désert" — He loses his savings — "La Perle du Brésil" and the Coup-d'État — "No luck" — Napoléon III. remains his debtor for eleven years — A mot of Auber, and one of Alexandre Dumas père — The story of "Aïda" — Why Félicien David did not compose the music — The real author of the libretto.

I knew Auber from the year '42 or '43 until the day of his death. He and I were in Paris during the siege and the Commune; we saw one another frequently, and I am positive that the terrible misfortunes of his country shortened his life by at least ten years. For though at the beginning of the campaign he was close upon ninety, he scarcely looked a twelvemonth older than when I first knew him, nearly three decades before; that is, a very healthy and active old man, but still an old man. So much nonsense has been written about his perpetual youth, that it is well to correct the error. But the ordinary French public, and many journalists besides, could not understand an octogenarian being on horseback almost every day of his life, any more than they understood later on M. de Lesseps doing the same. They did not and do not know M. Mackenzie-Grieves, and half a dozen English residents in Paris of a similar age, who scarcely ever miss their daily ride. If they had known them, they might perhaps have been less loud in their admiration of the fact.

What added, probably, to Auber's reputation of possessing the secret of perpetual youth was his great fondness for women's society, his very handsome appearance, though he was small comparatively, and his faultless way of dressing. He was most charming with the fairer sex, and many of the female pupils of the Conservatoire positively doted on him. Though polite to a degree with men —and I doubt whether Auber could have been other than polite with no matter whom—his smiles, I mean his benevolent ones, for he could smile very sceptically, were exclusively reserved for women. When he heard Mozart's "Don Juan" for the first time, he said, "This is the music of a lover of twenty, and if a man be not an imbecile, he may always have in a little corner of his heart the sentiment or fancy that he is only twenty."

There was but one drawback to Auber's enjoyment of the society of women—he was obliged to take

off his hat in their presence, and he hated being without that article of dress. He might have worn a skull-cap at home, though there was no necessity for it, as far as his hair was concerned, for up to the last he was far from bald; but he wanted his hat. He composed with his hat on, he had his meals with his hat on, and though he would have frequently preferred to take his seat in the stalls or balcony of a theatre, he invariably had a box, and generally one on the stage, in order to keep his hat on. He would often stand for hours on the balcony of his house in the Rue Saint-Georges with his hat on. "I never feel as much at home anywhere, not even in my own apartment, as in the synagogue," he said one day. He frequently went there for no earthly reason than because he could sit among a lot of people with his hat on. In fact, those frequent visits, coupled with his dislike to be bareheaded, made people wonder now and then whether Auber was a Jew. The supposition always made Auber smile. "That would have meant the genius of a Meyerbeer, a Mendelssohn, or a Halévy," he said. "No, I have been lucky enough in my life, but such good fortune as that never fell to my lot." For there was no man so willing—nay, anxious—to acknowledge the merit of others as Auber. But Auber was not a Jew, and his mania for keeping on his hat had nothing to do with his religion. It was simply a mania, and nothing more. When, in January, '55, Gérard de Nerval was found suspended from a lamp-post in the Rue de la Vieille-Lanterne, he had his hat on his head; his friends, and even the police, pretended to argue from this that he had not committed suicide, but had been murdered. "A man who is going to hang himself does not keep his hat on," they said. "Pourquoi pas, mon Dieu?" asked Auber, simply. "If I were going to kill myself, I should certainly keep my hat on." In short, it was the only thing about Auber which could not be explained.

Auber was exceedingly fond of society, and yet he was fond of solitude also. Many a time his friends reported that, returning home late from a party, they found Auber standing opposite his house in the Rue Saint-Georges, with apparently no other object than to contemplate it from below. After his return to Paris from London, whither he had been sent by his father, in order to become conversant with English business habits, he never left the capital again, though at the end of his life he regretted not having been to Italy. It was because Rossini, who was one of his idols, had said "that a musician should loiter away some of his time under that sky." But almost immediately he comforted himself with the thought that Paris, after all, was the only city worth living in. "I was very fond of my mother, but I have one grievance against her memory. What did she want to go to Caen for just at the moment when I was about to be born? But for that I should have been a real Parisian." I do not think it made much difference, for I never knew such an inveterate Parisian as Auber. When the investment of Paris had become an absolute certainty, some of his friends pressed him to leave; he would not hear of it. They predicted discomfort, famine, and what-not. "The latter contingency will not affect me much, seeing that I eat but once a day, and very little then. As for the sound of the firing disturbing me, I do not think it will. It has often been said that the first part of my overture to 'Fra Diavolo' was inspired by the retreating tramp of the regiment; there may be some truth in it. If it be vouchsafed to me to hear the retreating tramp of the Germans, I will write an overture and an opera, which will be something different, I promise you."

I do not suppose that, personally, Auber suffered any privations during the siege. A man in his position, who required but one meal a day, and that a very light one, was sure to find it somewhere; but he had great trouble to find sufficient fodder for his old faithful hack, that had carried him for years, and when, after several months of scheming and contriving to that effect, he was forced to give it up as food for others, his cup of bitterness was full. "Ils m'ont pris mon vieux cheval pour le manger," he repeated, when I saw him after the event; "je l'avais depuis vingt ans." It was really a great blow to him.

There is another legend about Auber which is not founded upon facts, namely, that he was pretty well independent of sleep. It was perfectly true that he went to bed very late and rose very early, but most people have overlooked the fact that during the evening he had had a comfortable doze, of at least an hour and a half or two hours, at the theatre. He rarely missed a performance at the Opéra or Opéra-Comique, except when his own work was performed. And during that time he slumbered peacefully, "en homme du monde," said Nestor Roqueplan, "without snoring."

"I never knew what it meant to snore," said Auber, apologetically, "until I took to sleeping in Véron's box; and as it is, I do not snore now except under provocation. But there would be no possibility of sleeping by the side of Véron without snoring. You have to drown his, or else it would awaken you."

Auber was a brilliant talker, but he scarcely ever liked to exert himself except on the subject of music. It was all in all to him, and the amount of work he did must have been something tremendous. There are few students of the history of operatic music, no matter how excellent their memories, who could give the complete list of Auber's works by heart. We tried it once in 1850, when that list was much shorter than it is now; there was not a single one who gave it correctly. The only one who came within a measureable distance was Roger, the tenor.

In spite of his world-wide reputation, even at that time, Auber was as modest about his work as Meyerbeer, but he had more confidence in himself than the latter. Auber was by no means ungrateful to the artists who contributed to his success; "but I don't 'coddle' them, and put them in cotton-wool, like Meyerbeer," he said. "It is perfectly logical that he should do so. The Nourrits, the Levasseurs, the Viardot-Garcias, and the Rogers, are not picked up at street-corners; but bring me the first urchin you meet, who has a decent voice, and a fair amount of intelligence, and in six months he'll sing the most difficult part I ever wrote, with the exception of that of Masaniello. My operas are a kind of warming-pan for great singers. There is something in being a good warming-pan."

At the first blush, this sounds something like jealousy in the guise of humility, but I am certain that

there was no jealousy in Auber's character. Few men have been so uniformly successful, but he also had his early struggles, "when perhaps I did better work than I have done since." The last sentence was invariably trolled out when a pupil of the Conservatoire complained to him of having been unjustly dealt with. I remember Coquelin the younger competing for the "prize of Comedy" in '65 or '66. He did not get it, and when we came out of Auber's box at the Conservatoire, the young fellow came up to him with tears in his eyes. I fancy they were tears of anger rather than of sorrow.

"Ah, Monsieur Auber," he exclaimed, "that's an injustice!"

"Perhaps so, my dear lad," replied Auber; "but remember that the verdict on all things in this world may be summed up in the words you have just uttered, 'It's an injustice.' Let me give you a bit of advice. If you mean to become a good Figaro, you must be the first to laugh at an injustice instead of weeping over it." Wherewith he turned his back upon the now celebrated comedian. In the course of these notes I shall have occasion to speak of Auber again.

Auber need not have generalized to young Coquelin; he might have cited one instance of injustice in his own profession, to which, fortunately, there was no parallel for at least thirty years. In the forties the critics refused to recognize the genius of Félicien David, just as they had refused to recognize the genius of Hector Berlioz. In the seventies they were morally guilty of the death of Georges Bizet, the composer of "Carmen."

I knew little or nothing of Hector Berlioz, but I frequently met Félicien David at Auber's. It was a pity to behold the man even after his success—a success which, however, did not put money in his purse. His moral sufferings, his material privations, had left their traces but too plainly on the face as well as on the mind. David had positively starved in order to buy the few books and the paper necessary to his studies, and yet he had the courage to say, "If I had to begin over again, I would do the same." The respectability that drives a gig when incarnated in parents who refuse to believe in the power of soaring of their offspring because they, the parents, cannot see the wings, has assuredly much to answer for. Flotow's father stops the supplies after seven years, because his son has not come up to time like a race-horse. Berlioz' father does not give him so long a shrift; he allows him three months to conquer fame. Félicien David had no father to help or to thwart him in his ambition. He was an orphan at the age of five, and left to the care of a sister, who was too poor to help him; but he had an uncle who was well-to-do, and who allowed him the magnificent sum of fifty francs per month—for a whole quarter—and then withdrew it, notwithstanding the assurance of Cherubini that the young fellow had the making of a great composer in him. And the worst is that these young fellows suffer in silence, while there are hundreds of benevolent rich men who would willingly open their purses to them. When they do reveal their distressed condition, it is generally to some one as poor as themselves. These rich men buy the autographs of the deceased genius for small or large sums which would have provided the struggling ones with comforts for days and days. I have before me such a letter which I bought for ten francs. I would willingly have given ten times the amount not to have bought it. It is written to a friend of his youth. "As for money," it says, "seeing that I am bound to speak of it, things are going from bad to worse. And it is very certain that in a little while I shall have to give it up altogether. I have been ill for three weeks with pains in the back, and fever and ague everywhere. I dare say that my illness was brought on by my worries, and by the bad food of the Paris restaurants, also by the constant dampness. Why am I not a little better off? I fancy that the slight comforts an artist may reasonably expect would do me a great deal of good. I am not speaking of the body, though it is a part of ourselves which considerably affects our intellect, but my imagination would be the better for it, for how can my brain, constantly occupied as it is with the worry of material wants, act unhampered? Really, I do not hesitate to say that poverty and privation kill the imagination."

They did not kill the imagination in David's case, but they undermined his constitution. It was at that period that he fell in with the Saint-Simoniens, to the high priest of which, M. Enfantin, who eventually became the chairman of the Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean Railway Company, he took me many years later. After their dispersion, the group to which he belonged went to the East, and it is to this apparently fortuitous circumstance that the world owes not only "Le Désert," "La Perle du Brésil," and "L'Eden," but probably also Meyerbeer's "Africaine." Meyerbeer virtually acknowledged that but for David's scores, so replete with the poetry of the Orient, he would have never thought of such a subject for one of his operas. M. Scribe, on the other hand, always maintained that the idea emanated from him, and that it dated from 1847, when the composer was given the choice between "La Prophète" and "L'Africaine," and chose the former. One might almost paraphrase the accusation of the wolf against the lamb in La Fontaine's fable. "M. Scribe, if you did not owe your idea to Félicien David, you owed it to Montigny, the director of the Gymnase, who in the thirties produced a play with a curious name, and a more curious plot, at the Ambigu-Comique."[28] One thing is certain, that "L'Africaine" was discarded, if ever it was offered, and would never have been thought of again but for Meyerbeer's intense and frankly acknowledged admiration of Félicien David's genius.

To return for a moment to Félicien David, whose melancholy vanished as if by magic when he related his wanderings in the East. I do not mean the poetical side of them, which inspired him with his great compositions, but the ludicrous one. I do not remember the dress of the Saint-Simoniens, I was too young at the time to have noticed it, but am told it consisted of a blue tunic and trousers to match, a scarlet jersey, which buttoned at the back, and could not be undone except with the aid of some one else. It was meant to symbolize mutual dependence upon one another. "As far as Marseilles everything went comparatively well," said David; "we lived by giving concerts, and though the receipts were by no means magnificent, they kept the wolf from the door. Our troubles began at Constantinople. Whether they did not like our music, or ourselves, or our dresses, I have never been

able to make out, but we were soon denounced to the authorities, and marched off to prison, though our incarceration did not last more than a couple of hours, thanks to our ambassador, Admiral Roussin. Our liberation, however, was conditional; we had to leave at once. We made our way to Smyrna, where my music seemed to meet with a little more favour. I performed every night, but in the open air, and some one took the hat round, just as if we had been a company of ambulant musicians to the manner born. We were, however, not altogether unhappy, for we had enough to eat and to drink, which with me, at any rate, was a paramount consideration. Up till then sufficient food had not been a daily item in my programme of life. My companions, nevertheless, became restless; they said they had not come to eat and drink and play music, but to convert the most benighted part of Europe to their doctrines; so we moved to Jaffa and Jerusalem, then to Alexandria, and finally to Cairo. By the time we got there, only three of us were left; the rest had gone homeward. Koenig-Bey had just at that moment undertaken the tuition of Mehemet-Ali's children—there were between sixty and seventy at that time; it was he who presented me to their father, with a view of my becoming the professor of music to the inmates of the harem. 'It is of no use to try to get you the appointment of professor of music to the young princes, because Mehemet, though intelligent enough, would certainly not hear of it. He would not think it necessary that a man-child should devote himself to so effeminate an accomplishment. I am translating his own thoughts on the subject, not mine. When I tell you that my monthly report about their intellectual progress is invariably waved off with the words, "Tell me how much they have gained or lost in weight," you will understand that I am not speaking at random. The viceroy thinks that hard study should produce a corresponding decrease in weight, which is not always the case, for those more or less inclined to obesity make flesh in virtue of their sitting too much. Consequently the fat kine have a very bad time of it, and among the latter is one of the most intelligent boys, Mohammed-Said.'"

"Those who would infer from this," said David one day, referring to the same subject, "that Mehemet-Ali was lacking in intelligence, would commit a grave error. I am convinced, from the little I saw of him, that he was a man of very great natural parts. His features, though not absolutely handsome, were very striking and expressive. He was over sixty then, but looked as if he could bear any amount of fatigue. His constitution must originally have been an iron one. Instead of the Oriental repose which I expected, there was a kind of semi-European, semi-military stiffness about him, which, however, soon wore off in conversation. I say advisedly conversation, albeit that he did not understand a word of French, which was the only language I spoke, and that I could not catch a word of his. But in spite of Koenig-Bey's acting the interpreter, it was a conversation between us both. He seemed to catch the meaning of my words the moment they left my lips, and every now and then smiled at my remarks. He as it were read the thoughts that provoked them, and I do not wonder at his having been amused, for I myself was never so amused in my life. Perhaps you will be, when I tell you that I was not to see the ladies I had to teach; my instruction was to be given to the eunuchs, who, in their turn, had to transmit them to the viceroy's wives and daughters. Of course, I tried to point out the impossibility of such a system, but Mehemet-Ali shook his head with a knowing smile. That was the only way he would have his womenkind initiated into the beauties of Mozart and Mendelssohn. I need not tell you that the arrangement came to nought."

Nearly all these conversations which I have noted down here, without much attempt at transition, took place at different times. One day, when he was relating some experiences of his wanderings through the less busy haunts of Egypt, I happened to say, "After all, Monsieur David, they did you good; they inspired you with the themes of your most beautiful works."

It was a very bitter smile that played on his lips, but only for a moment; the next his face resumed its usual melancholy expression. "Yes, they did me good. Do you know what occurred on the eve of the first performance of 'Le Désert,' on the morrow of which I may say without undue pride that I found myself famous? Well, I will tell you. But for Azevedo, I should have gone supperless that night.[29] I met him on the Boulevards, and I almost forced him to take some tickets, for I was hungry and desperate. I had been running about that morning to dispose of some tickets for love or money, for what I feared most was an empty house. I had sold half a dozen, perhaps, but no one had paid me. Azevedo said, 'Yes, send me some this afternoon.' 'I can give them to you now,' I replied, 'for I carry my box office upon me.' Then he understood, and gave me the money. May God bless him for it, for ever and ever!

"Now would you like to hear what happened after the performance?" he continued. "The place was full and the applause tremendous. Next morning the papers were full of my name; I was, according to most of them, 'a revelation in music.' But for all that I was living in an attic on a fifth floor, and had not sufficient money to pay my orchestra, let alone to arrange for another concert. As for the score of 'Le Désert,' it went the round of every publisher but one, and was declined by all these. At last the firm of Escudier offered me twelve hundred francs for it, which, of course, I was glad to take. They behaved handsomely after all, because they arranged for a series of performances of it, which I was to direct at a fee of a thousand francs per performance. Those good Saint-Simoniens, the Pereiras, Enfantin, Michel Chevalier, had not lifted a finger to help me in my need; nevertheless, I was not going to condemn good principles on account of the men who represented them not very worthily. Do you know what was the result of this determination not to be unjust if others were? I embarked my little savings in a concern presided over by one of them. I lost every penny of it; since then I have never been able to save a penny."

Félicien David was right—he never made money; first of all, "because," as Auber said, "he was too great an artist to be popular;" secondly, because the era of cantatas and oratorios had not set in in France; thirdly, because he composed very slowly; and fourthly, "because he had no luck." The

performances of his principal theatrical work were interrupted by the Coup-d'État. I am alluding to "La Perle du Brésil," which, though represented at the Opéra-Comique in 1850, only ran for a few nights there, divergencies of opinion having arisen between the composer and M. Émile Perrin, who was afterwards director of the Grand Opéra, and finally of the Comédie-Française. When it was revived, on November 22, 1851, the great event which was to transform the second republic into the second empire was looming on the horizon. In 1862, Napoléon III. made Félicien David an officer of the Légion d'Honneur; Louis-Philippe had bestowed the knighthood upon him in '46 or '47, after a performance of his "Christophe Colomb" at the Tuileries. When Auber was told of the honour conferred, he said, "Napoléon is worse than the fish with the ring of Polycrates; it did not take him eleven years to bring it back." Alexandre Dumas opined that "it was a pearl hid in a dunghill for a decade or more." When, towards the end of the Empire, a street near the projected opera building was named after Auber, and when he could see his bust on the façade of the building, the scaffolding of which had been removed, Auber remarked that the Emperor had been good enough to give him credit. "Now we are quits," he added, "for he was David's debtor for eleven years. At any rate, I'll do my best to square the account, so you need not order any hat-bands until '79." When '79 came, he had been in his tomb for nearly eight years.

I wrote just now that Félicien David composed very slowly. But for this defect, if it was one, Verdi would have never put his name to the score of "Aïda." The musical encyclopedias will tell you that Signor Ghislanzoni is the author of the libretto, and that the khedive applied to Signor Verdi for an opera on an Egyptian subject. The first part of that statement is utterly untrue, the other part is but partially true. Signor Ghislanzoni is at best but the adapter in verse and translator of the libretto. The original in prose is by M. Camille du Locle, founded on the scenario supplied by Mariette-Bey, whom Ismaïl-Pasha had given *carte blanche* with regard to the music and words. Mariette-Bey intended from the very first to apply to a French playwright, when one night, being belated at Memphis in the Serapeum, and unable to return on foot, he all at once remembered an old Egyptian legend. Next day he committed the scenario of it to paper, showed it to the khedive, and ten copies of it were printed in Alexandria. One of these was sent to M. du Locle, who developed the whole in prose.

M. du Locle had also been authorized to find a French composer, but it is very certain that Mariette-Bey had in his mind's eye the composer of "Le Désert," though he may not have expressly said so. At any rate, M. du Locle applied to David, who refused, although the "retaining fee" was fifty thousand francs. It was because he could not comply with the first and foremost condition, to have the score ready in six months at the latest. Then Wagner was thought of. It is most probable that he would have refused. To Mariette-Bey belongs the credit furthermore of having entirely stage-managed the opera.

Thus Félicien David, who had revealed "the East in music" to the Europeans, no more reaped the fruits of his originality than Decamps, who had revealed it in painting. Was not Auber right when he said to young Coquelin that the verdict on all things in this world might be summed up in the one phrase, "It's an injustice"?

CHAPTER VIII.

Three painters, and a school for pifferari — Gabriel Decamps, Eugène Delacroix, and Horace Vernet — The prices of pictures in the forties — Delacroix' find no purchasers at all — Decamps' drawings fetch a thousand francs each — Decamps not a happy man — The cause of his unhappiness — The man and the painter — He finds no pleasure in being popular — Eugène Delacroix — His contempt for the bourgeoisie — A parallel between Delacroix and Shakespeare — Was Delacroix tall or short? — His love of flowers — His delicate health — His personal appearance — His indifference to the love-passion — George Sand and Delacroix — A miscarried love-scene — Delacroix' housekeeper, Jenny Leguillou — Delacroix does not want to pose as a model for one of George Sand's heroes — Delacroix as a writer — His approval of Carlyle's dictum, "Show me how a man sings," etc. — His humour tempered by his reverence — His failure as a caricaturist — His practical jokes on would-be art-critics — Delacroix at home — His dress while at work — Horace Vernet's, Paul Delaroche's, Ingres' — Early at work — He does not waste time over lunch — How he spent his evenings — His dislike of being reproduced in marble or on canvas after his death — Horace Vernet — The contrast between the two men and the two artists — Vernet's appearance — His own account of how he became a painter — Moral and mental resemblance to Alexandre Dumas père — His political opinions — Vernet and Nicholas I. — A bold answer — His opinion on the mental state of the Romanoffs — The comic side of Vernet's character — He thinks himself a Vauban — His interviews with M. Thiers — His admiration for everything military — His worship of Alfred de Vigny — His ineffectual attempts to paint a scene in connection with the storming of Constantine — Laurent-Jan proposes to write an epic on it — He gives a synopsis of the cantos — Laurent-Jan lives "on the fat of the land" for six months — A son of Napoléon's companion in exile, General Bertrand — The chaplain of "la Belle-Poule" — The first French priest who wore the English dress — Horace Vernet and the veterans of "la grande armée" — His studio during their occupancy of it as models — His budget — His hatred of pifferari — A professor —

A few weeks ago,[30] when rummaging among old papers, documents, memoranda, etc., I came upon some stray leaves of a catalogue of a picture sale at the Hôtel Bullion[31] in 1845. I had marked the prices realized by a score or so of paintings signed by men who, though living at that time, were already more or less famous, and many of whom have since then acquired a world-wide reputation. There was only one exception to this—that of Herrera the Elder, who had been dead nearly two centuries, and whose name was, and is still, a household word among connoisseurs by reason of his having been the master of Velasquez. The handiwork of the irascible old man was knocked down for three francs seventy-five centimes, though no question was raised as to the genuineness of it in my hearing. It was a saint—the catalogue said no more,—and I have been in vain trying to recollect why I did not buy it. There must have been some cogent reason for my not having done so, for "the frame was no doubt worth double the money," to use an auctioneer's phrase. Was it suspicion, or what? At any rate, two years later, I heard that it had been sold to an American for fourteen thousand francs, though, after all, that was no guarantee of its value.

In those days it was certainly better to be a live artist than a dead one, for, a little further on among these pages, I came upon a marginal note of the prices fetched by three works of Meissonier, "Le Corps de Garde," "Une partie de piquet," and "Un jeune homme regardant des dessins," all of which had been in the salon of that year,[32] and each of which fetched 3000 francs. I should not like to say what their purchasing price would be to-day, allowing for the difference in the value of money. Further on still, there is a note of a picture by Alfred de Dreux, which realized a similar amount. Allowing for that same difference in the value of money, that work would probably not find a buyer now among real connoisseurs at 200 francs.[33] At the same time, the original sketch of David's "Serment du Jeu de Paume" did not find a purchaser at 2500 francs, the reserve price. A landscape by Jules André, a far greater artist than Alfred de Dreux, went for 300 francs, and Baron's "Oies du Frère Philippe" only realized 200 francs more. There was not a single "bid" for Eugène Delacroix' "Marc-Aurèle," and when he did sell a picture it was for 500 or 600 francs; nowadays it would fetch 100,000 francs. On the other hand, the drawings of Decamps' admirable "Histoire de Samson" realized 1000 francs each.

Yet Gabriel Decamps was a far unhappier man than Eugène Delacroix. The pictures rejected by the public became the "apples" of Delacroix' eyes, with which he would not part, subsequently, at any price, as in the case of his "Marino Faliero." Decamps, one day, while he lived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, deliberately destroyed one hundred and forty drawings, the like of which were eagerly bought up for a thousand francs apiece, though at present they would be worth four times that amount. Delacroix was content with his God-given genius; "he saw everything he had made, and behold it was very good," Decamps fumed and fretted at the supposed systematic neglect of the Government, which did not give him a commission. "You paint with a big brush, but you are not a great painter," said Sir Joshua to a would-be Michael-Angelo. To Gabriel Decamps the idea of being allowed or invited by the State to cover a number of yards of canvas or wall or ceiling was so attractive that he positively lost his sleep and his appetite over it. It was, perhaps, the only bitter drop in his otherwise tolerably full cup of happiness, but that one drop very frequently embittered the whole. He had many good traits in his character, though he was not uniformly good-tempered. There was an absolute indifference as to the monetary results of his calling, and an inherent generosity to those who "had fallen by the way." But he was something of a bear and a recluse, not because he disliked society, but because he deliberately suppressed his sociable qualities, lest he should arouse the suspicion of making them the stepping-stone to his ambition. No man ever misread the lesson, "Do well and fear not," so utterly as did Decamps. He was never tired of well-doing; and he was never tired of speculating what the world would think of it. There is not a single picture from his brush that does not contain an original thought; he founded an absolutely new school—no small thing to do. The world at large acknowledged as much, and yet he would not enjoy the fruits of that recognition, because it lacked the "official stamp." When Decamps consented to forget his real or fancied grievances he became a capital companion, provided one had a taste for bitter and scathing satire. I fancy Jonathan Swift must have been something like Gabriel Decamps in his daily intercourse with his familiars. But he rarely said an ill-natured thing of his fellow-artists. His strictures were reserved for the political men of his time, and of the preceding reign. The Bourbons he despised from the bottom of his heart, and during the Restauration his contempt found vent in caricatures which, at the moment, must have seared like a red-hot iron. He had kept a good many of these ephemeral productions, and, I am bound to say, they struck one afterwards as unnecessarily severe. "If they" (meaning the Bourbons) "had continued to reign in France," he said one day, "I would have applied for letters of naturalization to the Sultan."

Decamps was killed, like Géricault, by a fall off his horse, but long before that he had ceased to work. "I cannot add much to my reputation, and do not care to add to my store," he said. In 1855, the world positively rang with his name, but I doubt whether this universal admiration gave him much satisfaction. He exhibited more than fifty works at the Exposition Universelle of that year, a good many of which had been rejected by the "hanging committees" of previous salons. True to his system, he rarely, perhaps never directly, called the past judgment in question, but he lived and died a dissatisfied man. Unlike Mirabeau, who had not the courage to be unpopular, Decamps derived no gratification from popularity.

I knew Eugène Delacroix better than any of the others in the marvellous constellation of painters of that period, and our friendship lasted till the day of his death, in December, 1863. I was also on very good terms with Horace Vernet; but though the latter was perhaps a more lively companion, the stronger attraction was towards the former. I was one of the few friends whom he tolerated whilst at

work. Our friendship lasted for nearly a quarter of a century, and during that time there was never a single unpleasantness between us, though I am bound to admit that Delacroix' temper was very uncertain. Among all those men who had a profound, ineradicable contempt for the bourgeois, I have only known one who despised him even to a greater extent than he; it was Gustave Flaubert. Though Delacroix' manners were perfect, he could scarcely be polite to the middle classes. With the exception of Dante and Shakespeare, Delacroix was probably the greatest poet that ever lived; a greater poet undoubtedly than Victor Hugo, in that he was absolutely indifferent to the material results of his genius. If Shakespeare and the author of the "Inferno" had painted, they would have painted like Delacroix; his "Sardanapale" is the Byronic poem, condensed and transferred to canvas.

Long as I knew Delacroix, I had never been able to make out whether he was tall or short, and most of his friends and acquaintances were equally puzzled. As we stood around his coffin many were surprised at its length. His was decidedly a curious face, at times stony in its immobility, at others quivering from the tip of chin to the juncture of the eyebrows, and with a peculiar movement of the nostrils that was almost pendulum-like in its regularity. It gave one the impression of their being assailed by some unpleasant smell, and, one day, when Delacroix was in a light mood, I remarked upon it. "You are perfectly right," he replied; "I always fancy there is corruption in the air, but it is not necessarily of a material kind."

Be this as it may, he liked to surround himself with flowers, and his studio was often like a hothouse, apart from the floral decorations. The temperature was invariably very high, and even then he would shiver now and again. I have always had an idea that Delacroix had Indian blood in his veins, which idea was justified to a certain extent by his appearance, albeit that there was no tradition to that effect in his family. But it was neither the black hair, the olive skin, nor the peculiar formation of the features which forced that conclusion upon me; it was the character of Delacroix, which for years and years I endeavoured to read thoroughly, without succeeding to any appreciable degree. There was one trait that stood out so distinctly that the merest child might have perceived it—his honesty; but the rest was apparently a mass of contradiction. It is difficult to imagine a poet, and especially a painter-poet, without an absorbing passion for some woman—not necessarily for the same woman; to my knowledge Delacroix had no such passion, for one can scarcely admit that Jenny Leguillou, his housekeeper, could have inspired such a feeling. True, when I first knew Delacroix he was over forty, but those who had known him at twenty and twenty-five never hinted at any romantic attachment or even at a sober, homely affection. And assuredly a man of forty is not invulnerable in that respect. And yet, the woman who positively bewitched, one after another, so many of Delacroix' eminent contemporaries, Jules Sandeau, Alfred de Musset, Michel de Bourges, Chopin, Pierre Leroux, Cabet, Lammenais, etc., had no power over him.

Paul de Musset, perhaps as a kind of revenge for the wrongs suffered by his brother, once gave an amusing description of the miscarried attempt of George Sand "to net" Eugène Delacroix.

It would appear that the painter had shown signs of yielding to the charms which few men were able to withstand, or, at any rate, that George Sand fancied she could detect such signs. Whether it was from a wish on George Sand's part to precipitate matters or to nip the thing in the bud, it would be difficult to determine, but it is certain that she pursued her usual tactics—that is, she endeavoured to provoke an admission of her admirer's feeling. Though I subsequently ascertained that Paul de Musset's story was substantially true, I am not altogether prepared, knowing his animosity against her, to accept his hinted theory of the lady's desire "de brusquer les fiançailles."

One morning, then, while Delacroix was at work, George Sand entered his studio. She looked out of spirits, and almost immediately stated the purpose of her visit.

"My poor Eugène!" she began; "I am afraid I have got sad news for you."

"Oh, indeed," said Delacroix, without interrupting his work, and just giving her one of his cordial smiles in guise of welcome.

"Yes, my dear friend, I have carefully consulted my own heart, and the upshot is, I am grieved to tell you, that I feel I cannot and could never love you."

Delacroix kept on painting. "Is that a fact?" he said.

"Yes, and I ask you once more to pardon me, and to give me credit for my candour—my poor Delacroix."

Delacroix did not budge from his easel.

"You are angry with me, are you not? You will never forgive me?"

"Certainly I will. Only I want you to keep quiet for ten minutes; I have got a bit of sky there which has caused me a good deal of trouble, it is just coming right. Go and sit down or else take a little walk, and come back in ten minutes."

Of course, George Sand did not return; and equally, of course, did not tell the story to any one, but somehow it leaked out. Perhaps Jenny Leguillou had overheard the scene—she was quite capable of listening behind a screen or door—and reporting it. Delacroix himself, when "chaffed" about it, never denied it. There was no need for him to do so, because theoretically it redounded to the lady's honour; had she not rejected his advances?

I have noted it here to prove that the poetry of Delacroix n'allait pas se faufiler dans les jupons, because, though we would not take it for granted that where George Sand failed others would have succeeded, it is nevertheless an authenticated fact that only one other man among the many on whom she tried her wiles remained proof against them. That man was Prosper Mérimée, the author of "Colomba" and "Carmen," the friend of Panizzi. "Quand je fais un roman, je choisis mon sujet; je ne veux pas que l'on me découpe pour en faire un. Madame Sand ne met pas ses amants dans son cœur, elle les mets dans ses livres; et elle le fait si diablement vite qu'on n'a pas le temps de la devancer." Mérimée was right, each of George Sand's earlier books had been written with the heart's blood of one of the victims of her insatiable passions—for I should not like to prostitute the word "love" to her liaisons; and I am glad to think that Eugène Delacroix was spared that ordeal. It would have killed him; and the painter of "Sardanapale" was more precious to his own art than to hers, which, with all due deference to eminent critics, left an unpleasant sensation to those who were fortunate enough to be free from incipient hysteria.

A liaison with George Sand would have killed Eugène Delacroix, I am perfectly certain; for he would have staked gold, she would have only played with counters. It would have been the vitiated atmosphere in which the cradle of his life and of his genius—which were one, in this instance—would have been extinguished.

As it was, that candle burned very low at times, because, during the years I knew Delacroix, he had nearly always one foot in the grave; the healthy breezes of art's unpolluted air made that candle burn brightly now and again; hence the difference in quality, as striking, of some of his pictures.

Perhaps on account of his delicate health, Delacroix was not very fond of society, in which, however, he was ever welcome, and particularly fitted to shine, though he rarely attempted to do so. I have said that Dante and Shakespeare, if they had painted, would have painted as Delacroix did; I am almost tempted to add that if Delacroix' vocation had impelled him that way, he would have sung as they sang —of course, I do not mean that he would have soared as high, but his name would have lived in literature as it does in painting, though perhaps not with so brilliant a halo around it. For, unlike many great painters of his time, Delacroix was essentially lettré. One has but to read some of his critical essays in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of that period, to be convinced of that at once. Théophile Gautier said, one evening, that it was "the style of a poet in a hurry." The sentences give one the impression of newly-minted golden coins. Nearly every one contains a thought, which, if reduced to small change, would still make an admirable paragraph. He gives to his readers what he expects from his authors—a sensation, a shock in two or three lines. The sentences are modelled upon his favourite prose author, who, curious to relate, was none other than Napoléon I. I often tried to interest him in English literature. Unfortunately, he knew no English to speak of, and was obliged to have recourse to translations. Walter Scott he thought long-winded, and, after a few attempts at Shakespeare in French, he gave it up. "Ça ne peut pas être cela," he said. But he had several French versions of "Gulliver's Travels," all of which he read in turn. One day, I quoted to him a sentence from Carlyle's "Lectures on Heroes:" "Show me how a man sings, and I will tell you how he will fight." "C'est cela," he said; "if Shakespeare had been a general, he would have won his battles like Napoléon, by thunderclaps" (par des coups de foudre).

Delacroix had what a great many Frenchmen lack—a keen sense of humour, but it was considerably tempered by what, for the want of a better term, I may call the bump of reverence. He could not be humorous at the expense of those he admired or respected, consequently his attempts at caricature at the early period of his career in *Le Nain Jaune* were a failure; because Delacroix' admiration and respect were not necessarily reserved for those with whom he agreed in art or politics, but for everyone who attempted something great or useful, though he failed. The man who, at the age of sixty, would enthusiastically dilate upon his meeting forty years before with Gros, whose hat he had knocked off by accident, was not the likely one to hold up to ridicule the celebrity of the hour or day *without* malice prepense. And this malice prepense never uprose within him, except in the presence of some bumptious, ignorant nobody. Then it positively boiled over, and he did not mind what trick he played his interlocutor. The latter might be a wealthy would-be patron, an influential Government official, or a well-known picture-dealer; it was all the same to Delacroix, who had an utter contempt for patronage, nepotism, and money. It was as good as a clever scene in a comedy to see him rise and draw himself up to his full height, in order to impress his victim with a sense of the importance of what he was going to say. To get an idea of him under such circumstances, one must go and see his portrait in the Louvre, painted by himself, with the semi-supercilious, semi-benevolent smile playing upon the parted lips, and showing the magnificent regular set of teeth, of which he was very proud, beneath the black bushy moustache, which reminds one curiously of that of Rembrandt. Of course, the victim was mesmerized, and stood listening with all attention, promising himself to remember every word of the spoken essay on art, with the view of producing it as his own at the first favourable opportunity. And he generally did, to his own discomfiture and the amusement of his hearers, who, if they happened to know Delacroix, which was the case frequently, invariably detected the source of the speaker's information. I once heard a spoken essay on Holbein reproduced in that way, which would have simply made the fortune of any comic writer. The human parrot had not even been parrot-like, for he had muddled the whole in transmission. I took some pains to reproduce his exact words, and I never saw Delacroix laugh as when I repeated it to him. For, as a rule, and even when he was mystifying that kind of numskull in the presence of half a dozen well-informed friends, Delacroix remained perfectly serious, though the others had to bite their lips lest they should explode. In fact, it would have been difficult at any time to guess or discover, beneath the well-bred man of the world, with his charming, courtly, though somewhat distant manner, the painter who gave us "La Barque de Dante," and "Les Massacres de Scio;" still, Delacroix was that man of the world, exceedingly careful of

his appearance, particular to a degree about his nails, which he wore very long, dressed to perfection, and, in spite of the episode with George Sand, recorded above, most ingratiating with women.

Different altogether was he in his studio. Though he was "at home" from three till five, to visitors of both sexes, it was distinctly understood that he would not interrupt his work for them, or play the host as the popular painter of to-day is supposed to do. The atelier, encumbered with bric-à-brac and sumptuous hangings and afternoon tea, had not been invented: if the host wore a velvet coat, a Byronic collar, and gorgeous papooshes, it was because he liked these things himself, not because he intended to impress his visitors. As a rule, the host, though in his youth perhaps he had been fond of extravagant costumes, did not like them: Horace Vernet often worked in his shirt-sleeves, Paul Delaroche nearly always wore a blouse, and Ingres, until he became "a society man," which was very late in life, donned a dressing-gown. Delacroix was, if anything, more slovenly than the rest when at work. An old jacket buttoned up to the chin, a large muffler round his neck, a cloth cap pulled over his ears, and a pair of thick felt slippers made up his usual garb. For he was nearly always shivering with cold, and had an affection of the throat, besides, which compelled him to be careful. "But for my wrapping up, I should have been dead at thirty," he said.

Nevertheless, at the stroke of eight, winter and summer, he was in his studio, which he did not leave until dark, during six months of the year, and a little before, during the other six. Contrary to the French habit, he never took luncheon, and generally dined at home a little after six—the fatigue of dining out being too much for him.

I may safely say that I was one of Delacroix' friends, with whom he talked without restraint. I often went to him of an evening when the weather prevented his going abroad, which, in his state of health, was very often. He always chafed at such confinement; for though not fond of society in a general way, he liked coming to the Boulevards, after his work was over, and mixing with his familiars. Delacroix smoked, but, unlike many addicted to tobacco, could not sit idle. His hands, as well as his brain, wanted to be busy; consequently, when imprisoned by rain or snow, he sat sketching figures or groups, talking all the while. By then his name had become familiar to every art student throughout the world, and he often received flattering letters from distant parts. One evening, shortly after the death of David d'Angers, to an episode in whose life I have devoted a considerable space in these notes, Delacroix received an American newspaper, the title of which I have forgotten, but which contained an exceedingly able article on the great sculptor, as an artist, and as a man. It wound up with the question, "And what kind of monument will be raised to him by the man who virtually shortened his life by sending him into exile, because David remained true to the republican principles which Napoléon only shammed—or, if not shammed, deliberately trod underfoot to ascend a tyrant's throne?"

I translated the whole of the article, and, when I came to the last lines, Delacroix shook his head sadly. "You remember," he said, "the answer of our friend Dumas, when they asked him for a subscription towards a monument to a man whom every one had reviled in the beginning of his career. 'They had better be content with the stones they threw at him during his existence. No monument they can raise will be so eloquent of their imbecility and his genius.' I may take it," he went on, "that such a question will be raised one day after my death, perhaps many years after I am gone. If you are alive you will, by my will, raise your voice against the project. I have painted my own portrait; while I am here, I will take care that it be not reproduced; I will forbid them to do so after I am at rest. There shall not be a bust on my tomb."

About a fortnight before his death he made a will to that effect, and up to the present hour (1883) its injunctions have been respected. Delacroix lies in a somewhat solitary spot in Père-Lachaise. Neither emblem, bust, nor statue adorns his tomb, which was executed according to his own instructions. "They libelled me so much during my life," he said one day, "that I do not want them to libel me after my death, on canvas or in marble. They flattered me so much afterwards, that I knew their flattery to be fulsome, and, if anything, I am more afraid of it than of their libels."

It would be difficult to find a greater contrast than there existed between Eugène Delacroix, both as a man and an artist, and Horace Vernet. The one loved his art with the passionate devotion of an intensely poetical lover for his wayward mistress, whom to cease wooing for a moment might mean an irreparable breach or, at least, a long estrangement; the other loved his with the calm affection of the cherished husband for the faithful wife who had blessed him with a numerous offspring, whom he had known from his very infancy, a marriage with whom had been decided upon when he was a mere lad, whom he might even neglect for a little while without the bond being in any way relaxed. According to their respective certificates of birth, Vernet was the senior by ten years of Delacroix. When I first knew them, about 1840, Vernet looked ten years younger than Delacroix. If they had chosen to disguise themselves as musketeers of the Louis XIII. period, Vernet would have reminded one of both Aramis and d'Artagnan; Delacroix, of Athos.

Montaigne spoke Latin before he could speak French; Vernet drew men and horses before he had mastered either French or Latin. His playthings were stumpy, worn-out brushes, discarded palettes, and sticks of charcoal; his alphabet, the pictures of the Louvre, where his father occupied a set of apartments, and where he was born, a month before the outbreak of the first Revolution. He once said to me, "Je suis peintre comme il y des hommes qui sont rois—parceque ils ne peuvent pas être autre chose. Il fallait un homme de génie pour sortir d'un pareil bourbier et malheureusement je n'ai que du talent." By the "bourbier" he meant his great-grandfather, his two grandfathers, and his father, all of whom were painters and draughtsmen.

Posterity will probably decide whether Horace Vernet was a genius or merely a painter of great talent, but it will scarcely convey an approximate idea of the charm of the man himself. There was only one other of his contemporaries who exercised the same spell on his companions—Alexandre Dumas *père*. Though Vernet was a comparative dwarf by the side of Dumas, the men had the same qualities, physical, moral, and mental. Neither of them knew what bodily fatigue meant; both could work for fourteen or fifteen hours a day for a fortnight or a month; both would often have "a long bout of idleness," as they called it, which, to others not endowed with their strength and mental activity, would have meant hard labour. Both were fond of earning money, fonder still of spending it; both created almost without an effort. Dumas roared with laughter while writing; Vernet sang at the top of his voice while painting, or bandied jokes with his visitors, who might come and go as they liked at all hours. Dumas, especially in the earlier days of his career, had to read a great deal before he could catch the local colour of his novels and plays—he himself has told us that he was altogether ignorant of the history of France. But when he had finished reading up the period in question, he wrote as if he had been born in it. Vernet was a walking cyclopædia on military costume; he knew, perhaps, not much more than that, but that he knew thoroughly, and never had to think twice about the uniforms of his models, and, as he himself said, "I never studied the thing, nor did I learn to paint or to draw. According to many people, I do not know how to paint or to draw now: it may be so; at any rate I have the comfort of having wasted nobody's time in trying to learn."

Like Dumas, he was very proud of his calling and of the name he had made for himself in it, which he would not have changed for the title of emperor—least of all for that of king; for, like his great contemporary, he was a republican at heart. It did not diminish either his or Dumas' admiration for Napoléon I. "I can understand an absolute monarchy, nay, a downright autocracy, and I can understand a republic," said Vernet, "but I fail to understand the use of a constitutional king, just because it implies and entails the principle of succession by inheritance. An autocracy means one ruler over so many millions of subjects; a constitutional monarchy means between five and six hundred direct rulers, so many millions of indirect ones, and one subject who is called king. Who would leave his child the inheritance of such slavery? À la bonne heure, give me a republic such as we understand it in France, all rulers, all natural-born kings, gods in mortals' disguise who dance to the piping of the devil. There have been two such since I was born; there may be another half-dozen like these within the next two centuries, because, before you can have an ideal republic, you must have ideal republicans, and Nature cannot afford to fritter away her most precious gifts on a lot of down-at-heels lawyers and hobnail-booted scum. She condescends now and then to make an ideal tyrant—she will never make a nation of ideal republicans. You may just as well ask her to make a nation of Raffaelles or Michael Angelos, or Shakespeares or Molières."

Both men, in spite of their republican opinions, were personally attached to some members of the Orléans family; both had an almost invincible objection to the Bourbons. Vernet had less occasion to be outspoken in his dislike than Dumas, but he refused to receive the Duc de Berri when the latter offered to come and see the battle-pieces Vernet was painting for the then Duke of Orléans (Louis-Philippe). Vernet had stipulated that his paintings should illustrate exclusively the campaigns of the first Republic and the Empire, though subsequently he depicted some episodes of the Algerian wars, in which the son of the king had distinguished himself. "Tricolour cockades or no pictures," he remarked, and Louis-Philippe good-humouredly acquiesced. Though courteous to a degree, he never minced matters to either king or beggar. While in Russia Nicholas took a great fancy to him. It appears that the painter, who must have looked even smaller by the side of the Czar than he did by that of Dumas, had accompanied the former, if not on a perilous, at least on a very uncomfortable journey in the middle of the winter. He and the Emperor were the only two men who had borne the hardships and privations without grumbling, nay, with Mark Tapleyean cheerfulness. That kind of fortitude was at all times a passport to Nicholas' heart, doubly so in this instance, by reason of Vernet's by no means robust appearance. From that moment Nicholas became very attached to, and would often send for, him. They would often converse on subjects even more serious, and, one day, after the partition of Poland, Nicholas proposed that Vernet should paint a picture on the subject.

"I am afraid I cannot do it, sire," was the answer. "I have never painted a Christ on the cross."

"The moment I had said it," continued Vernet, when he told me the story, which is scarcely known, "I thought my last hour had struck. I am positively certain that a Russian would have paid these words with his life, or at least with lifelong exile to Siberia. I shall never forget the look he gave me; there was a murderous gleam in the eyes; but it was over in an instant. Nevertheless, I feel convinced that Nicholas was mad, and, what is more, I feel equally convinced that there is incipient madness throughout the whole of the Romanoff family. I saw a good many of its members during my stay in Russia. They all did and said things which would have landed ordinary men and women in a lunatic asylum. At the same time there was an unmistakable touch of genius about some of them. I often endeavoured to discuss the matter with the resident foreign physicians, but, as you may imagine, they were very reticent. But mark my words, one day there will be a terrible flare-up. Of course, the foreigner, who sees the superstitious reverence, the slavish respect with which they are surrounded, scarcely wonders that these men and women should, in the end, consider themselves above, and irresponsible to, the millions of grovelling mortals whom they rule; in spite of all this, the question can only be one of time, and when the Russian empire falls, the cataclysm will be unlike any other that has preceded it."

There was a comic side to Horace Vernet's character. By dint of painting battle-pieces he had come to consider himself an authority on strategy and tactics, and his criticisms on M. Thiers' system of fortifications used to set us roaring. I am under the impression—though I will not strictly vouch for it—

that at the recommendation of one or two of the inveterate jokers of our set, Laurent-Jan[34] and Méry, he had a couple of interviews with M. Theirs, but we never ascertained the result of them. It was almost certain that the minister of Louis-Philippe, who at one period of his life considered himself a Napoléon and a Vauban rolled into one, did not entertain Vernet's suggestions with the degree of enthusiasm to which he thought them entitled; at any rate, from that time, the mention of M. Thiers' name generally provoked a contemptuous shrug of the shoulders on Vernet's part. "C'est tout à fait comme Napoléon et Jomini, mon cher Vernet," said Laurent-Jan; "mais, après tout, qu'est que cela vous fait? La postérité jugera entre vous deux, elle saura bien débrouiller la part que vous avez contribuée à ces travaux immortels."

Much as Horace Vernet admired his great contemporaries in art and literature, his greatest worship was reserved for Alfred de Vigny, the soldier-poet, though the latter was by no means a sympathetic companion. Next to his society, which was rarely to be had, he preferred that of Arthur Bertrand, the son of Napoléon's companion in exile. Arthur Bertrand had an elder brother, Napoléon Bertrand, who, at the storming of Constantine, put on a new pair of white kid gloves, brought from Paris for the purpose. Horace Vernet made at least fifty sketches of that particular incident, but he never painted the picture. "I could not do it justice," he said, when remonstrated with for his procrastination. "I should fail to realize the grandeur of the thing." Thereupon Laurent-Jan, who had no bump of reverence, proposed a poem in so many cantos, to be illustrated by Vernet. I give the plan as developed by the would-be author.

1. The kid in its ancestral home among the mountains. A mysterious voice from heaven tells it that its skin will be required for a pair of gloves. The kid objects, and inquires why the skin of some other kid will not do as well. The voice reveals the glorious purpose of the gloves. The kid consents, and at the same moment a hunter appears in sight. The kid, instead of taking to its heels, assumes a favourable position to be shot. It makes a dying speech.

2. A glove-shop on the Boulevard. Enter Napoléon Bertrand, asking for a pair of gloves. The girl tells him that she has only one pair left, and communicates the legend connected with it. The price is twenty francs. Napoléon Bertrand demurs at it, and tells her, in his turn, what the gloves are wanted for. The girl refuses to take the money, and her employer, overhearing the conversation, dismisses her there and then. He keeps the wages due to her as the price of the gloves. Napoléon Bertrand puts the latter in his pocket, offers the girl his arm, and invites her to breakfast in a *cabinet particulier*, "en tout bien, en tout honneur." To prove his perfectly honourable intentions, he tells her the story of Jeanne d'Arc. The girl's imagination is fired by the recital, and after luncheon she goes in search of a book on the subject. An unscrupulous, dishonest second-hand bookseller palms off an edition of Voltaire's "La Pucelle." The girl writes to Napoléon Bertrand to tell him that he has made a fool of her, that Jeanne d'Arc was no better than she should be, and that she is going to join the harem of the Bey of Constantine.

3. Napoléon Bertrand stricken with remorse before Constantine. Orders given for the assault. Napoléon Bertrand looks for his gloves, and finds that they are too small. He can just get them on, but cannot grasp the handle of his sword. His servant announces a mysterious stranger, a veiled female stranger. She is admitted; she has made her escape from the harem; a mysterious voice from heaven—the same that spoke to the kid—having warned her the night before that the gloves would be too small, and that she was to let a piece in. Reconciliation. Tableau. The bugles are sounding "boot and saddle." Storming of Constantine.

I have reproduced the words of Laurent-Jan; I will not attempt to reproduce his manner, which was simply inimitable. Horace Vernet and Arthur Bertrand shook with laughter, and the latter offered Laurent-Jan to keep him for a twelvemonth if he would write the poem. Jan consented, and lived upon the fat of the land during that time, but the poem never saw the light.

Arthur Bertrand was one of the most jovial fellows of his time. He, Eugène Sue, and Latour-Mézerai were the best customers of the florist on the Boulevards. It was he who accompanied the Prince de Joinville to St. Helena to bring back the remains of Napoléon. After their return a new figure joined our set now and then. It was the Abbé Coquereau, the chaplain of "La Belle-Poule." The Abbé Coquereau was the first French Catholic priest who discarded the gown and the shovel hat, and adopted that of the English clergy. He was a charming man, and by no means straight-laced, but he drew the line at accompanying Arthur in his nightly perambulations. One evening he, Arthur Bertrand, and Alexandre Dumas were strolling along the Boulevards when the latter tried to make the abbé enter the Variétés. The abbé held firm, or rather took to his heels.

In those days there were still a great many veterans of the *grande armée* about, and a great deal of Horace Vernet's money went in entertaining them at the various cafés and restaurants—especially when he was preparing sketches for a new picture. The ordinary model, clever and eminently useful as he was at that period, was willingly discarded for the old and bronzed warrior of the Empire, some of whom were even then returning from Africa. "They may just as well earn the money I pay the others," he said; consequently it was not an unusual thing to see a general, a couple of colonels, half a dozen captains, and as many sergeants and privates, all of whom had served under Napoléon, in Vernet's studio at the same time. Of course, the officers were only too pleased to give their services gratuitously, but Vernet had a curious way of making up his daily budget. Twenty models at four francs—for models earned no more then—eighty francs. Fifteen of them refused their pay. The eighty francs to be divided between five. And the five veterans enjoyed a magnificent income for weeks and weeks at a time.

Truth compels me to state, however, that during those weeks "the careful mother could not have taken her daughter" to Vernet's studio. A couple of live horses, not unfrequently three, an equal number of stuffed ones, camp kettles, broken limbers, pieces of artillery, an overturned ammunition waggon, a collection of uniforms, that would have made the fortune of a costumier, scattered all over the place; drums, swords, guns and saddles: and, amidst this confusion, a score of veterans, some of whom had been comrades-in-arms and who seemed oblivious, for the time being, of their hard-earned promotion in the company of those who had been less lucky than they, every man smoking his hardest and telling his best garrison story: all these made up a scene worthy of Vernet himself, but somewhat appalling to the civilian who happened to come upon it unawares.

Vernet was never happier than when at work under such circumstances. Perched on a movable scaffolding or on a high ladder, he reminded one much more of an acrobat than of a painter. Like Dumas, he could work amidst a very Babel of conversation, but the sound of music, however good, disturbed him. In those days, itinerant Italian musicians and pifferari, who have disappeared from the streets of Paris altogether since the decree of expulsion of '81, were numerous, and grew more numerous year by year. I, for one, feel sorry for their disappearance, for I remember having spent half a dozen most delightful evenings listening to them.

The thing happened in this way. Though my regular visits to the Quartier-Latin had ceased long ago, I returned now and then to my old haunts during the years '63 and '64, in company of a young Englishman who was finishing his medical studies in Paris, who had taken up his quarters on the left bank of the Seine, and who has since become a physician in very good practice in the French capital. He had been specially recommended to me, and I was not too old to enjoy an evening once a week or a fortnight among my juniors. At a café, which has been demolished since to make room for a much more gorgeous establishment at the corners of the Boulevards Saint-Michel and Saint-Germain, we used to notice an elderly gentleman, scrupulously neat and exquisitely clean, though his clothes were very threadbare. He always sat at the same table to the right of the counter. His cup of coffee was eked out by frequent supplements of water, and meanwhile he was always busy copying music—at least, so it seemed to us at first. We soon came to a different conclusion, though, because every now and then he would put down his pen, lean back against the cushioned seat, look up at the ceiling and smile to himself—such a sweet smile; the smile of a poet or an artist, seeking inspiration from the spirits supposed to be hovering now and then about such.

That man was no copyist, but an obscure, unappreciated genius, perhaps, biding his chance, hoping against hope, meanwhile living a life of jealously concealed dreams and hardship. For he looked sad enough at the best of times, with a kind of settled melancholy which apparently only one thing could dispel—the advent of a couple or trio of pifferari. Then his face would light up all of a sudden, he would gently push his music away, speak to them in Italian, asking them to play certain pieces, beating time with an air of contentment which was absolutely touching to behold. On the other hand, the young pifferari appeared to treat him with greater deference than they did the other customers; the little girl who accompanied them was particularly eager for his approval.

In a little while we became very friendly with the old gentleman, and, one evening, he said, "If you will be here next Wednesday, the pifferari will give us something new."

On the evening in question he looked quite smart; he had evidently "fait des frais de toilette," as our neighbours have it; he wore a different coat, and his big white neckcloth was somewhat more starched than usual. He seemed quite excited. The pifferari, on the other hand, seemed anxious and subdued. The café was very full, for all the habitués liked the old gentleman, and had made it a point of responding to his quasi-invitation. They were well rewarded, for I have rarely heard sweeter music. It was unlike anything we were accustomed to hear from such musicians; there was an old-world sound about it that went straight to the heart, and when we looked at the old gentleman amidst the genuine applause after the termination of the first piece, there were two big tears coursing down his wrinkled cheeks.

The pifferari came again and again, and though they never appealed to him directly, we instinctively guessed that there existed some connection between them. All our efforts to get at the truth of the matter were, however, in vain, for the old gentleman was very reticent.

Meanwhile my young friend had passed his examinations, and shifted his quarters to my side of the river. He did not abandon the Quartier-Latin altogether, but my inquiries about the old musician met with no satisfactory response. He had disappeared. Nearly two years went by, when, one afternoon, he called. "Come with me," he said; "I am going to show you a curious nook of Paris which you do not know, and take you to an old acquaintance whom you will be pleased to see again."

The "curious nook" of Paris still exists to a certain extent, only the pifferari have disappeared from it. It is situated behind the Panthéon, and is more original than its London counterpart—Saffron Hill. It is like a corner of old Rome, Florence, or Naples, without the glorious Italian sun shining above it to lend picturesqueness to the rags and tatters of its population; swarthy desperadoes with golden rings in their ears and on their grimy fingers, their greasy, soft felt hats cocked jauntily on their heads, or drawn over the flashing dark eyes, before which their womankind cower and shake; old men who but for the stubble on their chins would look like ancient cameos; girls with shapely limbs and handsome faces; middle-aged women who remind one of the witches in Macbeth; women younger still, who have neither shape nor make; urchins and little lassies who remind one of the pictures of Murillo; in short, a population of wood-carvers and modellers, vendors of plaster casts, artist-models, sugar-bakers and mosaic-workers, living in the streets the greater part of the day, retiring to their wretched attics at

night, sober and peaceful generally, but desperate and unmanageable when in their cups.

The cab stopped before a six-storied house which had seen better days, in a dark, narrow street, into which the light of day scarcely penetrated. The moment we alighted we heard a charivari of string instruments and voices, and as we ascended the steep, slimy, rickety staircase the sound grew more distinct. When we reached the topmost landing, my friend knocked at one of the three or four doors, and, without waiting for an answer, we entered. It was a scantily furnished room with a bare brick floor, an old bedstead in one corner, a few rush-bottomed chairs, and a deal table; but everything was scrupulously clean. Behind the table, a cotton nightcap on his head, his tall thin frame wrapt in an old overcoat, stood our old friend, the composer; in front, half a dozen urchins, in costumes vaguely resembling those of the Calabrian peasantry, grimy like coalheavers, their black hair standing on end with attention, were rehearsing a new piece of music. Then I understood it all. He was the professor of pifferari, an artist for all that, an unappreciated genius, perhaps, who, rather than not be heard at all, introduced a composition of his own into their hackneyed programme, and tasted the sweets of popularity, without the accompanying rewards which, nowadays, popularity invariably brings. This one had known Paisiello and Rossini, had been in the thick of the excitement on the first night of the "Barbière," and had dreamt of similar triumphs. Perhaps his genius was as much entitled to them as that of the others, but he had loved not wisely, but too well, and when he awoke from the love-dream, he was too ruined in body and mind to be able to work for the realization of the artistic one. He would accept no aid. Three years later, we carried him to his grave. A simple stone marks the place in the cemetery of Montparnasse.

CHAPTER IX.

Louis-Philippe and his family — An unpublished theatrical skit on his mania for shaking hands with every one — His art of governing, according to the same skit — Louis-Philippe not the ardent admirer of the bourgeoisie he professed to be — The Faubourg Saint-Germain deserts the Tuileries — The English in too great a majority — Lord ——'s opinion of the dinners at the Tuileries — The attitude of the bourgeoisie towards Louis-Philippe, according to the King himself — Louis-Philippe's wit — His final words on the death of Talleyrand — His love of money — He could be generous at times — A story of the Palais-Royal — Louis-Philippe and the Marseillaise — Two curious stories connected with the Marseillaise — Who was the composer of it? — Louis-Philippe's opinion of the throne, the crown, and the sceptre of France as additions to one's comfort — His children, and especially his sons, take things more easily — Even the Bonapartists admired some of the latter — A mot of an Imperialist — How the boys were brought up — Their nocturnal rambles later on — The King himself does not seem to mind those escapades, but is frightened at M. Guizot hearing of them — Louis-Philippe did not understand Guizot — The recollection of his former misery frequently haunts the King — He worries Queen Victoria with his fear of becoming poor — Louis-Philippe an excellent husband and father — He wants to write the libretto of an opera on an English subject — His religion — The court receptions ridiculous — Even the proletariat sneer at them — The *entrée* of the Duchesse d'Orléans into Paris — The scene in the Tuileries gardens — A mot of Princesse Clémentine on her father's too paternal solicitude — A practical joke of the Prince de Joinville — His caricatures and drawings — The children inherited their talent for drawing and modelling from their mother — The Duc de Nemours as a miniature and water-colour painter — Suspected of being a Legitimist — All Louis-Philippe's children great patrons of art — How the bourgeoisie looked upon their intercourse with artists — The Duc de Nemours' marvellous memory — The studio of Eugène Lami — His neighbours, Paul Delaroche and Honoré de Balzac — The Duc de Nemours' bravery called in question — The Duc d'Aumale's exploits in Algeria considered mere skirmishes — A curious story of spiritism — The Duc d'Aumale a greater favourite with the world than any of the other sons of Louis-Philippe — His wit — The Duc d'Orléans also a great favourite — His visits to Decamps' studio — An indifferent classical scholar — A curious kind of black-mail — His indifference to money — There is no money in a Republic — His death — A witty reply to the Legitimists.

As will appear by-and-by, I was an eye-witness of a good many incidents of the Revolution of '48, and a great many more have been related to me by friends, whose veracity was and still is beyond suspicion. Neither they nor I have ever been able to establish a sufficiently valid political cause for that upheaval. Perhaps it was because we were free from the prejudices engendered by what, for want of a better term, I must call "dynastic sentiment." We were not blind to the faults of Louis-Philippe, but we refused to look at them through the spectacles supplied in turns by the Legitimists, the Imperialists, and Republicans. How far these spectacles were calculated to improve people's vision, the following specimen will show.

I have lying before me a few sheets of quarto paper, sewn together in a primitive way. It is a manuscript skit, in the form of a theatrical duologue, professing to deal with the king's well-known

habit of shaking hands with every one with whom he came in contact. The *dramatis personæ* are King Fip I., Roi des Épiciers—read, King of the Philistines or Shopkeepers, and his son and heir, Grand Poulot (Big Spooney). The monarch is giving the heir-apparent a lesson in the art of governing. "Do not be misled," he says, "by a parcel of theorists, who will tell you that the citizen-monarchy is based upon the sovereign will of the people, or upon the strict observance of the Charter; this is merely so much drivel from the political Rights or Lefts. In reality, it does not signify a jot whether France be free at home and feared and respected abroad, whether the throne be hedged round with republican institutions or supported by an hereditary peerage, whether the language of her statesmen be weighty and the deeds of her soldiers heroic. The citizen-monarchy and the art of governing consist of but one thing—the capacity of the principal ruler for shaking hands with any and every ragamuffin and out-of-elbows brute he meets." Thereupon King Fip shows his son how to shake hands in every conceivable position—on foot, on horseback, at a gallop, at a trot, leaning out of a carriage, and so forth. Grand Poulot is not only eager to learn, but ambitious to improve upon his sire's method. "How would it do, dad," he asks, "if, in addition to shaking hands with them, one inquired after their health, in the second person singular—'Comment vas tu, mon vieux cochon?' or, better still, 'Comment vas tu, mon vieux citoyen?'" "It would do admirably," says papa; "but it does not matter whether you say cochon or citoyen, the terms are synonymous."

I am inclined to think that beneath this rather clever banter there was a certain measure of truth. Louis-Philippe was by no means the ardent admirer of the bourgeoisie he professed to be. He did not foster any illusions with regard to their intellectual worth, and in his inmost heart he resented their so-called admiration of him, which he knew to be would-be patronage under another name. They had formed a hedge round him which prevented any attempt on his part at conciliating his own caste, the old noblesse. It is doubtful whether he would have been successful, especially in the earlier years of his reign; but their ostracism of him and his family rankled in his mind, and found vent now and again in an epigram that stung the author as much as the party against which it was directed. "There is more difficulty in getting people to my court entertainments from across the Seine than from across the Channel," he said.

The fact is, that the whole of the Faubourg St.-Germain was conspicuous by its absence from the Tuileries in those days, and that the English were in rather too great a majority. They were not always a distinguished company. I was little more than a lad at this time, but I remember Lord ——'s invariable answer when his friends asked him what the dinner had been like, and whether he had enjoyed himself: "The dinner was like that at a good table-d'hôte, and I enjoyed myself as I would enjoy myself at a good hotel in Switzerland or at Wiesbaden, where the proprietor knew me personally, and had given orders to the head waiter to look after my comforts. But," he added, "it is, after all, more pleasant dining there, when the English are present. At any rate, there is no want of respect. When the French sit round the table, it is not like a king dining with his subjects, but like half a hundred kings dining with one subject." Allowing for a certain amount of exaggeration, there was a good deal of truth in the remarks, as I found out afterwards. "The bourgeoisie in their attitude towards me," said Louis-Philippe, one day, to the English nobleman I have just quoted, "are always reminding me of Adalbéron of Rheims with Hugues Capet: 'Qui t'as fait roi?' asked the bishop. 'Qui t'as fait duc?' retorted the king. I have made them dukes to a greater extent, though, than they have made me king."

For Louis-Philippe was a witty king—wittier, perhaps, than any that had sat on the throne of France since Henri IV. Some of his mots have become historical, and even his most persistent detractors have been unable to convict him of plagiarism with regard to them. What he specially excelled in was the "mot de la fin" anglicé—the clenching of an argument, such as, for instance, his final remark on the death of Talleyrand. He had paid him a visit the day before. When the news of the prince's death was brought to him, he said, "Are you sure he is dead?"

"Very sure, sire," was the answer. "Why, did not your majesty himself notice yesterday that he was dying?"

"I did, but there is no judging from appearances with Talleyrand, and I have been asking myself for the last four and twenty hours what interest he could possibly have in departing at this particular moment."

To those who knew Louis-Philippe personally, it was very patent that he disliked those who had been instrumental in setting him on the throne, and who, under the cloak of "liberty, fraternity, and equality," were seeking their own interest only, namely, the bourgeoisie. He knew their quasi-goodwill to him to be so much sheer hypocrisy, and perhaps he and they were too much alike in some respects, in their love of money for the sake of hoarding it. It was, perhaps, the only serious failing that could be laid to the charge of the family, because none of its members, with the exception of the Duc d'Orléans, were entirely free from it. It must not be inferred, though, that Louis-Philippe kept his purse closed to really deserving cases of distress. Far from it. I have the following story from my old tutor, to whom I am, moreover, indebted for a great many notes, dealing with events of which I could not possibly have had any knowledge but for him.

In 1829 the greater part of the Galerie d'Orléans in the Palais-Royal was completed. The unsightly wooden booths had been taken down, and the timber must have been decidedly worth a small fortune. Several contractors made very handsome offers for it, but Louis-Philippe (then Duc d'Orléans) refused to sell it. It was to be distributed among the poor of the neighbourhood for fuel for the ensuing winter, which threatened to be a severe one. One day, when the duke was inspecting the works in company of his steward, an individual, who was standing a couple of yards away, began to shout at the top of his

voice, "Vive Louis-Philippe!" "Go and see what the fellow wants, for assuredly he wants something," said the duke, who was a Voltairean in his way, and had interpreted the man's enthusiasm aright. Papa Sournois was one of those nondescripts for whom even now there appear to be more resources in the French capital than elsewhere. At the period in question he mainly got his living by selling contre-marques (checks) at the doors of the theatre. He had heard of the duke's intention with regard to the wood, hence his enthusiastic cry of "Vive Louis-Philippe!" A cartload of wood was sent to his place; papa Sournois converted it into money, and got drunk with the proceeds for a fortnight. When the steward, horribly scandalized, told the duke of the results of his benevolence, the latter merely laughed, and sent for the wife, who made her appearance accompanied by a young brood of five. The duke gave her a five-franc piece, and told her to apply to the concierge of the Palais-Royal for a similar sum every day during the winter months. Of course, five francs a day was not as much as a drop of water out of the sea when we consider Louis-Philippe's stupendous income, and yet when the Tuileries were sacked in 1848, documents upon documents were found, compiled with the sole view of saving a few francs per diem out of the young princes' "keep."

"I am so sick of the word 'fraternity,'" said Prince Metternich, after his return from France, "that, if I had a brother, I should call him cousin." Though it was to the strains of the Marseillaise that Louis-Philippe had been conducted to the Hôtel-de-Ville on the day when Lafayette pointed to him as "the best of all republics," a time came when Louis-Philippe got utterly sick of the Marseillaise.

But what was he to do, seeing that his attempt at introducing a new national hymn had utterly failed? The mob refused to sing "La Parisienne," composed by Casimir de la Vigne, after Alexandre Dumas had refused to write a national hymn; and they, moreover, insisted on the King joining in the chorus of the old hymn, as he had hitherto done on all public occasions.[35] They had grumblingly resigned themselves to his beating time no longer, but any further refusal of his co-operation might have been resented in a less peaceful fashion. On the other hand, there was the bourgeoisie who were of opinion that, now that the monarchy had entered upon a more conservative period, the intoning of the hymn, at any rate on the sovereign's part, was out of place, and savoured too much of a republican manifestation. "It was Guizot who told him so," said Lord ——, who had been standing on the balcony of the Tuileries on the occasion of the king's "saint's day,"[36] and had heard the minister make the remark.

"And what did the king reply?" was the question.

"Do not worry yourself, monsieur le ministre; I am only moving my lips; I have ceased to pronounce the words for many a day."

These were the expedients to which Louis-Philippe was reduced before he had been on the throne half a dozen years. "I am like the fool between two stools," observed the king in English, afterwards, when speaking to Lord ——, "only I happen to be between the comfortably stuffed easy-chair of the bourgeois drawing-room and the piece of furniture seated on which Louis XIV. is said to have received the Dutch ambassadors."

While speaking of the Marseillaise, here are two stories in connection with it which are not known to the general reader. The first was told to me by the old tutor already mentioned; the second aroused a great deal of literary curiosity in the year 1860, and bears the stamp of truth on the face of it. It was, however, never fully investigated, or, at any rate, the results of the investigation were never published.[37]

"We were all more or less aware," said my informant, "that Rouget de l'Isle was not the author of the whole of the words of the Marseillaise. But none of us in Lyons, where I was born, knew who had written the last strophe, commonly called the 'strophe of the children,' and I doubt whether they were any wiser in Paris. Some of my fellow-students—for I was nearly eighteen at that time—credited André Chenier with the authorship of the last strophe, others ascribed it to Louis-François Dubois, the poet. [38] All this was, however, so much guess-work, when, one day during the Reign of Terror, the report spread that a ci-devant priest, or rather a priest who had refused to take the oath to the Republic, had been caught solemnizing a religious marriage, and that he was to be brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal that same afternoon. Though you may not think so, merely going by what you have read, the appearance of a priest before the Tribunal always aroused more than common interest, nor have you any idea what more than common interest meant in those days. A priest to the Revolutionaries and to the Terrorists, they might hector and bully as they liked, was not an ordinary being. They looked upon him either as something better than a man or worse than a devil. They had thrown the religious compass they had brought from home with them overboard, and they had not the philosophical one to take its place. You may work out the thing for yourself; at any rate, the place was crammed to suffocation when we arrived at the Hôtel de Ville. It was a large room, at the upper end of which stood an oblong table, covered with a black cloth. Seated around it were seven self-constituted judges. Besides their tricolour scarfs round their waists, they wore, suspended by a ribbon from their necks, a small silver axe.

"As a rule there was very little speechifying. 'La mort sans phrase,' which had become the fashion since Louis XVI.'s execution, was strictly adhered to. Half a dozen prisoners were brought in and taken away without arousing the slightest excitement, either in the way of commiseration or hatred. After having listened, the judges either extended their hands on the table or put them to their foreheads. The first movement meant acquittal and liberation, the second death; not always by the guillotine though, for the instrument was not perfect as yet, and did not work sufficiently quickly to please them. All at once the priest was brought in, and a dead silence prevailed. He was not a very old

man, though his hair was snow-white.

"'Who art thou?' asked the president.

"The prisoner drew himself up to his full height. 'I am the Abbé Pessoneaux, a former tutor at the college at Vienne, and the author of the last strophe of the Marseillaise,' he said quietly.

"I cannot convey to you the impression produced by those simple words. The silence became positively oppressive; you could hear the people breathe. The president did not say another word; the priest's reply had apparently stunned him also: he merely turned round to his fellow-judges. Soldiers and gaolers stood as if turned into stone; every eye was directed towards the table, watching for the movement of the judges' hands. Slowly and deliberately they stretched them forth, and then a deafening cheer rang through the room. The Abbé Pessoneaux owed his life to his strophe, for, though his story was not questioned then, it was proved true in every particular. On their way to Paris to be present at the taking of the Tuileries on the 10th of August, the Marseillais had stopped at Vienne to celebrate the Fête of the Federation. On the eve of their arrival the Abbé Pessoneaux had composed the strophe, and but for his seizure the authorship would have always remained a matter of conjecture, for Rouget de l'Isle would have never had the honesty to acknowledge it."

My tutor was right, and I owe him this tardy apology; it appears that, after all, Rouget de l'Isle had not the honesty to acknowledge *openly* his indebtedness to those who made his name immortal, and that his share in the Marseillaise amounts to the first six strophes. He did not write a single note of the music. The latter was composed by Alexandre Boucher, the celebrated violinist, in 1790, in the drawing-room of Madame de Mortaigne, at the request of a colonel whom the musician had never met before, whom he never saw again. The soldier was starting next morning with his regiment for Marseilles, and pressed Boucher to write him a march there and then. Rouget de l'Isle, an officer of engineers, having been imprisoned in 1791, for having refused to take a second oath to the Constitution, heard the march from his cell, and, at the instance of his gaoler, adapted the words of a patriotic hymn he was then writing to it.

One may fancy the surprise of Alexandre Boucher, when he heard it sung everywhere and recognized it as his own composition, though it had been somewhat altered to suit the words. But the pith of the story is to come. I give it in the very words of Boucher himself, as he told it to a Paris journalist whom I knew well.

"A good many years afterwards, I was seated next to Rouget de l'Isle at a dinner-party in Paris. We had never met before, and, as you may easily imagine, I was rather interested in the gentleman, whom, with many others at the same board, I complimented on his production; only I confined myself to complimenting him on his *poem*.

"'You don't say a word about the music,' he replied; 'and yet, being a celebrated musician, that ought to interest you. Do not you like it?'

"'Very much indeed,' I said, in a somewhat significant tone.

"'Well, let me be frank with you. The music is not mine. It was that of a march which came, Heaven knows whence, and which they kept on playing at Marseilles during the Terror, when I was a prisoner at the fortress of St. Jean. I made a few alterations necessitated by the words, and there it is.'

"Thereupon, to his great surprise, I hummed the march as I had originally written it.

"'Wonderful!' he exclaimed; 'how did you come by it?' he asked.

"When I told him, he threw himself round my neck. But the next moment he said—

"'I am very sorry, my dear Boucher, but I am afraid that you will be despoiled for ever, do what you will; for your music and my words go so well together, that they seem to have sprung simultaneously from the same brain, and the world, even if I proclaimed my indebtedness to you, would never believe it.'

"'Keep the loan,' I said, moved, in spite of myself, by his candour. 'Without your genius, my march would be forgotten by now. You have given it a patent of nobility. It is yours for ever.'"

I return to Louis-Philippe, who, at the time of my tutor's story, and for some years afterwards, I only knew from the reports that were brought home to us. Of course, I saw him several times at a distance, at reviews, and on popular holidays, and I was surprised that a king of whom every one spoke so well in private, who seemed to have so much cause for joy and happiness in his own family, should look so careworn and depressed in public. For, young as I was, I did not fail to see that, beneath the calm and smiling exterior, there was a great deal of hidden grief. But I was too young to understand the deep irony of his reply to one of my relatives, a few months before his accession to the throne: "The crown of France is too cold in winter, too warm in summer; the sceptre is too blunt as a weapon of defence or attack, it is too short as a stick to lean upon: a good felt hat and a strong umbrella are at all times more useful." Above all, I was too young to understand the temper of the French where their rulers were concerned, and though, at the time of my writing these notes, I have lived for fifty years amongst them, I doubt whether I could give a succinct psychological account of their mental attitude towards their succeeding régimes, except by borrowing the words of one of their cleverest countrywomen, Madame Émile de Girardin: "When Marshal Soult is in the Opposition, he is acknowledged to have

won the battle of Toulouse; when he belongs to the Government, he is accused of having lost it." Since then the Americans have coined a word for that state of mind—"cussedness."

Louis-Philippe's children, and especially his sons, some of whom I knew personally before I had my first invitation to the Tuileries, seemed to take matters more cheerfully. Save the partisans of the elder branch, no one had a word to say against them. On the contrary, even the Bonapartists admired their manly and straightforward bearing. I remember being at Tortoni's one afternoon when the Duc d'Orléans and his brother, the Duc de Nemours, rode by. Two of my neighbours, unmistakable Imperialists, and old soldiers by their looks, stared very hard at them; then one said, "Si le petit au lieu de filer le parfait amour partout, avait mis tous ses œufs dans le même panier, il aurait eu des grands comme cela et nous ne serions pas dans l'impasse où nous sommes."

"Mon cher," replied the other, "des grands comme cela ne se font qu'à loisir, pas entre deux campagnes."[39]

The admiration of these two veterans was perfectly justified: they were very handsome young men, the sons of Louis-Philippe, and notably the two elder ones, though the Duc d'Orléans was somewhat more delicate-looking than his brother, De Nemours. The boys had all been brought up very sensibly, perhaps somewhat too strict for their position. They all went to a public school, to the Collége Henri IV., and I remember well, about the year '38, when I had occasion of a morning to cross the Pont-Neuf, where there were still stalls and all sorts of booths, seeing the blue-and-yellow carriage with the royal livery. It contained the Ducs d'Aumale and de Montpensier, who had not finished their studies at that time.

But though strictly brought up, they were by no means milksops, and what, for want of a better term, I may call "mother's babies:" quite the reverse. It was never known how they managed it, but at night, when they were supposed to be at home, if not in bed, they were to be met with at all kinds of public places, notably at the smaller theatres, such as the Vaudeville, the Variétés, and the Palais-Royal, one of which, at any rate, was a goodly distance from the Tuileries. It was always understood that the King knew nothing about these little escapades, but I am inclined to doubt this: I fancy he connived at them; because, when Lord —— told him casually one day that he had met his sons the night before, Louis-Philippe seemed not in the least surprised, he only anxiously asked, "Where?"

"At the Café de Paris, your majesty."

The king seemed relieved. "That's all right," he said, laughing. "As long as they do not go into places where they are likely to meet with Guizot, I don't mind; for if he saw them out in the evening, it might cost me my throne. Guizot is so terribly respectable. I am afraid there is a mistake either about his nationality or about his respectability; they are badly matched."

The fact is, that though Louis-Philippe admired and respected Guizot, he failed to understand him. To the most respectable of modern kings—not even Charles I. and William III. excepted—if by respectability we mean an unblemished private life—Guizot's respectability was an enigma. The man who, in spite of his advice to others, "Enrichissez vous, enrichissez vous," was as poor at the end of his ministerial career as at the beginning, must have necessarily been a puzzle to a sovereign who, with a civil list of £750,000, was haunted by the fear of poverty, and haunted to such a degree as to harass his friends and counsellors with his apprehensions. "My dear minister," he said one day to Guizot, after he had recited a long list of his domestic charges—"My dear minister, I am telling you that my children will be wanting for bread." The recollection of his former misery uprose too frequently before him like a horrible nightmare, and made him the first bourgeois instead of the first gentilhomme of the kingdom, as his predecessors had been. When a tradesman drops a shilling and does not stoop to pick it up, his neglect becomes almost culpable improvidence; when a prince drops a sovereign and looks for it, the deed may be justly qualified as mean. The *leitmotif* of Louis-Philippe's conversation, witty and charming as it was, partook of the avaricious spirit of a Thomas Guy and a John Overs rather than of that of the great adventurer John Law. The chinking of the money-bags is audible through both, but in the one case the orchestration is strident, disagreeable, depressing; in the other, it is generous, overflowing with noble impulses, and cheering. I recollect that during my stay at Tréport and Eu, in 1843, when Queen Victoria paid her visit to Louis-Philippe, the following story was told to me. Lord —— and I were quartered in a little hostelry on the Place du Château. One morning Lord —— came home laughing till he could laugh no longer. "What do you think the King has done now?" he asked. I professed my inability to guess. "About an hour ago, he and Queen Victoria were walking in the garden, when, with true French politeness, he offered her a peach. The Queen seemed rather embarrassed how to skin it, when Louis-Philippe took a large clasp-knife from his pocket. 'When a man has been a poor devil like myself, obliged to live upon forty sous a day, he always carries a knife. I might have dispensed with it for the last few years; still, I do not wish to lose the habit—one does not know what may happen,' he said. Of course, the tears stood in the Queen's eyes. He really ought to know better than to obtrude his money worries upon every one."

I must confess that I was not as much surprised as my interlocutor, who, however, had known Louis-Philippe much longer than I. Not his worst enemies could have accused the son of Philippe Égalité of being a coward: the bulletins of Valmy, Jemmappes, and Neerwinden would have proved the contrary. But the contempt of physical danger on the battle-field does not necessarily constitute heroism in the most elevated sense of the term, although the world in general frequently accepts it as such. A man can die but once, and the semi-positivism, semi-Voltaireanism of Louis-Philippe had undoubtedly steeled him against the fear of death. His religion, throughout life, was not even skin-deep; and when he accepted the last rites of the Church on his death-bed, he only did so in deference to his wife. "Ma

femme, es-tu contente de moi?" were his words the moment the priests were gone.

Nevertheless, he was too good a husband to grieve his wife, who was deeply religious, by any needless display of unbelief. He always endeavoured, as far as possible, to find an excuse for staying away from church. He, as well as the female members of his family, were very fond of music; and Adam, the composer, was frequently invited to come and play for them in the private apartments. In fact, after his abdication, he seriously intended to write, in conjunction with Scribe, the libretto of an opera on an English historical subject, the music of which should be composed by Halévy. The composer of "La Juive" and the author of "Les Hugenots" came over once to consult with the King, whose death, a few months later, put an end to the scheme.

On the occasion of Adam's visits the princesses worked at their embroidery, while the King often stood by the side of the performer. Just about that period the chamber organ was introduced, and, on the recommendation of Adam, one was ordered for the Tuileries. The first time Louis-Philippe heard it played he was delighted: "This will be a distinct gain to our rural congregations," he said. "There must be a great many people who, like myself, stay away from church on account of their objection to that horrible instrument, the serpent. Is it not so, my wife?"

The ideal purpose of life, if ever he possessed it, had been crushed out of him—first, by his governess, Madame de Genlis; secondly, by the dire poverty he suffered during his exile: and, notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, France wanted at that moment an ideal ruler, not the rational father of a large family who looked upon his monarchy as a suitable means of providing for them. He was an usurper without the daring, the grandeur, the lawlessness of the usurper. The lesson of Napoléon I.'s method had been thrown away upon him, as the lesson of Napoléon III.'s has been thrown away upon his grandson. When I said France, I made a mistake,—I should have said Paris; for since 1789 there was no longer a King of France, there was only a King of Paris. Such a thing as a Manchester movement, as a Manchester school of politics, would have been and is still an impossibility in France.

And, unfortunately, Paris, which had applauded the glorious *mise-en-scène* of the First Empire, which had even looked on approvingly at some of the pomp and state of Louis XVIII. and Charles X., jeered at Louis-Philippe and his court with its ridiculous gatherings of tailors, drapers, and bootmakers, "ces gardes nationaux d'un pays où il n'y a plus rien de national à garder," and their pretentious spouses "qui," according to the Duchesse de la Trémoïlle, "ont plus de chemises que nos aïeules avaient des robes."[40] She and the Princesse Bagration were the only female representatives of the Faubourg St. Germain who attended these gatherings; for the Countess Le Hon, of whom I may have occasion to speak again, and who was the only other woman at these receptions that could lay claim to any distinction, was by no means an aristocrat. And be it remembered that in those days ridicule had still the power to kill.

Nor was the weapon wielded exclusively by the aristocracy; the lower classes could be just as satirical against the new court element. I was in the Tuileries gardens on that first Sunday in June, 1837, when the Duchesse d'Orléans made her entrée into Paris. The weather was magnificent, and the set scene—as distinguished from some of the properties, to use a theatrical expression—in keeping with the weather. The crowd itself was a pleasure to look at, as it stood in serried masses behind the National Guards and the regular infantry lining the route of the procession from the Arc de Triomphe to the entrance of the Château. All at once an outrider passes, covered with dust, and the crowd presses forward to get a better view. A woman of the people, in her nice white cap, comes into somewhat violent contact with an elegantly dressed elderly lady, accompanied by her daughter. The woman, instead of apologizing, says aloud that she wishes to see the princess: "You will have the opportunity of seeing her at court, mesdames," she adds. The elegant lady vouchsafes no reply, but turns to her daughter: "The good woman," says the latter, shrugging her shoulders, "is evidently not aware that she has got a much greater chance of going to that court than we have. She has only got to marry some grocer or other tradesman, and she will be considered a grande dame at once." Then the procession passes—first the National Guards on horseback, then the King and M. de Montalivet, followed by Princesse Hélène, with her young husband riding by the side of the carriage. So far so good: the first three or four carriages were more or less handsome, but Heaven save us from the rest, as well as from their occupants! They positively looked like some of those wardrobe-dealers so admirably described by Balzac.

When all is over, the woman of the people turns to the elegant lady: "I ask your pardon, madame; it was really not worth while hurting you. If these are *grandes dames*, I prefer *les petites* whom I see in my neighbourhood, the Rue Notre-Dame de Lorette. Comme elles étaient attifées!"—*Anglice*, "What a lot of frumps they looked!"

In fact, Louis-Philippe and his queen sinned most grievously by overlooking the craving of the Parisians for pomp and display. No one was better aware of this than his children, notably the Duc d'Orléans, Princess Clémentine,[41] and the Duc de Nemours. They called him familiarly "le père." "Il est trop père," said the princess in private; "il fait concurrence au Père Éternel." She was a very clever girl—perhaps a great deal cleverer than any of her brothers, the Solon of the family, the Duc de Nemours, included—but very fond of mischief and practical joking. She found her match, though, in her brother, the Prince de Joinville, the son of Louis-Philippe of whom France heard most and saw least, for he was a sailor. One day, his sister asked him to bring her a complete dress of a Red-Skin chieftain's wife. His absence was shorter than usual, and, a few days before his return, he told her in a letter that he had the costume she wanted. "Here, Clémentine, this is for you," he said, at his arrival, putting a string of glass beads on the table.

"Very pretty," said Clémentine, "but you promised me a complete dress."

"This is the complete dress. I never saw them wear any other."

I did not see the Prince de Joinville very often, perhaps two or three times in all; once on the occasion of his marriage with Princess Françoise de Bourbon, the daughter of Dom Pedro I. of Brazil, and sister of the present emperor, when the prince brought his young bride to Paris. He was a clever draughtsman and capital caricaturist; but if the first of these talents proved an unfailing source of delight to his parents, the second frequently inspired them with terror, especially his father, who never knew which of his ministers might become the next butt for his third son's pencil. I have seen innumerable sketches, ostensibly done to delight his young wife and brothers, which, had they been published, would have been much more telling against his father's pictorial satirists than anything they produced against the sovereign. For in those days, whatever wisdom or caution they may have learnt afterwards, the sons of Louis-Philippe were by no means disposed to sit down tamely under the insults levelled at the head of their house. In fact, nearly the whole of Louis-Philippe's children had graphic talents of no mean order. The trait came to them from their mother, who was a very successful pupil of Angelica Kauffman. Princesse Marie, who died so young, executed a statue of Jeanne d'Arc, which was considered by competent judges, not at all likely to be influenced by the fact of the artist's birth, a very creditable piece of work indeed. I never saw it, so I cannot say, but I have seen some miniatures by the Duc de Nemours, which might fairly rank with performances by the best masters of that art, short of genius.

It is a curious, but nevertheless admitted fact that the world has never done justice to the second son of Louis-Philippe. He was not half as great a favourite with the Parisians as his elder brother, although in virtue of his remarkable likeness to Henri IV., whom the Parisians still worship—probably because he is dead,—he ought to have commanded their sympathies. This lukewarmness towards the Duc de Nemours has generally been ascribed by the partisans of the Orleanist dynasty to his somewhat reticent disposition, which by many people was mistaken for *hauteur*. I rather fancy it was because he was suspected of being his father's adviser, and, what was worse, his father's adviser in a reactionary sense. He was accused of being an anti-parliamentarian, and he never took the trouble to refute the charge, probably because he was too honest to tell a lie.[42] I met the Duc de Nemours for the first time in the studio of a painter, Eugène Lami, just as I met his elder brother in that of Decamps. In fact, all these young princes were sincere admirers and patrons of art, and, if they had had their will, the soirées at the Tuileries would have been graced by the presence of artists more frequently than they were; but, preposterous and scarcely credible as it may seem, the bourgeoisie looked upon this familiar intercourse of the king's sons with artists, literary men, and the like, as so much condescension, if not worse, of which they, the bourgeoisie, would not be guilty if they could help it. It behoves me, however, to be careful in this instance, for the English aristocracy at home was not much more liberal in those days.

The first thing that struck one in the Duc de Nemours was the vast extent of his general information and the marvellous power of memory. Eugène Lami had just returned from London, and, in the exercise of his profession, had come in contact with some members of the oldest families. The mere mention of the name sufficed as the introduction to the general and anecdotal history of such a family, and I doubt whether the best official at Herald's College could have dissected a pedigree as did the Duc de Nemours. Eugène Lami was at that time engaged upon designing some new uniforms for the army, many of which disappeared only after the war of 1870. He lived in the Rue des Marais, the greater part of which was subsequently demolished to make room for the Boulevard de Magenta, and in the same house with two men whose names have become immortal, Honoré de Balzac and Paul Delaroche. I have already spoken of both, but I did not mention the incident that led to the painter's acquaintance with the novelist, an incident so utterly fanciful that the boldest farce-writer would think twice before utilizing it in a play. It was told to me by Lami himself. One morning, as he and Paul Delaroche were working, there was a knock at the door, and a stout individual, dressed in a kind of monastic garb, appeared on the threshold. Delaroche remembered that he had met him on the staircase, but neither knew who he was, albeit that Balzac's fame was not altogether unknown to them. "Gentlemen," said the visitor, "I am Honoré Balzac, a neighbour and a confrère to boot. My chattels are about to be seized, and I would ask you to save a remnant of my library."

Of course, the request was granted. The books were stowed away behind the pictures; and, after that, Balzac often dropped in to have a chat with them, but neither Delaroche nor Lami, the latter least of all, ever conceived a sincere liking for the great novelist. Their characters were altogether dissimilar. I have seen a good many men whose names have become household words among the refined, the educated, and the art-loving all the world over; I have seen them at the commencement, in the middle, and at the zenith of their career: I have seen none more indifferent to the material benefits of their art than Eugène Lami and Paul Delaroche, not even Eugène Delacroix and Decamps. Balzac was the very reverse. To make a fortune was the sole ambition of his life.

To return for a moment to Louis-Philippe's sons. I have said that the Duc de Nemours was essentially the grand seigneur of the family; truth compels me to add, however, that there was a certain want of pliability about him which his social inferiors could not have relished. It was Henri IV. minus the bonhomie, also perhaps minus that indiscriminate galanterie which endeared Ravaillac's victim to all classes, even when he was no longer young. In the days of which I am treating just now, the Duc de Nemours was very young. As for his courage, it was simply above suspicion; albeit that it was called in question after the revolution of '48, to his father's intense sorrow. No after-dinner encomium was ever as absolutely true as that of Sir Robert Peel on the sons and daughters of the last King of France, when he described them as respectively brave and chaste. Nevertheless, had the Duc

de Nemours and his brothers been a thousand times as brave as they were, party spirit, than which there is nothing more contemptible in France, would have found the opportunity of denying that bravery.

If these notes are ever published, Englishmen will smile at what I am about to write now, unless their disgust takes another form of expression. The exploits of the Duc d'Aumale in Algeria are quoted by independent military authorities as so many separate deeds of signal heroism. They belong to history, and not a single historian has endeavoured to impair their value. Will it be believed that the Opposition journals of those days spoke of them with ill-disguised contempt as mere skirmishes with a lot of semi-savages? And, during the Second Republic, many of these papers returned to the charge because the Duc d'Aumale, being the constitutionally-minded son of a constitutionally-minded king, resigned the command of his army instead of bringing it to France to coerce a nation into retaining a ruler whom, ostensibly at least, she had voluntarily accepted, and whom, therefore, she was as free to reject.

In connection with these Algerian campaigns of the Duc d'Aumale, I had a story told to me by his brother, De Montpensier, which becomes particularly interesting nowadays, when spiritualism or spiritism is so much discussed. He had it from two unimpeachable sources, namely, from his brother D'Aumale and from General Cousin-Montauban, afterwards Comte de Palikao, the same who was so terribly afraid, after the expedition in China, that the emperor would create him Comte de Pékin, and who sent an aide-de-camp in advance to beg the sovereign not to do so.[43]

It was to General Montauban that Abdel-Kader surrendered after the battles of Isly and Djemma-Gazhouat. It was in the latter engagement that a Captain de Géreaux fell, and when the news of his death reached his family they seemed almost prepared for it. It transpired that, on the very day of the engagement, and at the very hour in which Captain de Géreaux was struck down, his sister, a young and handsome but very impressionable girl, started all of a sudden from her chair, exclaiming that she had seen her brother, surrounded by Arabs, who were felling him to the ground. Then she dropped to the floor in a dead swoon.

A few years elapsed, when General Montauban, who had become the military Governor of the province of Oran, received a letter from the De Géreaux family, requesting him to make some further inquiries respecting the particulars of the captain's death. The letter was written at the urgent prayer of Mdlle. de Géreaux, who had never ceased to think and speak of her brother, and who, on one occasion, a month or so before the despatch of the petition, had risen again from her chair, though in a more composed manner than before, insisting that she had once more seen her brother. This time he was dressed in the native garb, he seemed very poor, and was delving the soil. These visions recurred at frequent intervals, to the intense distress of the family, who could not but ascribe them to the overstrung imagination of Mdlle. de Géreaux. A little while after, she maintained having seen her brother in a white robe and turban, and intoning hymns that sounded to her like Arabic. She implored her parents to institute inquiries, and General Montauban was communicated with to that effect. He did all he could; the country was at peace, and, after a few months, tidings came that there was a Frenchman held prisoner in one of the villages on the Morocco frontier, who for the last two or three years had entirely lost his reason, but that, previous to that calamity, he had been converted to Islamism. His mental derangement being altogether harmless, he was an attendant at the Mosque. As a matter of course, the information had been greatly embellished in having passed through so many channels, nor was it of so definite a character as I have noted it down, but that was the gist of it.

Meanwhile, Montauban had been transferred to another command, and for a twelvemonth after his successor's arrival the inquiry was allowed to fall in abeyance. When it was finally resumed, the French prisoner had died, but, from a document written in his native language found upon him and brought to Oran, there remained little doubt that he was Captain de Géreaux.

To return for a moment to the Duc d'Aumale, who, curiously enough, exercised a greater influence on the outside world in general than any of his other brethren—an influence due probably to his enormous wealth rather than to his personal qualities, though the latter may, to some people, have seemed remarkable. I met him but seldom during his father's lifetime. He was the beau-ideal of the preux chevalier, according to the French notion of the modern Bayard—that is, handsome, brave to a fault, irresistibly fascinating with women, good-natured in his way, and, above all, very witty. It was he who, after the confiscation of the d'Orléans' property by Napoléon III., replied to the French Ambassador at Turin, who inquired after his health, "I am all right; health is one of the things that cannot be confiscated." Nevertheless, upon closer acquaintance, I failed to see the justifying cause for the preference manifested by public opinion, and, upon more minute inquiry, I found that a great many people shared my views. I am at this moment convinced that, but for his having been the heir of that ill-fated Prince de Condé, and consequently the real defender in the various suits resulting from the assassination of that prince by Madame de Feuchères, he would have been in no way distinguished socially from the rest of the D'Orléans.

The popularity of his eldest brother, the Duc d'Orléans, was, on the contrary, due directly to the man himself. As far as one can judge of him, he was the reverse of Charles II., in that he never said a wise thing and never did a foolish one. He was probably not half so clever as his father, nor, brave as he may have been, would he have ever made so dashing a soldier as his brother D'Aumale, or so rollicking a sailor as his brother De Joinville. He did not pretend to the wisdom of his brother De Nemours, nor to the mystic tendencies of his youngest sister, nor to the sprightly wit of Princesse Clémentine, and yet withal he understood the French nation better than any of them. Even his prenuptial escapades, secrets to no one, were those of the grand seigneur, though by no means

affichées; they endeared him to the majority of the people. "Chacun colon-ise à sa façon," was the lenient verdict on his admiration for Jenny Colon, at a moment when colonization in Algeria was the topic of the day. On the whole he liked artists better, perhaps, than art itself, yet it did not prevent him from buying masterpieces as far as his means would allow him. Though still young, in the latter end of the thirties, I was already a frequent visitor to the studios of the great French painters, and it was in that of Decamps' that I became alive to his character for the first time. I was talking to the great painter when the duke came in. We had met before, and shook hands, as he had been taught to do by his father when he met with an Englishman. But I could not make out why he was carrying a pair of trousers over his arm. After we had been chatting for about ten minutes, I wondering all the while what he was going to do with the nether garment, he caught one of my side glances, and burst out laughing. "I forgot," he said; "here, Decamps, here are your breeches." Then he turned to me to explain. "I always bring them up with me when I come in the morning. The concierge is very old, and it saves her trudging up four flights of stairs." The fact was, that the concierge, before she knew who he was, had once asked him to take up the painter's clothes and boots. From that day forth he never failed to ask for them when passing her lodge.

I can but repeat, the Duc d'Orléans was one of the most charming men I have known. I always couple him in my mind with Benjamin Disraeli, and Alexandre Dumas the elder. I knew the English statesman almost as well during part of my life as the French novelist. Though intellectually wide apart from them, the duke had one, if not two traits in common with both; his utter contempt for money affairs and the personal charm he wielded. I doubt whether this personal charm in the other two men was due to their intellectual attainments; with the Duc d'Orléans it was certainly not the case. He rarely, if ever, said anything worth remembering; in fact, he frankly acknowledged his very modest scholarship, and his inability either to remember the epigrams of others or to condense his thoughts into one of his own. "I should not like to admit as much to my father, who, it appears, is a very fine Greek and Latin scholar," he said—"that is, if I am to believe my brothers, De Nemours and D'Aumale, who ought to know; for, notwithstanding the prizes they took at college, I believe they are very clever. Ah, you may well look surprised at my saying, 'notwithstanding the prizes they took,' because I took ever so many, although, for the life of me, I could not construe a Greek sentence, and scarcely a Latin one. I have paid very handsomely, however, for my ignorance." And then he told us an amusing story of his having had to invent a secretaryship to the duchess for an old schoolfellow. "You see, he came upon me unawares with a slip of paper I had written him while at college, asking him to explain to me a Greek passage. There was no denying it, I had signed it. What is worse still, he is supposed to translate and to reply to the duchess's German correspondence, and, when I gave him the appointment, he did not know a single word of Schiller's language, so I had to pay a German tutor and him too."

I have said that the Duc d'Orléans was absolutely indifferent with regard to money, but he would not be fleeced with impunity. What he disliked more than anything else, was the greed of the shopkeeping bourgeois. One day, while travelling in Lorraine, he stopped at the posting-house to have his breakfast, consisting of a couple of eggs, a few slices of bread and butter, and a cup of coffee. Just before proceeding on his journey, his valet came to tell him that mine host wanted to charge him two hundred francs for the repast. The duke merely sent for the mayor, handed him a thousand-franc note, gave him the particulars of his bill of fare, told him to pay the landlord according to the tariff, and to distribute the remainder of the money among the poor. It is more than probable that mine host was among the first, in '48, to hail the republic: princes and kings, according to him, were made to be fleeced; if they objected, what was the good of having a monarchy?

The popular idol in France must distribute largesse, and distribute it individually, or be profitable in some other way. Greed, personal interest, underlies most of the political strife in France. During one of the riots, so common in the reign of Louis-Philippe, Mimi-Lepreuil, a well-known clever pick-pocket, was shouting with all his might, "Vive Louis-Philippe! à bas la République!" As a rule, gentlemen of his profession are found on the plebeian side, and one of the superintendents of police on duty, who had closely watched him, inquired into the reason of his apostasy. "I am sick of your Republicans," was the answer. "I come here morning after morning"—it happened on the Place de la Bourse,—"and dip my hands into a score of pockets without finding a red cent. During the Revolution of July, at the funeral of General Lamarque, I did not make my expenses. Give me a royal procession to make money." These were his politics.

It would be difficult to say what the Duc d'Orléans would have done, had he lived to ascend the throne. One thing is certain, however, that on the day of his death, genuine tears stood in the eyes of all classes, except the Legitimists. As I have already said, they ascribed the fatal accident to God's vengeance for the usurpation of his father. "If this be the case," said an irreverent but witty journalist, "it argues but very little providence on the part of *your Providence*, for now He will have to keep the peace between the Duc de Berri, the Duc de Reichstadt, and the Duc d'Orléans."

CHAPTER X.

The Revolution of '48 — The beginning of it — The National Guards in all their glory — The Café Grégoire on the Place du Caire — The price of a good breakfast in '48 — The palmy days of the Cuisine Bourgeoise — The excitement on the Boulevards on Sunday, February 20th, '48 — The theatres — A ball at Poirson's, the erstwhile

director of the Gymnase — A lull in the storm — Tuesday, February 22nd — Another visit to the Café Grégoire — On my way thither — The Comédie-Française closes its doors — What it means, according to my old tutor — We are waited upon by a sergeant and corporal — We are no longer "messieurs," but "citoyens" — An eye to the main chance — The patriots do a bit of business in tricolour cockades — The company marches away — Casualties — "Le patriotisme" means the difference between the louis d'or and the écu of three francs — The company bivouacs on the Boulevard Saint-Martin — A tyrant's victim "*malgré lui*" — Wednesday, February 23rd — The Café Grégoire once more — The National Guards *en négligé* — A novel mode of settling accounts — The National Guards fortify the inner man — A bivouac on the Boulevard du Temple — A camp scene from an opera — I leave — My companion's account — The National Guards protect the regulars — The author of these notes goes to the theatre — The Gymnase and the Variétés on the eve of the Revolution — Bouffé and Déjazet — Thursday, February 24th, '48 — The Boulevards at 9.30 a.m. — No milk — The Revolutionaries do without it — The Place du Carrousel — The sovereign people fire from the roofs on the troops — The troops do not dislodge them — The King reviews the troops — The apparent inactivity of Louis-Philippe's sons — A theory about the difference in bloodshed — One of the three ugliest men in France comes to see the King — Seditious cries — The King abdicates — Chaos — The sacking of the Tuileries — Receptions and feasting in the Galerie de Diane — "Du café pour nous, des cigarettes pour les dames" — The dresses of the princesses — The bourgeois feast the gamins who guard the barricades — The Republic proclaimed — The riff-raff insist upon illuminations — An actor promoted to the Governorship of the Hôtel de Ville — Some members of the "provisional Government" at work — Méry on Lamartine — Why the latter proclaimed the Republic.

I was returning home earlier than usual on Saturday night, the 19th of February, '48, when, at the corner of the Rue Lafitte, I happened to run against a young Englishman who had been established for some years in Paris as the representative of his father, a wealthy cotton-spinner in the north. We had frequently met before, and a cordial feeling had sprung up between us, based at first—I am bound to say—on our common contempt for the vanity of the French.

"Come and breakfast with me to-morrow morning," he said; "I fancy you will enjoy yourself. We will breakfast in my quarter, and you will see the National Guards in all their glory. They will muster very strong to-morrow, if it be fine."

"But why to-morrow?" I replied. "I was under the impression that the idea of the Reformist banquet in the Champs-Élysées had been abandoned, so there will be no occasion for them to parade? Besides, that would be on Tuesday only."

"It has been abandoned, but if you think that it will prevent them from turning out, you are very much mistaken; at any rate, come and listen to the preliminaries."

I promised him to come, but I had not the slightest idea that I was going to witness a kind of mild prologue to a revolution.

Next morning turned out very fine—balmy spring weather—and as I sauntered along the Boulevards Montmartre and Poissonnière to the place of appointment the streets were already crowded with people in their Sunday clothes. The place where I was to meet my English friend was situated in the midst of a busy quarter, scarcely anything but warehouses where they sold laces, and flowers, and silks; something like the neighbourhood at the back of Cheapside. The wealthy tradesmen of those days did not live in the outskirts of Paris, as they did later on; and when my friend and I reached the principal café and restaurant on the Place du Caire—I think it was called the Café Grégoire—there was scarcely a table vacant. The habitués were, almost to a man, National Guards, prosperous business men, considerably more anxious, as I found out in a short time, to play a political part than to maintain public tranquillity. If I remember rightly, one of them, a chemist and druggist, who was pointed out to me then, became a deputy after the fall of the Second Empire; and I may notice en passant that this same spot was the political hothouse which produced, afterwards, Monsieur Tirard, who started life as a small manufacturer of imitation jewellery, and who rose to be Minister of Finances under the Third Republic.

The breakfast was simply excellent, the wine genuine throughout, the coffee and cognac all that could be wished; and, when I asked my friend to let me look at the bill, out of simple curiosity, or, rather, for the sake of comparing prices with those of the Cafés de Paris and Riche, I found that he had spent something less than eleven francs. At the Café Riche it would have been twenty-five francs, and, at the present time, one would be charged double that sum. These were the palmy days of the Cuisine Française, or, to call it by another name, the Cuisine Bourgeoise, for which, a few years later, a stranger in Paris would have almost sought in vain. Luckily, however, for my enjoyment and digestive organs, I was no stranger to Paris and to the French; if I had been, both the former would have been spoilt, the excitement of those around me being such as to lead the alien to believe that there would be an instantaneous departure for the Tuileries, and a revival of the bloody scenes of the first revolution. It has been my lot, in after-years, to hear a great deal of political drivel in French and English, but it was sound philosophy compared to what I heard that morning. I have spoken before of

the Hôtel des Haricots, where men like Hugo, Balzac, Béranger, and Alfred de Musset chose to be imprisoned rather than perform their *duties* as National Guards. After that, I could fully appreciate their reluctance to be confounded with such a set of pompous wind-bags.

It came to nothing that day, but I had become interested, and made an appointment with my friend for the Tuesday, unless something should happen in the interval. Still, I did not think that the monarchy of July was doomed, though, on returning to the Boulevards, I could not help noticing that the excitement had considerably increased during the time I had been at breakfast. By twelve o'clock that night I was convinced that I had been mistaken, and that the dynasty of the D'Orléans had not a week to live. All the theatres were still open, but I had an invitation to a ball, given by Poirson, the then late director of the Gymnase Théâtre, at his house in the Faubourg Poissonnière. "Nous ne danserons plus jamais sous Louis-Philippe!" was the general cry, which did not prevent the guests from thoroughly enjoying themselves.

Next morning, Monday, there seemed to be a lull in the storm, but on the Tuesday the signs of the coming hurricane were plainly visible on the horizon. The Ministry of Marine was guarded by a company of linesmen. I had some business in the Rue de Rivoli, which at that time ended almost abruptly at the Louvre; and, on my way to the Café Grégoire, I met patrol upon patrol of National Guards beating the "assembly." I had occasion to pass before the Comédie-Française. The ominous black-lettered slip of yellow paper, with the word *Relâche*, was pasted across the evening's bill. That was enough for me. I remembered the words of my old tutor: "When the Comédie-Française shuts its doors in perilous times, it is like the battening down of the hatches in dirty weather. There is mischief brewing." When I got to the Place du Caire, I was virtually in the thick of it. With the exception of my friend and I, there was not a man in mufti. Even the proprietor had donned his uniform. Our fillet of beef was brought to us by a corporal, and our coffee poured out by a sergeant. Whether these warrior-waiters meant to strike one blow for freedom and to leave the place to take care of itself, we were unable to make out; but their patrons were no longer "messieurs," but had already become "citoyens." I was tempted to say, in the words of Dupin—the one who was President of the Chamber on the day of the Coup d'État, and who was Louis-Philippe's personal friend, "Soyons citoyens, mais restons messieurs," but I thought it better not. My friend had given up all idea of attending to business. "It will not be of the least use," he said. "If I had ribbons to sell instead of cottons, I might make a lot of money, though; for I am open to wager that some of our patriotic neighbours, while they are going to bell the cat outside, have given orders to their workpeople to manufacture tricolour cockades and rosettes with the magic R. F. (République Française) in the centre."

"You do not mean that they would think of such a thing at such a critical moment, even if the republic were a greater probability than it appears to be?" I remonstrated.

"I do mean to say so," he replied, beckoning at the same time to a sleek, corpulent lieutenant, standing a few paces away. "Can you do with a nice lot of narrow silk ribbon?" he asked, as the individual walked up to our table.

"What colour?" inquired the lieutenant.

My friend gave me a significant look, and named all the hues of the rainbow except white, red, and blue.

"Won't do," said the lieutenant, shaking his head. "If it had been red, white, and blue I would have bought as much as you like, because I am manufacturing rosettes for the good cause." After this he walked away.

On the Thursday afternoon the Boulevards and principal thoroughfares swarmed with peripatetic vendors of the republican insignia, and some of my friends expressed their surprise as to where they had come from in so short a time. Seeing that they were Frenchmen, I held my tongue, even when one professed to explain, "They have come from England; they are always speculating upon our misfortunes, though they do it cleverly enough. They got scent of what was coming, and sent them over as quickly as they could. Truly they are a great nation—of shopkeepers!" I was reminded of Béranger's scapegrace, when he was accused of being drunk.

> "Qu'est que cela me fait, à moi?
> Que l'on m'appelle ivrogne?"

he sings.

As the afternoon wore on, the excitement increased; the news from the Boulevards became alarming, and at about three o'clock the company marched away. As a matter of course we followed, and equally, as a matter of course, did not leave them until 2.30 next morning. Casualties to report. A large scratch in one of the drummer's cheeks, made by an oyster-shell, flung at the company as it turned round the corner of the Rue de Cléry. No battles, no skirmishes, a great deal of fraternizing with "le peuple souverain," whom, in their own employ, the well-to-do tradesmen would have ordered about like so many mangy curs.

From that day forth I have never dipped into any history of modern France, professing to deal with the political causes and effects of the various upheavals during the nineteenth century in France. They may be worth reading; I do not say that they are not. I have preferred to look at the men who instigated those disorders, and have come to the conclusion that, had each of them been born with five or ten thousand a year, their names would have been absolutely wanting in connection with them.

This does not mean that the disorders would not have taken place, but they would have always been led by men in want of five or ten thousand a year. On the other hand, if the D'Orléans family had been less wealthy than they are there would have been no firmly settled third republic; if Louis-Napoléon had been less poor, there would, in all probability, have been no second empire; if the latter had lasted another year, we should have found Gambetta among the ministers of Napoléon III., just like Émile Ollivier, of the "light heart." "Les convictions politiques en France sont basées sur le fait que le louis d'or vaut sept fois plus que l'écu de trois francs." This is the dictum of a man who never wished to be anything, who steadfastly refused all offers to enter the arena of public life.

My friend and I had been baulked of the drama we expected—for we frankly confessed to one another that the utter annihilation of that company of National Guards would have left us perfectly unmoved,—and got instead, a kind of first act of a military spectacular play, such as we were in the habit of seeing at Franconi's. The civic warriors were ostensibly bivouacking on the Boulevard St. Martin; they stacked their muskets and fraternized with the crowd; it would not have surprised us in the least to see a troupe of ballet dancers advance into our midst and give us the entertainment de rigueur—the intermède. It was the only thing wanting to complete the picture, from which even the low comedy incident was not wanting. An old woebegone creature, evidently the worse for liquor, had fallen down while a patrol of regulars was passing. He was not a bit hurt; but there and then the rabble proposed to carry him to the Hôtel de Ville, and to give him an apotheosis as a martyr to the cause. They had already fetched a stretcher, and were, notwithstanding his violent struggles, hoisting him on it, when prevented by the captain of the National Guards.

Still, we returned next day to the Café Grégoire. In the middle of the place there lay an old man—that one, stark dead, who had been fired upon without rhyme or reason by a picket of the National Guards. It was only about eleven o'clock, and those valiant defenders of public order were still resting from their fatigue—at any rate, there were few of them about. There was a discussion going on whether they should go out or not—a discussion confined to the captain, two lieutenants, and as many sub-lieutenants. They appeared not to have the least idea of the necessity to refer for orders to the colonel or the head-quarters of the regiment or the legion, as it was called. They meant to settle the matter among themselves. The great argument in favour of calling out the men was that one of them, while standing at his window that very morning, was fired at by a passing ragamuffin, who, instead of hitting him, shattered his windowpanes.

"Well," said one of the lieutenants, who had been opposed to the calling out of the men, "then we are quits after all; for look at the old fellow lying out there."

"No, we are not," retorts the captain; "for he was shot by a mistake, so he doesn't count."

"L'esprit ne perd jamais ses droits en France;" so, in another moment or two, the bugle sounded lustily throughout the quarter. We followed the buglers for a little while, it being still too early for our breakfast, and consequently enjoyed the felicity of seeing a good many of the warriors "in their habit as they lived" indoors—namely, in dressing-gown and slippers and smoking-caps. For most of them opened their windows on the first, second, and third floors, to inquire whether the call was urgent. The buglers entered into explanations. No, the call was not urgent, but the captain had decided on a military promenade, just to reassure the neighbourhood, and to stimulate the martial spirit of the lagging members of the company. The explanation invariably provoked the same answer, and in a voice not that of the citizen-warrior: "Que le capitaine attende jusqu'après le déjeûner."

Davoust has said that the first condition of the fitness of an army is its commissariat. In that respect every one of these National Guards was fit to be a Davoust, for their fortifying of the inner man was not accomplished until close upon two o'clock. By that time they marched out, saluted by the cries of "Vive la Réforme!" of all the ragtag and bobtail from the Faubourgs du Temple and St. Antoine, who had invaded the principal thoroughfares. The "Marseillaise," the "Chant des Girondins," "La République nous appelle" resounded through the air; and I was wondering whether they were packing their trunks at the Tuileries, also what these National Guards had come out for. They only seemed to impede the efficient patrolling of the streets by the regulars, and, instead of dispersing the rabble, they attracted them. They were evidently under the impression that they made a very goodly show, and at every word of command I expected to see the captain burst asunder. When we got to the Boulevard St. Martin, the latter was told that the sixth legion was stationed on the Boulevard du Temple. A move was made in that direction.

Now "Richard is himself again;" he is among the crowd he likes best—the crowd of the Boulevard du Crime, with its theatres, large and small, its raree and puppet shows, its open-air entertainments, its cafés and mountebanks; and, what is more, he is there in his uniform, distinguished from the rest, and consequently the cynosure of all the little actresses and pretty *figurantes* who have just left the rehearsal—for by this time it is after three—and who are but too willing to be entertained. Appointments are made to dine or to sup together, without the slightest reference as to what may happen in the interval. All at once there is an outcry and a rush towards the Porte Saint-Martin; our warriors are obliged to leave their inamoratas, and when they come to look for their muskets, which they have placed in a corner for convenience' sake, they find that a good many have disappeared. The customers belonging to the sovereign people have slunk off with them. Nevertheless they join the ranks, for the bugle has sounded. At the corner of the Faubourg Saint-Martin, whence the noise proceeded, they are met by three or four score of the sovereign people, ragged, unkempt, who are pushing in front of them two of the students of the École Polytechnique. The two young fellows are very pale, and can scarcely speak. Still they manage to explain that the Municipal Guard at the Saint-Martin barracks have fired upon the people; then they go their way. Whither? Heaven only knows. But

our captain, in the most stentorian of voices, gives the word of command, "To the right, wheel!" and we are striding up the faubourg, which is absolutely deserted as far as the Rue des Marais. A collision seems pretty inevitable now, the more that the Municipal Guards are already taking aim, when all at once our captain and one of the lieutenants rush forward, and fling themselves into the arms of the officers of the Municipal Guards. Tableau; and I am baulked once more of a good fight. I leave my friend to see the rest of this ridiculous comedy, and take my departure there and then.

The following is my companion's account of what happened after I left. I am as certain that every word of it is true as if I had been there myself, though it seems almost incredible that French officers, whose worst enemies have never accused them of being deficient in courage, should have acted so inconsiderately.

"The officers of the National Guards appear to have assumed at once the office of protectors of the regulars against the violence of the crowd. Why the regulars should have submitted to this, seeing that they were far better armed than their would-be guardians, I am unable to say. Be this as it may, the regulars consented, the flag floating above the principal door of the barracks was taken down, and I really believe that the Municipal Guards stacked their arms and virtually handed them over to the others. But I will not vouch for it. At any rate, a few hours afterwards, while the company had gone to dinner, the barracks were assailed, the men and officers knocked down by the people, and the building set on fire. When the fifth legion returned about eleven o'clock to the Faubourg Saint-Martin, the flames were leaping up to the sky, so they turned their heels contentedly in the direction of the Boulevard du Temple, where they bivouacked between the Théâtre de la Gaîté and the Ambigu-Comique, while those who had made appointments with the little actresses went round by the stage doors to keep them. That, as far as I could judge, was the part of the fifth legion in the day's proceedings. I left them in all their glory, thinking themselves, no doubt, very fine fellows.

"On the Thursday morning"—my companion told me all this on Saturday evening, the 26th of February—"I was up betimes, simply because the drumming and bugling prevented my sleeping. At eight, the Café Grégoire was already very full, the heroes of the previous night had returned to perform their ablutions, and also, I suppose, to reassure their anxious spouses; but they had no longer that conquering air I noticed when I left them the night before. Whether they had come to the conclusion that both in love and war they had reaped but barren victories, I cannot say, but their republican ardour, it seemed to me, had considerably cooled down. I am convinced that, notwithstanding the events of Wednesday night in the Faubourg Saint-Martin, they were under the impression that neither the people nor the military would resort to further extremities. I cannot help thinking that, after I left, not a single man could have remained at his post, because not one amongst them seemed to have an idea of the horrible slaughter on the Boulevard des Capucines.[44] They were not left very long in ignorance of the real state of affairs, and then they saw at once that they had roused a spectre they would be unable to lay. From that moment, it is my opinion, they would have willingly drawn back, but it was too late. While they were still debating, an individual rushed in, telling them that one or two regiments, commanded by a general (who turned out to be General Bedeau), had drawn up in front of the barricade which had been thrown up during the night in the Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle, and was being defended by a detachment of the fifth legion. They all ran out, and I ran with them. When we got to the boulevard, matters had already been arranged, and they were just in time to join the escort General Bedeau had accepted, after having consented not to execute the orders with which he had been entrusted. By that time I began to perceive which way the wind was blowing: the canaille had unceremoniously linked their arms in those of the National Guards, and insisted, courteously but firmly, on carrying their firearms. When we got to the Rue Montmartre, they took the horses out of the gun-carriages, and the soldiers looked tamely on, notwithstanding the commands of their officers. When the latter endeavoured to enforce their orders by hitting them with the flat of their swords, they simply left the ranks and joined the rabble. I had had enough of it, and made my way home by the back streets. I had had enough of it, and kept indoors until this afternoon."

Thus far my informant. As for myself, I saw little on the Wednesday night of what was going on. It was my own fault: I was too optimistic. I had scarcely gone a few steps, after my dinner, when, just in front of the Gymnase, they began shouting, "*La Patrie, Journal du soir*; achetez *La Patrie*. Voyez le nouveau ministère de Monsieur Molé." I remember giving the fellow half a franc, at which he grumbled, though it was three times the ordinary price. On opening the paper, I rashly concluded from what I read that the revolution was virtually at an end, and I was the more confirmed in my opinion by the almost instantaneous lighting up of the Boulevards. It was like a fairy scene: people were illuminating—a little bit too soon, as it turned out. Being tired of wandering, and feeling no inclination for bed, I turned into the Gymnase. There were Bressant and Rose Chéri and Arnal; I would surely be able to spend a few pleasant hours. But alack and alas! the house presented a very doleful appearance—dead-heads, to a man; and very few of these, people who, if they could not fiddle themselves, like Nero while Rome was burning, would go to hear fiddling under no matter what circumstances, provided they were not asked to pay. I did not stay long, but when I came out into the streets the noise was too deafening for me. The "Marseillaise" has always had a particularly jarring effect upon my nerves. There are days when I could be cruel enough to prefer "the yells of those ferocious soldiers, as they murder in cold blood the sons and the companions" of one section of defenceless patriots, to the stirring strains of the other section as they figuratively rush to the rescue; and on that particular evening I felt in that mood. So, when I got to the Boulevard Montmartre, I turned into the Théâtre des Variétés. I remember the programme up to this day. They were playing "Le Suisse de Marly," "Le Marquis de Lauzun," "Les Extrêmes se touchent," and "Les Vieux Péchés." I had seen the second and the last piece at least a dozen times, but I was always ready to see them

again for the sake of Virginie Déjazet in the one, of Bouffé in the other. The lessee at that time was an Englishman. Bouffé and I had always kept up our friendship; so I made up my mind to go and have a chat with him, hoping that Déjazet, whose conversation affected one like a bottle of champagne, would join us. The house, like the Gymnase, was almost empty, but I made my way behind the scenes, and in about half an hour forgot all about the events outside. Bouffé was telling me anecdotes about his London performances, and Déjazet was imitating the French of some of the bigwigs of King Leopold's court; so the time passed pleasantly enough. At the end of the performance we proposed taking supper, and turned down the Rue Montmartre. It was late when I returned home, consequently I saw nothing of the slaughter on the Boulevard des Capucines.

Though I had gone to bed late, I was up betimes on the Thursday morning. A glance at the Boulevards, as I turned the corner of my street about half-past nine, convinced me that the illuminations of the previous night had been premature, and that before the day was out there would be an end of the monarchy of July. A slight mist was still hanging over the city as I strolled in the direction of the Madeleine, and the weather was damp and raw, but in about half an hour the sun broke through. A shot was heard now and then, but I myself saw no collision then between the troops and the people. On the contrary, it looked to me as if the former would have been glad to be left alone. As I had been obliged to leave home without my usual cup of tea for want of milk—the servant had told me there was none—I went back a little way to Tortoni's, where I was greeted with the same answer. I could have tea or coffee or chocolate made with water, but milk there was none on that side of Paris, and, unless things took a turn, there would be no butter. The sovereign people had thrown up barricades during the night round all the northern and north-western issues, and would not let the milk-carts pass. They, no doubt, had some more potent fluids to fall back upon, for a good many, even at that early hour, were by no means steady in their gait. The Boulevards were swarming with them. Since then, I have seen these sovereign people getting the upper hand twice, viz. on the 4th of September, '70, and on the 18th of March, '71. I have seen them during the siege of Paris, and I have no hesitation in saying that, for cold-blooded, apish, monkeyish, tigerish cruelty, there is nothing on the face of God's earth to match them, and that no concessions wrung from society on their behalf will ever make them anything else but the fiends in human shape they are.

After my fruitless attempt to get my accustomed breakfast, I resumed my perambulations, this time taking the Rue Vivienne as far as the Palais-Royal. It must have been between half-past ten and eleven when I reached the Place du Carrousel, which, at a rough guess, was occupied by about five thousand regular infantry and horse and National Guards. The Place du Carrousel was not then, what it became later on, a large open space. Part of it was encumbered with narrow streets of very tall houses, and from their windows and roofs the sovereign people—according to an officer who had been on duty from early morn—had been amusing themselves by firing on the troops,—not in downright volleys, but with isolated shots, picking out a man here and there. "But," I remonstrated, "half a dozen pompiers and a score of linesmen could dislodge them in less than ten minutes, instead of returning their shots one by one." "So they could," was the reply, "but orders came from the Château not to do so, and here we are. Besides," added my informant, "I doubt very much, if I gave my men the word of command to storm the place, whether they would do so; they are thoroughly demoralized. On our way hither I had the greatest difficulty in keeping them together. Without a roll-call I could not exactly tell you how many are missing, but as we came along I noticed several falling out and going into the wine-shops with the rabble. They did not come back again. I had to shut my eyes to it. If I had attempted to prevent it, there would have been a more horrible slaughter than there was last night on the Boulevards, and, what is worse, the men who remained staunch would have been in a minority, and not able to stand their ground. The mob have got hold of the muskets of the National Guards. I dare say, as you came along, you noticed on many doors, written up in chalk, 'Arms given up,' and on some the words 'with pleasure' added to the statement." It was perfectly true; I had noticed it.

I was still talking to the captain when the drums began to beat and the buglers sounded the salute. At the same moment I saw the King, in the uniform of a general of the National Guards, cross the courtyard on horseback. I noticed a great many ladies at the ground-floor windows of the palace, but could not distinguish their faces. I was told afterwards that they were the Queen and the princesses, endeavouring to encourage the septuagenarian monarch. Louis-Philippe was seventy-five then.

I have often heard and seen it stated by historians of the revolution of '48, that the Duke d'Aumale and the Prince de Joinville, had they been in Paris, would have saved their father's crown. This is an assumption which it is difficult to disprove, seeing how popular these young princes were then. But if the assumption is meant to convey that the mob at the sight of these brave young fellows would have laid down their arms without fighting, I can unhesitatingly contradict it. What the National Guard might have done it is impossible to say. The regulars, no doubt, would have followed the princes into battle, as they would have followed their brother, De Nemours, notwithstanding the latter's unpopularity. There would have been a great deal of bloodshed, but the last word would have remained with the Government. Louis-Philippe's greatest title to glory is that of having prevented such bloodshed. But to show how little such abnegation of self is understood by even the most educated Frenchmen, I must relate a story which was told to me many years afterwards by a French officer who, at that time, had just returned from the Pontifical States, where he had helped to defeat the small army of Garibaldi. He was describing the battle-field of Mentana to Napoléon III., and mentioned a prisoner he had made who turned out to be an old acquaintance from the Boulevards. "He was furious against Garibaldi, sire," said the officer, "because the latter had placed him in the necessity, as it were, of firing upon his own countrymen in a strange land. Said the prisoner, 'I am not an émigré; I would not have gone to Coblenz; I am a Frenchman from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot. If it came to fighting my countrymen in the streets of Paris, that would be a different thing.

I should not have the slightest scruple of firing upon the Imperial Guards or upon the rabble, as the case might be, for that would be civil war.' That's what he said, sire."

Napoléon nodded his head, and with his wonderful, sphinxlike smile, replied, "Your prisoner was right; it makes all the difference." The Orléans princes, save perhaps one, never knew these distinctions; if they had known them, the Comte de Paris might be King of France to-day.

To return for a moment to Louis-Philippe as I saw him at the last moments of his reign. He felt evidently disappointed at the lukewarm reception he received, for though there was a faint cry among the regulars of "Vive le Roi!" it was immediately drowned by the stentorian one of the rabble of "Vive la Réforme!" in which a good many of the National Guards joined. He was evidently in a hurry to get back to the Tuileries, and, when he disappeared in the doorway, I had looked upon him for the last time in my life. An hour and a half later, he had left Paris for ever.

Personally I saw nothing of the flight of the King, nor of the inside of the Tuileries, until the royal family were gone. The story of that flight was told to me several years later by the Duc de Montpensier. What is worse, in those days it never entered my mind that a time would come when I should feel desirous of committing my reminiscences to paper, consequently I kept no count of the hours that went by, and cannot, therefore, give the exact sequence of events. I do not know how long I stood among the soldiers and the crowd, scarcely divided from one another even by an imaginary line. It was not a pleasant crowd, though to my great surprise there were a great many more decently dressed persons in it than I could have expected, so I stayed on. About half an hour after the King re-entered the Tuileries, I noticed two gentlemen elbow their way through the serried masses. I had no difficulty in recognizing the one in civilian's clothes. Though he was by no means so famous as he became afterwards, there was hardly a Parisian who would not have recognized him on the spot. His portrait had been drawn over and over again, at least as many times as that of the King, and it is a positive fact that nurses frightened their babies with it. He was the ugliest man of the century. It was M. Adolphe Cremieux.[45] His companion was in uniform. I learnt afterwards that it was General Gourgaud, but I did not know him then except by name, and in connection with his polemics with the Duke of Wellington, in which the latter did not altogether behave with the generosity one expects from an English gentleman towards a fallen foe. As they passed, the old soldier must have been recognized, because not one, but at least a hundred cries resounded, "Vive la grande armée! Vive l'Empereur!" In after years I thought that these cries sounded almost prophetic, though I am pretty sure that those who uttered them had not the slightest hope of, and perhaps not even a desire for, a Napoleonic restoration; at any rate, not the majority. There is one thing, however, which could not have failed to strike the impartial observer during the next twenty years. I have seen a good many riots, small and large, during the Second Republic and the Second Empire. "Seditious cries," as a matter of course, were freely shouted. I have never heard a single one of "Vivent les D'Orléans!" or "Vivent les Bourbons!" I have already spoken more than once about the powerful influence of the Napoleonic legend in those days; I shall have occasion to refer to it again and again when speaking about the nephew of the first Napoléon.

Cremieux and Gourgaud could not have been inside the Tuileries more than a quarter of an hour when they rushed out again. They evidently made a communication to the troops, because I beheld the latter waving their arms, but, of course, I did not catch a word of what they said; I was too far away. It was, I learnt afterwards, the announcement of the advent of a new ministry, and the appointment of a new commander of the National Guards. When I saw hats and caps flung into the air, and heard the people shouting, I made certain that the revolution was at an end. I was mistaken. It was not Cremieux's communication at all that had provoked the enthusiasm; it was a second communication, made by some one from the doorway of the Tuileries immediately after the eminent barrister had disappeared among the crowd, to the effect that the King had abdicated in favour of the Comte de Paris, with the Duchesse d'Orléans as regent. Between the first and second announcements there could not have elapsed more than five or six minutes, ten at the utmost, because, before I had time to recover from my surprise, I saw Cremieux and Gourgaud battle through the tightly wedged masses once more, and re-enter the Tuileries to verify the news. I am writing this note especially by the light of subsequent information, for, I repeat, it was impossible to understand events succinctly by the quickly succeeding effects they produced at the time. Another ten minutes elapsed—ten minutes which I shall never forget, because every one of the thousands present on the Place du Carrousel was in momentary danger of having the life crushed out of him. It was no one's fault; there was, if I recollect rightly, but one narrow issue on the river-side, and there was a dense seething mass standing on the banks, notwithstanding the danger of that position, for the insurgents were firing freely and recklessly across the stream. Egress on the opposite side of the Place du Carrousel, that of the Place du Palais-Royal, had become absolutely impossible, for at that moment a fierce battle was raging there between the people and the National Guards for the possession of the military post of the Château d'Eau;[46] and those of the non-combatants who did not think it necessary to pay for the fall or the maintenance of the monarchy of July with life or limb, tried to get out of the bullets' reach. There was but one way of doing so, by a stampede in a southerly direction; the Rue de Rivoli, at any rate that part which existed, was entirely blocked to the west, the congeries of streets that have been pulled down since to make room for its prolongation to the east were bristling with barricades: hence the terrible, suffocating crush, in which several persons lost their lives. The most curious incident connected with these awful ten minutes was that of a woman and her baby. When Cremieux issued for the second time from the Tuileries, it was to confirm the news of the King's abdication. Almost immediately afterwards, the masses on the quay were making for the Place de la Concorde and the Palais-Bourbon, whither, it was rumoured, the Duchesse D'Orléans and her two sons were going; and

gradually the wedged-in mass on the Place du Carrousel found breathing space. Then the woman was seen to fall down like a ninepin that has been toppled over; she was dead, but her baby, which she had held above the crowd, and which they had, as it were, to wrench from her grasp, was alive and well.

I stood for a little while longer on the Place du Carrousel, trying to make up my mind whether to proceed to the Place de la Concorde or to the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville. I knew that the newly-elected powers, whosoever they might be, would make their appearance at the latter spot, but how long it would be before they came, I had not the least idea. I was determined, however, to see at any rate one act of the drama or the farce; for even then there was no knowing in what guise events would present themselves. I could hear the reports of firearms on both sides of me, though why there should be firing when the King had thrown up the sponge, I could not make out for the life of me. I did not know France so well then as I know her now. I did not know then that there is no man or, for that matter, no woman on the civilized earth so heedlessly and obdurately bloodthirsty when he or she works himself into a fury as the professedly débonnaire Parisian proletarian. Nevertheless, I decided to go to the Hôtel de Ville, and had carefully worked my way as far as the site of the present Place du Châtelet, when I was compelled to retrace my steps. The élite of the Paris scum was going to dictate its will to the new Government; it was marching to the Chamber of Deputies with banners flying. One of the latter was a red-and-white striped flannel petticoat, fastened to a tremendously long pole. I had no choice, and if at that moment my friends had seen me they might have easily imagined that I had become one of the leaders of the revolutionary mob. We took by the Quai de la Mégisserie, and just before the Pont des Arts there was a momentary halt. The vanguard, which I was apparently leading, had decided to turn to the right; in other words, to visit the abode of the hated tyrant. Had I belonged to the main division, I should have witnessed a really more important scene, from the historical point of view; as it was, I witnessed—

The Sacking of the Tuileries.

The idea that "there is a divinity that hedgeth round a king" seemed, I admit, preposterous enough at that moment; but I could not help being struck with its partial truth on seeing the rabble invade the palace. When I say the rabble, I mean the rabble, though there were a great many persons whom it would be an insult to class as such, and who from sheer curiosity, or because they could not help themselves, had gone in with them. The doors proved too narrow, and those who could not enter by that way, entered by the windows. The whole contingent of the riff-raff, male and female, weltering in the adjacent streets—and such streets!—was there. Well, for the first ten minutes they stood positively motionless, not daring to touch anything. It was not the fear of being caught pilfering and punished summarily that prevented them. The minority which might have protested was so utterly insignificant in numbers, as to make action on their part impossible. No, it was neither fear nor shame that stayed the rabble's hands; it was a sentiment for which I can find no name. It was the consciousness that these objects had belonged to a king, to a royal family, which made them gaze upon them in a kind of superstitious wonder. It did not last long. We were on the ground floor, which mainly consisted of the private apartments of the household of Louis-Philippe. We were wandering, or rather squeezing, through the study and bedroom of the King himself, through the sitting-rooms of the princes and princesses. I do not think that a single thing was taken from there at that particular time. But as if the atmosphere their rulers had breathed but so very recently became too oppressive, the crowd swayed towards the vestibule, and ascended the grand staircase. Then the spell was broken. The second batch that entered through the windows, when we had made room for them, were apparently not affected by wonder and respect, for, half an hour later, when I came down again, every cupboard, every wardrobe, had been forced, though it is but fair to say that very little seems to have been taken; the contents, books, clothing, linen, etc., were scattered on the floors; but the cellars, containing over four thousand bottles of wine, were positively empty. Two hours later, however, the clothing, especially that of the princesses, had totally disappeared. It had disappeared on the backs of the inmates of St. Lazare, the doors of which had been thrown open, and who had rushed to the Tuileries to deck themselves with these fine feathers which, in this instance, did not make fine birds. I saw some of them that same evening on the Boulevards, and a more heart-rending spectacle I have rarely beheld.

The three hours I spent at the Tuileries were so crowded with events as to make a succinct account of them altogether impossible. I can only give fragments, because, though at first the wearers of broadcloth were not molested, this tolerance did not last long on the part of the new possessors of the Tuileries; and consequently the former gradually dropped off, and those of them who remained had to be very circumspect, and, above all, not to linger long in the same spot. This growing hostility might have been nipped in the bud by our following the example of the National Guards, and taking off our coats and fraternizing with the rabble; but I frankly confess that I had neither the courage nor the stomach to do so. I have read descriptions of mutinous sailors stowing in casks of rum and gorging themselves with victuals; revolting as such scenes must be to those who take no active part in them, I doubt whether they could be as revolting as the one I witnessed in the Gallerie de Diane.

The Galerie de Diane was one of the large reception rooms on the first floor, but it generally served as the dining and breakfast room of the royal family. The table had been laid for about three dozen persons, because, as a rule, Louis-Philippe invited the principal members of his military and civil households to take their repasts with him. The breakfast had been interrupted, and not been cleared away. When I entered the apartment some sixty or seventy ruffians of both sexes were seated at the board, while a score or so were engaged in waiting upon them. They were endeavouring to accomplish what the Highest Authority has declared impossible of accomplishment, namely, the making of silken purses out of sows' ears. They were "putting on" what they considered "company manners," and, under any other circumstances but these, the attempt would have proved irresistibly comic to the

educated spectator; as it was, it brought tears to one's eyes. I have already hinted elsewhere that the cuisine at the Tuileries during Louis-Philippe's reign was execrable, though the wine was generally good. Bad as was the fare on that abandoned breakfast-table, it must, nevertheless, have been superior to that usually partaken of by the convives who had taken the place of the fugitive king and princes. They, the convives, however, did not think so; they criticized the food, and ordered the improvised attendants "to give them something different;" then they turned to their female companions, filling their glasses and paying them compliments. But for the fact of another batch eagerly claiming their turn, the repast would have been indefinitely prolonged; as it was, the provisions in the palace were running short, and the deficiency had to be made up by supplies from outside. The inner man being refreshed, the ladies were invited to take a stroll through the apartments, pending the serving of the café and liqueurs. The preparation of the mocha was somewhat difficult, seeing the utensils necessary for the supply of so large a company were probably not at hand, and the ingredients themselves in the store-rooms of the palace. Nothing daunted, one of the self-invited guests rose and said, in a loud voice, "Permettez moi d'offrir le café à la compagnie," which offer was received with tumultuous applause. Suiting the action to the word, he pulled out a small canvas bag, and took from it two five-franc pieces. "Qu'on aille chercher du café et du meilleur," he said to one of the guests who had stepped forward to execute his orders, for they sounded almost like it; and I was wondering why those professed champions of equality did not tell him to fetch the coffee himself. Then he added, "Et pendant que tu y es, citoyen, apporte des cigares pour nous et des cigarettes pour les dames." The "citoyen" was already starting on his errand, when the other "citoyen" called him back. "Écoute," he said; "tu n'acheteras rien à moins d'y être forcé. Je crois que tu n'auras qu'à demander à la première épicerie venue ce qu'il te faut, et ainsi au premier bureau de tabac. Ils ont si peur, ces sales bourgeois qu'ils n'oseront pas te refuser. En tout cas prends un fusil; on ne sait pas ce qui peut arriver; mais ne t'en sers pas qu'en cas de necessité:"—which meant plainly enough, "If they refuse to give you the coffee and the tobacco, shoot them down."

Of course, I am unable to say how these two commodities were eventually procured; but I have every reason to believe that this messenger had only "to ask and have," without as much as showing his musket. There is no greater cur at troublous times than the Paris shopkeeper. The merest urchin will terrify him. Even on the previous day I had seen bands of gamins who had constituted themselves the guardians of the barricades—and there was one in nearly every street—levy toll without the slightest resistance, when a few well-administered cuffs would have sent them flying, so I have not the slightest doubt that our friend had all the credit of his generosity without disbursing a penny—unless his delegate fleeced him also, on the theory that a man who could "fork out" ten francs at a moment's notice was nothing more or less than a bourgeois. However, when I returned after about forty minutes' absence, it was very evident that both the coffee and the tobacco had arrived, because the Galerie de Diane, large as it was, was full of smoke, and three saucepans, filled with water, were standing on the fire, while two or three smaller ones were arranged on the almost priceless marble mantelpiece. Another batch of ravenous republicans had taken their seats at the board, their predecessors whiling the time away in sweet converse with the "ladies." Some of the latter were more usefully engaged; they were rifling the cabinets of the most rare and valuable Sèvres, and arranging the cups, saucers, platters on their tops to be ready for the beverage that was being brewed. I was wondering how they had got at these art treasures, having noticed an hour before that their receptacles were locked and the keys taken away. The doors had simply been battered in with the hammer of the great clock of the Tuileries.

It was of a piece with the wanton destruction I had witnessed elsewhere, during my absence from the Galerie de Diane. Before I returned thither, I had seen the portrait of General Bugeaud in the Salle des Maréchaux, literally stabbed with bayonets; the throne treated to a similar fate, and carried off to the Place de la Bastille to be burned publicly; the papers of the royal family mercilessly flung to the winds; the dresses of the princesses torn to ribbons or else put on the backs of the vilest of the vile.

There was only one comic incident to relieve the horror of the whole. In one of the private apartments the rabble had come upon an aged parrot screeching at the top of its voice, "À bas Guizot!" The bird became a hero there and then, and was absolutely crammed with sweets and sugar. That one comic note was not enough to dispel my disgust, and after the scene in the Galerie de Diane which I have just described, I made my way into the street.

I had scarcely proceeded a few steps, when I heard the not very startling news that the republic had been formally proclaimed in the Chamber by M. de Lamartine, who had afterwards repaired to the Hôtel de Ville. At the same time, people were shouting that the King had died suddenly. I endeavoured to get as far, but, though the distance was certainly not more than half a mile, it took me more than an hour. At every few yards my progress was interrupted by barricades, the self-elected custodians of which were particularly anxious to show their authority to a man like myself, dressed in a coat. At last I managed to get to the corner of the Rues des Lombards and Saint-Martin, and just in time to enjoy a sight than which I have witnessed nothing more comic during the succeeding popular uprisings in subsequent years. I was just crossing, when a procession hove in sight, composed mainly of ragged urchins, dishevelled women, and riff-raff of both sexes. In their midst was an individual on horseback, dressed in the uniform of a general of the First Republic, whom they were cheering loudly. The stationary crowd made way for them, and mingled with the escort. The moment I had thrown in my lot with the latter, retreat was no longer possible, and in a very short time I found myself in the courtyard of the Hôtel de Ville, and, in another minute or so, in the principal gallery on the first floor, where, it appears, *some members* of the Provisional Government were already at work. I had not the remotest notion who they were, nor did I care to inquire, having merely come to look on. The work of the members of the Provisional Government seemed mainly to consist in consuming enormous quantities

of charcuterie and washing them down with copious libations of cheap wine. The place was positively reeking with the smell of both, not to mention the fumes of tobacco. Every one was smoking his hardest. The entrance of the individual in uniform caused somewhat of a sensation; a *member*—whom I had never seen before and whom I have never beheld since—stepped forward to ask his business. The new-comer did not appear to know himself; at any rate, he stammered and stuttered, but his escort left him no time to betray his confusion more plainly. "C'est le citoyen gouverneur de l'Hôtel de Ville," they shouted as with one voice; and there and then the new governor was installed, though I am perfectly sure that not a soul of all those present knew as much as his name.

Subsequent inquiries elicited the fact that the man was a fourth or fifth-rate singer, named Chateaurenaud, and engaged at the Opéra National (formerly the Cirque Olympique) on the Boulevard du Temple. On that day they were having a dress rehearsal of a new piece in which Chateaurenaud was playing a military part. He had just donned his costume when, hearing a noise on the Boulevards, he put his head out of the window. The mob caught sight of him. "A general, a general!" cried several urchins; and in less time than it takes to tell, the theatre was invaded, and notwithstanding his struggles, Chateaurenaud was carried off, placed on horseback, and conducted to the Hôtel de Ville, where, for the next fortnight, he throned as governor. For, curious to relate, M. de Lamartine ratified his appointment(?) on the morning of the 25th of February. Chateaurenaud became an official of the secret police during the Second Empire. I often saw him on horseback in the Bois de Boulogne, when the Emperor drove in that direction.

I did not stay long in the Hôtel de Ville, but made my way back to the Boulevards as best I could; for by that time darkness had set in, and the mob was shouting for illuminations, and obstructing the thoroughfares everywhere. Every now and then one came upon a body which had been lying there since the morning, but they took no notice of it. Their principal concern seemed the suitable acknowledgment of the advent of the Second Republic by the bourgeoisie by means of coloured devices, or, in default of such, by coloured lamps or even candles. Woe to the houses, the inhabitants of which remained deaf to their summons to that effect. In a very few minutes every window was smashed to atoms, until at last a timid hand was seen to arrange a few bottles with candles stuck into them on the sill, and light them. Then they departed, to impose their will elsewhere.

That night, after dinner, the first person of my acquaintance I met was Méry. He had been in the Chamber of Deputies from the very beginning of the proceedings; it was he who solemnly assured me that the first cry of "Vive la République!" had been uttered by M. de Lamartine. I was surprised at this, because I had been told that early in the morning the poet had paid a visit to the Duchesse d'Orléans to assure her of his devotion to her cause. "That may be so," said Méry, to whom I repeated what I had heard; "but you must remember that Lamartine is always hard up, and closely pursued by duns. A revolution with the prospect of becoming president of the republic was the only means of staving off his creditors. He clutched at it as a last resource."

Alexandre Dumas was there also, but I have an idea that he would have willingly passed the sponge over that incident of his life, for I never could get him to talk frankly on the subject. This does not mean that he would have recanted his republican principles, but that he was ashamed at having lent his countenance to such a republic as that. I fancy there were a great many like him.

CHAPTER XI.

The Second Republic — Lamartine's reason for proclaiming it — Suspects Louis-Napoléon of similar motives for wishing to overthrow it — Tells him to go back to England — De Persigny's account of Louis-Napoléon's landing in France after February 24th, '48 — Providential interference on behalf of Louis-Napoléon — Justification of Louis-Napoléon's belief in his "star" — My first meeting with him — The origin of a celebrated nickname — Badinguet a creation of Gavarni — Louis-Napoléon and his surroundings at the Hôtel du Rhin — His appearance and dress — Lord Normanby's opinion of his appearance — Louis-Napoléon's French — A mot of Bismarck — Cavaignac, Thiers, and Victor Hugo's wrong estimate of his character — Cavaignac and his brother Godefroi — The difference between Thiers and General Cavaignac — An elector's mot — Some of the candidates for the presidency of the Second Republic — Electioneering expenses — Impecuniosity of Louis-Napoléon — A story in connection with it — The woman with the wooden legs — The salons during the Second Republic — The theatres and their skits on the situation — "La Propriété c'est le Vol" — France governed by the *National* — A curious list of ministers and officials of the Second Republic — Armand Marrast — His plans for reviving business — His receptions at the Palais-Bourbon as President of the Chamber of Deputies — Some of the guests — The Corps Diplomatique — The new deputies, their wives and daughters.

I knew Louis-Napoléon, if not intimately, at least very well, for nearly a quarter of a century, and I felt myself as little competent to give an opinion on him on the last as on the first day of our acquaintance. I feel almost certain of one thing, though; that, if he had had very ample means of his own, the Second Empire would have never been. Since its fall I have heard and read a great deal about Louis-Napoléon's unfaltering belief in his star; I fancy it would have shone less brightly to him

but for the dark, impenetrable sky of impecuniosity in which it was set. Méry said that Lamartine proclaimed the Second Republic as a means of staving off his creditors; and the accusation was justified by Lamartine's own words in the Assemblée Nationale itself on the 11th of September, 1848: "Je déclare hautement que le 24 Février à midi, je ne pensais pas à la République." To use a popular locution, the author of "L'Histoire des Girondins" suspected, perhaps, that Louis-Napoléon might take a leaf from his, the author's, book; for the needy man, though perhaps not a better psychologist than most men, has a very comprehensive key to the motives of a great number of his fellow-creatures, especially if they be Frenchmen and professional politicians. I am speaking by the light of many years' observation. Furthermore, the pecuniary embarrassments of Louis-Napoléon were no secret to any one. "I have established a republic for money's sake," Lamartine said to himself; "some one will endeavour to overthrow it for money's sake." I am aware that this is not a very elevated standard whereby to judge political events; but I do not profess to be an historian—mine is only the little huckster shop of history.

It is more than probable that this was the reason why Lamartine told Louis-Napoléon to go back to England, in their interview—a secret one—on the 2d of March, 1848.

It was M. de Persigny who told me this many years afterwards. "The Prince could afford to humour De Lamartine in that way," he added, "for if ever a man was justified in believing in his star it was he. I'll tell you a story which is scarcely known to half a dozen men, including the Emperor and myself; I am not aware of its having been told by any biographer. The moment we ascertained the truth of the news that reached us from Paris, we made for the coast, and, on Saturday morning, we crossed in the mail-packet. It was very rough, and we had a good shaking, so that when we got to Boulogne we were absolutely 'done up.' But we heard that a train was to start for Paris, and, as a matter of course, the Prince would not lose a minute. We had to walk to Neufchâtel, about three miles distant, because there was something the matter with the rails, I do not know what. We flung ourselves into the first compartment, which already contained two travellers. Almost immediately we had got under way, one of these, who had looked very struck when we entered, addressed the Prince by name. He turned out to be Monsieur Biesta, who had paid a visit to Napoléon during his imprisonment at Ham, and who immediately recognized him. Monsieur Biesta had just left the Duc de Nemours. I do not know whether he was at that time a Republican, a Monarchist, or an Imperialist, but he was a man of honour, and it was thanks to him that the son of Louis-Philippe made his escape. The other one was the Marquis d'Arragon, who died about a twelvemonth afterwards. All went well until we got to Amiens, where we had to wait a very long while, the train which was to have taken us on to Paris having just left. For once in a way the Prince got impatient. He who on the eve of the Coup d'État remained, at any rate outwardly, perfectly stolid, was fuming and fretting at the delay. One would have thought that the whole of Paris was waiting at the Northern station to receive him with open arms, and to proclaim him Emperor there and then. But impatient or not, we had to wait, and, what was worse or better, the train that finally took us came to a dead stop at Persan, where the news reached us that the rails had been broken up by the insurgents at Pontoise, that a frightful accident had happened in consequence to the train we had missed by a few minutes at Amiens, in which at least thirty lives were lost, besides a great number of wounded. But for the merest chance we should have been among the passengers. Was I right in saying that the Prince was justified in believing in his star?"

I did not meet with Louis-Napoléon until he was a candidate for the presidency of the Second Republic, and while he was staying at the Hôtel du Rhin in the Place Vendôme. Of course, I had heard a great deal about him, but my informants, to a man, were English. While the latter were almost unanimous in predicting Louis-Napoléon's eventual advent to the throne, the French, though in no way denying the influence of the Napoleonic legend, were apt to shrug their shoulders more or less contemptuously at the pretensions of Hortense's son; for few ever designated him by any other name, until later on, when the nickname of "Badinguet" began to be on every one's lips. Consequently, I was anxious to catch a glimpse of him; but before noting the impressions produced by that first meeting, I will devote a few lines to the origin of that celebrated sobriquet.

Personally, I never heard it in connection with Louis-Napoléon until his betrothal to Mdlle. Eugénie de Montijo became common "talk;" but I had heard and seen it in print a good many years before, and even as late as '48. There was, however, not the slightest attempt at that time to couple it with the person of the future Emperor. Three solutions have made the round of the papers at various times: (1) that it was the name of the stonemason or bricklayer who lent Louis-Napoléon his clothes to facilitate his escape from Ham in June, 1845; (2) that it was the name of the soldier who was wounded by the Prince on the 5th of August, 1840, at Boulogne, when the latter fired on Captain Col-Puygellier; (3) that about the latter end of the forties a pipe-manufacturer introduced a pipe, the head of which resembled that of Louis-Napoléon, and that the pipemaker's name was Badinguet.

The latter solution may be dismissed at once as utterly without foundation. With regard to that having reference to the stonemason, no stonemason lent Louis-Napoléon his clothes. The disguise was provided by Dr. Conneau from a source which has never been revealed. There was, moreover, no stonemason of the name of Badinguet at Ham, and, when Louis-Napoléon crossed the drawbridge of the castle, his face partially hidden by a board he was carrying on his shoulder, a workman, who mistook him for one of his mates, exclaimed, "Hullo, there goes Bertoux." Bertoux, not Badinguet.

The name of the soldier wounded by Louis-Napoléon was Geoffroy; he was a grenadier, decorated on the battle-field; and shortly after Napoléon's accession to the throne, he granted him a pension. There can be no possible mistake about the name, seeing that it was attested at the trial subsequent to the fiasco before the Court of Peers.

The real fact is this: Gavarni, like Balzac, invented many names, suggested in many instances by those of their friends and acquaintances, or sometimes merely altered from those they had seen on signboards. The great caricaturist had a friend in the Département des Landes named Badingo; about '38 he began his sketches of students and their companions ("Étudiants et Étudiantes"), and in one of them a medical student shows his lady-love an articulated skeleton.

"Look at this," says the former; "this is Eugénie, the former sweetheart of Badinguet—that tall, fair girl who was so fond of *meringues*. He has had her mounted for thirty-six francs."

The connection is very obvious; it only wanted one single wag to remember the skit when Napoléon became engaged to Eugénie de Montijo. He set the ball rolling, and the rest followed as a matter of course.

At the same time, Gavarni had not been half as original, as he imagined, in the invention of the name. Badinguet was a character in a one-act farce entitled "Le Mobilier de Rosine," played for the first time in 1828, at the Théâtre Montansier; and there is a piece of an earlier date even, in which Grassot played a character by the name of Badinguet. In 1848, there was a kind of Jules Vernesque piece at the Porte Saint-Martin, in which Badinguet, a Parisian shopkeeper, starts with his wife Euphémie for some distant island.

To return to Louis-Napoléon at the Hôtel du Rhin, and my first glimpse of him. I must own that I was disappointed with it. Though I had not the slightest ground for expecting to see a fine man, I did not expect to see so utterly an insignificant one, and badly dressed in the bargain. On the evening in question, he wore a brown coat of a peculiar colour, a green plush waistcoat, and a pair of yellowish trousers, the like of which I have never seen on the legs of any one off the stage. And yet Lord Normanby, and a good many more who have said that he looked every inch a king, were not altogether wrong. There was a certain gracefulness about him which owed absolutely nothing either to his tailor, his barber, or his bootmaker. "The gracefulness of awkwardness" sounds remarkably like an Irish bull, yet I can find no other term to describe his gait and carriage. Louis-Napoléon's legs seemed to have been an afterthought of his Creator—they were too short for his body, and his head appeared constantly bent down, to supervise their motion; consequently, their owner was always at a disadvantage when compelled to make use of them. But when standing still, or on horseback, there was an indescribable something about the man which at once commanded attention. I am not overlooking the fact that, on the occasion of our first meeting, my curiosity had been aroused; but I doubt whether any one, endowed with the smallest power of observation, though utterly ignorant with regard to his previous history, and equally sceptical with regard to his future destiny, could have been in his company for any length of time without being struck with his appearance.

When I entered the apartment on the evening in question, Louis-Napoléon was leaning in his favourite attitude against the mantelpiece, smoking the scarcely ever absent cigarette, and pulling at the heavy brown moustache, the ends of which in those days were not waxed into points as they were later on. There was not the remotest likeness to any portrait of the Bonaparte family I had ever seen. He wore his thin, lank hair much longer than he did afterwards. The most startling features were decidedly the aquiline nose and the eyes; the latter, of a greyish-blue, were comparatively small and somewhat almond-shaped, but, except at rare intervals, there was an impenetrable look, which made it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to read their owner's thoughts by them. If they were "the windows of his soul," their blinds were constantly down. The "I am pleased to see you, sir," with which he welcomed me, holding out his hand at the same time, was the English of an educated German who had taken great pains to get the right accent and pronunciation, without, however, completely succeeding; and when I heard him speak French, I detected at once his constant struggle with the same difficulties. The struggle lasted till the very end of his life, though, by dint of speaking very slowly, he overcame them to a marvellous extent. But the moment he became in any way excited, the *f*'s and the *t*'s and the *p*'s were always trying to oust the *v*'s, the *d*'s and the *b*'s from their newly-acquired positions, and often gained a momentary victory. There is an amusing story to that effect, in connection with Napoléon's first interview with Bismarck. I will not vouch for its truth, but, on the face of it, it sounds blunt enough to be genuine. The Emperor was complimenting the German statesman on his French.

"M. de Bismarck, I have never heard a German speak French as you do," said Napoléon.

"Will you allow me to return the compliment, sire?"

"Certainly."

"I have never heard a Frenchman speak French as you do."[47]

When Prince Louis-Napoléon held out his hand and I looked into his face, I felt almost tempted to put him down as an opium-eater. Ten minutes afterwards, I felt convinced that, to use a metaphor, he himself was the drug, and that every one with whom he came in contact was bound to yield to its influence. When I came away that evening, I could have given Cavaignac, Thiers, Lamartine, Hugo, and the rest, who wanted to make a cat's-paw of him, a timely warning, if they would have condescended to listen to, and profit by it, which I am certain they would not have done. Strange as it may seem, every one of these men, and, with the exception of one, all undoubtedly clever, thought Louis-Napoléon either an imbecile or a secret drunkard. And, what is more, they endeavoured to propagate their opinion throughout the length and breadth, not only of France, but of Europe.

As usual, the one who was really the greatest nonentity among the latter was most lavish in his contempt. I am alluding to General Cavaignac. The nobodies who have governed or misgoverned France since the Fall of Sedan were, from an intellectual point of view, eagles compared to that surly and bumptious drill-sergeant, who had nothing, absolutely nothing, to recommend him for the elevated position he coveted. He was the least among all those brilliant African soldiers whose names and prowess were on every one's lips; he had really been made a hero of, at so much per line, by the staff of the *National*, where his brother Godefroy wielded unlimited power. He was all buckram; and, in the very heart of Paris, and in the midst of that republic whose fiercest watchword, whose loudest cry, was "equality," he treated partisans and opponents alike, as he would have treated a batch of refractory Arabs in a distant province of that newly-conquered African soil. He disliked every one who did not wear a uniform, and assumed a critical attitude towards every one who did. His republicanism was probably as sincere as that of Thiers—it meant "La République c'est moi:" with this difference, that Thiers was amiable, witty, and charming, though treacherous, and that Cavaignac was the very reverse. His honesty was beyond suspicion; that is, he felt convinced that he was the only possible saviour of France: but it was impaired by his equally sincere conviction that bribery and coercion—of cajoling he would have none—were admissible, nay, incumbent to attain that end. "Thiers, c'est la république en écureuil, Cavaignac c'est la république en ours mal léché," said a witty journalist. He and Louis-Napoléon were virtually the two men who were contending for the presidential chair, and the chances of Cavaignac may be judged by the conclusion of the verbal report of one of Lamoricière's emissaries, who canvassed one of the departments.

"'The thing might be feasible,' said an elector, 'if your general's name was Geneviève de Brabant, or that of one of the four sons of Aymon.[48] But his name is simply Cavaignac—Cavaignac, and that's all. I prefer Napoléon; at any rate, there is a ring about that name.' And I am afraid that eleven-twelfths of the electors are of the same opinion."

As for Ledru Rollin, Raspail, Changarnier, and even Lamartine and the Prince de Joinville, some of whom were candidates against their will, they were out of the running from the very start, though, curiously enough, the son of the monarch whom the republic had driven from the throne obtained more votes than the man who had proclaimed that republic. These votes were altogether discarded as unconstitutional, though one really fails to see why one member of a preceding dynasty should have been held to be more eligible than another. Be this as it may, the votes polled by the sailor prince amounted to over twenty-three thousand, showing that he enjoyed a certain measure of popularity. It is doubtful whether the Duc d'Aumale or the Duc de Nemours would have obtained a fifth of that number. As I have already said, the latter was disliked by his father's opponents for his suspected legitimist tendencies, and tacitly blamed by some of the partisans of the Orleanist régime for his lack of resistance on the 24th of February; the former's submission "to the will of the nation," as embodied in a manifesto "to the inhabitants of Algeria," provoked no enthusiasm either among friends or foes.[49] Perhaps public rumour was not altogether wrong, when it averred that the D'Orléans were too tight-fisted to spend their money in electioneering literature. The expense involved in that item was a terrible obstacle to Louis-Napoléon and his few faithful henchmen; for, though the Napoleonic idea was pervading all classes of society, there was, correctly speaking, no Bonapartist party to shape it for the practical purposes of the moment. The Napoleonic idea was a fond remembrance of France's glorious past, rather than a hope of its renewal in the future. Even the greatest number of the most ardent worshippers of that marvellous soldier of fortune, doubted whether his nephew was sufficiently popular to obtain an appreciable following, and those who did not doubt were mostly poor. While Dufaure and Lamoricière were scattering money broadcast, and using pressure of the most arbitrary kind, in order to insure Cavaignac's success, Louis-Napoléon and his knot of partisans were absolutely reduced to their own personal resources. Miss Howard—afterwards Comtesse de Beauregard—and Princesse Mathilde had given all they could; a small loan was obtained from M. Fould; and some comparatively scanty supplies had been forthcoming from England—it was said at the time, with how much truth I know not, that Lords Palmerston and Malmesbury had contributed: but the exchequer was virtually empty. A stray remittance of a few thousand francs, from an altogether unexpected quarter, and most frequently from an anonymous sender, arrived now and then; but it was what the Germans call "a drop of water in a very hot frying-pan;" it barely sufficed to stop a hole. Money was imperatively wanted for the printing of millions upon millions of handbills, thousands and thousands of posters, and their distribution; for the expenses of canvassers, electioneering agents, and so forth. The money went to the latter, the rest was obtained on credit. Prince Louis, confident of success, emptied his pockets of the last five-franc pieces; when he had no more, he promised to pay. He was as badly off as his famous uncle before the turn of fortune came.

In connection with this dire impecuniosity, I remember a story for the truth of which I can vouch as if I had had it from Louis-Napoléon's own lips. In front of Siraudin's confectioner's shop at the angle of the Boulevard des Capucines and the Rue de la Paix, there sits an old woman with two wooden legs. About '48, when she was very pretty and dressed with a certain coquettishness, she was already there, though sitting a little higher up, in front of the wall of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which has since made room for the handsome establishment of Giroux. Behind her, on the wall, were suspended for sale some cheap and not very artistically executed reproductions of Fragonard, "Le Coucher de la Mariée," etc., all of which would fetch high prices now; also songs, the tunes of which she played with great taste on her violin. It was reported that she had been killed during the attack on the ministry, but to people's great surprise she reappeared a few days afterwards. Prince Louis, who was staying at the Place Vendôme, then used to take a short cut by the Rue Neuve des Capucines to the Boulevards, and it seems that he never passed her without giving her something. In a few weeks she came to look upon his contributions as a certain part of her income. She knew who he was, and, curiously enough, seemed to be aware not only of his political preoccupations, but of his pecuniary embarrassments. I

am unable to say whether she was in sympathy with the former, but she was evidently concerned about the latter; for, one evening, after thanking Louis-Napoléon, she added, "Monseigneur, je voudrais vous dire un mot."

"Parlez, madame."

"On me dit que vous êtes fort gêné dans ce moment. J'ai trois billets de mille francs chez moi, qui ne font rien. Voulez-vous me permettre de vous les offrir; vous me les rendrez quand vous serez empereur."

Prince Louis did not accept them, but he never forgot a kindness, and when he did become Emperor, he offered her a small annuity. The answer was characteristic of her independence. "Dites à l'empereur qu'il est bien bon de se rappeler de moi, mais je ne puis pas accepter son offre. S'il avait accepté mon argent, je ne dis pas, maintenant, non." And while I am writing these notes, she still sits in her usual place, though I have heard it said more than once that she is the owner of one or two houses in the Avenue de l'Opéra, and that she gave a considerable marriage portion to her daughter, who has remained ignorant of the sources of her mother's income, who was educated in the country, and has never been to Paris. One of the conditions of her marriage was that she should emigrate to Australia. For the latter part of the story, I will, however, not vouch.

During the months of October and November, '48, I saw Prince Louis at least a dozen times, though only once away from his own apartments. There was really "nowhere to go," for most of the salons had closed their doors, and those which remained open were invaded by political partisans of all shades. Conversation, except on one topic, there was little or none. Social entertainments were scarcely to be thought of after the bloody disorders in June: Paris trade suffered in consequence, and the whole of the shopkeeping element, which virtually constituted the greater part of the Garde Nationale, regretted the fall of the Orléans dynasty to which it had so materially contributed. After these disorders in June, the troops bivouacked for a whole month on the Boulevards; on the Boulevard du Temple with its seven theatres; on the Boulevard Poissonnière, almost in front of the Gymnase; on the Boulevard Montmartre, in front of the Variétés; on the Place de la Bourse, in front of the Vaudeville. The new masters did not care to be held up to ridicule; they insinuated, rather than asserted, that the insults levelled from the stage had contributed to the insurrection; and seeing that the bourgeoisie, very contrite already, did not care to hear "the praise of the saviours of the country" by command, they deserted the play-houses and kept their money in their pockets. The Constituent Assembly was compelled to grant the managers an indemnity; but, as it could not keep the soldiers there for ever, and as it cared still less to vote funds to its enemies while its supporters were clamouring for every cent of it, the strict supervision gradually relaxed. The first to take advantage of this altered state of things was Clairville, with his "La Propriété c'est le Vol" (November 28, '48), a skit on the celebrated phrase of Proudhon. It is very doubtful whether the latter had uttered it in the sense with which the playwright invested it; but fear is proverbially illogical, and every one in Paris ran to see the piece, trusting probably that it might produce a salutary effect on those who intended to take the philosopher's axiom literally.

"La Propriété c'est le Vol" was described on the bills as "a socialistic extravaganza in three acts and seven tableaux." The scene of the first tableau represents the garden of Eden. The Serpent, who is the Evil Spirit, declares war at once upon Adam, who embodies the principle of Property. The Serpent was a deliberate caricature of Proudhon with his large spectacles.

In the subsequent tableaux, Adam, by a kind of metempsychosis, had been changed into Bonichon, an owner of house property in the Paris of the nineteenth century. The Serpent, though still wearing his spectacles, had been equally transformed into a modern opponent of all property. We are in February, '48. Bonichon and some of his fellow-bourgeois are feasting in honor of the proposed measures of reform, when they are scared out of their wits by the appearance of the Serpent, who informs them that the Republic has sidled up to Reform, managed to hide itself beneath its cloak, and been proclaimed. The next scene brings us to the year 1852 (four years in advance of the period), when the right of every one to live by the toil of his hands has become law. Bonichon is being harassed and persecuted by a crowd of handicraftsmen and others, who insist on working for him whether he likes it or not. The glazier smashes his windows, in order to compel him to have new panes put in. The paper-hanger tears the paper off his walls on the same principle. The hackney coachman flings Bonichon into his cab, takes him for a four hours' drive, and charges accordingly. A dentist imitates the tactics of Peter the Great with his courtiers, forces him into a chair and operates upon his grinders, though, unlike Peter, he claims the full fee. A dozen or so of modistes and dressmakers invade his apartments with double the number of gowns for Madame Eve Bonichon, who, the reverse of her husband, does not object to this violent appeal for her custom. Perhaps Madame Octave, a charming woman who played the part, did well to submit, because during the first tableau, the audience, though by no means squeamish, had come to the conclusion that Madame Eve would be all the better for a little more clothing.

And so the piece goes on. The first performance took place twelve days before the presidential election, when Cavaignac was still at the head of affairs. Notwithstanding his energetic suppression of the disorders in June, every one, with the exception of the journalistic swashbucklers of *Le National*, hoped to get rid of him; and a song aimed at him cruelly dissected his utter insignificance from a mental, moral, and political point of view. When Louis-Napoléon gained the day, the song was changed for a more kindly one.

It is no exaggeration to say that during those days France was absolutely governed by the *National*.

I made a list, by no means complete, at the time, of the various appointments and high places that had fallen to the members of the staff and those connected with it financially and otherwise. I have kept it, and transcribe it here with scarcely any comment.

Armand Marrast, the editor, became a member of the Provisional Government, Mayor of Paris, and subsequently President of the National Assembly.

Marrast (No. 2) became Procureur-Général at Pau.

Marrast (No. 3), who had been a captain of light horse during the reign of Louis-Philippe, was given a colonelcy unattached.

Marrast (No. 4) became Vice-Principal of the Lycée Corneille.

Bastide, one of the staff, became Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Vaulabelle, one of the staff, became Minister of Public Education.

Goudchaux, the banker of the *National*, became Minister of Finances.

Recurt, the chief physician to the staff, became Minister of the Interior and subsequently Minister of Public Works (President of the Board of Works).

Trélat, another physician, became Minister of Public Works.

Marie, the solicitor to the *National*, became a member of the Provisional Government, a member of the Executive Committee, and subsequently Minister of Justice.

Génin, one of the staff, became chief of the literary department at the Ministry of Public Education.

Charras, one of the staff, became Under-Secretary of State, at the Ministry for War.

Degouve-Denuncques, one of the staff, became Prefect of the Département of the Somme.

Buchez, third physician and an occasional contributor, became Deputy Mayor of Paris and subsequently President of the Assembly up to the 15th of May (when he had to make room for M. Armand Marrast himself). As will be seen, within a month of the republicans' advent to power, M. Buchez had been raised to one of the highest functions in the State, though absolutely devoid of any political or parliamentary talent, as was shown later on by his "Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française," an utterly commonplace production.

Dussart, one of the staff, became Prefect of the Seine-Inférieure.

Adam, one of the staff, became Chief Secretary of the Prefecture of the Seine.

Sain de Bois-le Comte, one of the staff, became minister plenipotentiary at Turin.

Félicien Mallefille, one of the staff, became minister plenipotentiary at Lisbon.

Anselme Petétin, one of the staff, became minister plenipotentiary at Hanover.

Auguste Petétin (his brother), one of the staff, became Prefect of the Department of the Côte-d'Or.

Frédéric Lacroix, one of the staff, became chief secretary for civil affairs in Algeria.

Hetzel, one of the staff, became chief secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Rousset, one of the staff, became Prefect of the Department of the Loire.

Duclerc, shorthand reporter, became for a little while Minister of Finances.

Pagnerre, publisher of the *National*, and bookseller, became a mayor, a member of the Provisional Government, a member of the Executive Committee, and finally Director of the Comptoir d'Escompte.

Achille Grégoire, the printer of the *National*, became Prefect of the Department of the Upper-Saône.

Clément Thomas, called the Constable of the *National*, became the Commander-in-chief of the National Guard of the Seine.

There are a few score more, friends and allies, such as Lalanne, who was made director of the national workshops; Levrault, who was sent to Naples as minister plenipotentiary; Carette, who became Civil-Chief at Constantine; Carteron, who was appointed keeper of the national archives, etc.

As a matter of course, all these adventurers had revolving around them a number of satellites, as eager as the former to reap the fruits of the situation. Most of them, like the cat of Heine's epigram, had to devour their steak raw; they did not know how to cook it. Ministers, prefects, and high dignitaries of State as they were, they felt awkward in the society of those to whom no illusion was possible with regard to their origin and that of their political fortunes.

They haunted, therefore, by preference, the less well frequented restaurants and cafés, the wings of the minor theatres, on the pretext that they were the elect of the people, and that the people were their fittest companions. Their erstwhile leader and chief scorned to stoop to such tricks. He was an educated man, with a thick veneer of the gentleman about him, which, however, did not prevent him from being one of the two most arrant snobs I have met anywhere. I advisedly say anywhere, for France herself does not produce that objectionable genus to any appreciable extent. You may find a good many cads, you will find comparatively few snobs. Compared to Armand Marrast, Eugène Sue was nowhere as a snob. He was a thickset man with a rubicund face, with a mass of grey woolly hair and a kind of stubbly, small moustache. His manners were supposed to be modelled on those of the nobles of the old régime; said manners mainly consisting of swaggering impudence to those whom he considered his equals, and freezing insolence to those he deemed his inferiors. The latter, I need not say, were by far the most numerous. He who bellowed most loudly that birth should carry no privilege, never forgot to remind his hearers, by deeds, if not by words, that he was of noble descent. "Si sa famille était noble, sa mère s'est surement endormie dans l'antichambre un jour qu'un valet-de-chambre entreprenant était trop près," said the Marquis d'Arragon one evening.[50] He felt greatly flattered at the caricaturists of the day representing him in the court dress of Louis XVI.'s reign, though to most people he looked like a "marquis de quatre sous."[51]

He professed to be very fond of antique furniture and decorations, and this fondness was the main cause of his ousting his former subaltern, Buchez, from the presidential chair of the Assembly, for, shortly before the revolution of '48, the official residence of that functionary had been put in thorough repair, its magnificent furniture had been restored, etc.

The depression of business inspired M. Armand Marrast with the happy thought of giving some entertainments in the hope of reviving it. During the Third Republic, though I had ceased to live in France permanently, I have seen a good many motley gatherings at the Élysée-Bourbon, and at the Hôtel-de-Ville, especially in M. Grévy's time, though Mac-Mahon's presidency offered some diverting specimens also; but I have never seen anything like the social functions at the Palais-Bourbon during the months of September, October, and November, 1848. They were absolutely the festive scenes of Paul de Kock on a large scale, amidst Louis XIV. and Louis XV. furniture, instead of the bourgeois mahogany, and with an exquisitely artistic background, instead of the commonplace paperhangings of the lower middle-class dwellings. The corps diplomatique was virtually on the horns of a dilemma. After the February revolution, the shock of which was felt throughout the whole of Europe, and caused most of the sovereigns to shake on their thrones, it had stood by M. de Lamartine, and even by his successor at the French Foreign Office, M. Bastide, if not with enthusiasm, at least with a kind of complacency. The republic proclaimed by the former, might, after all, contain elements of vitality. The terrible disorders in June tended to shake this reluctant confidence; still, there was but little change in the ambassadors' outward attitude, until it became too evident that, unless a strong dictator should intervene, mob rule was dangerously nigh. Then the corps diplomatique began to hold aloof. Of course there were exceptions, such as, for instance, Mr. Richard Rush, the minister of the United States, who had been the first to congratulate the Provisional Government, and the various representatives of the South-American republics; but even the latter could scarcely refrain from expressing their astonishment at the strange company in which they found themselves. The women were perhaps the most remarkable, as women generally are when out of their element. The greater part had probably never been in a drawing-room before, and, notwithstanding M. Taine's subsequently expressed dictum about the facility with which a Parisien grisette, shopwoman, or lady's-maid may be transformed at a few moments into a semblance of a *grande dame*, these very petites bourgeoises and their demoiselles made a very indifferent show. Perhaps the grisette, shopwoman, or lady's-maid would have acquitted herself better. Her natural taste, sharpened by constant contact with her social superiors, might have made up for the slender resources of her wardrobe; and, as the French say, "one forgives much in the way of solecism to the prettily dressed woman." As it was, the female section of M. Marrast's guests could advance no valid plea for mercy on that score. The daughters looked limp with their choregraphic exertions: the emblem of innocence, "la sainte mousseline," as Ambroise Thomas called it afterwards, hung in vague, undefined folds on angular figures, perhaps because the starch necessary to it had been appropriated by the matrons. The latter were rigid to a degree, and looked daggers at their spouses and their friends at the slightest attempt to stir them to animation. "Fais donc danser ma vieille," was the consecrated formula with which a not very eager cavalier was dragged to the seat where said "vieille" was reposing in all the majesty of her unaccustomed finery, considerably impaired in the wearer's transit on foot from her domicile at Montrouge or Ménilmontant to the banks of the Seine; for the weather that year was almost tropical, even in the autumn, and consequently the cab had been dispensed with. It would appear, from a remark I overheard, that Jehu, in the way of business, preferred as fares the partisans of and adherents to the fallen régimes, even of the latest one. Said a portly dame to her neighbour, alluding to the cabman, "Il a absolument refusé de nous prendre. Il a dit qu'il était dans l'opposition, et qu'il ne voulait pas trahir ses principes à moins de dix francs. Dix francs, ma chère, nous aurions pu souper chez nous, et sans compter les frais de toilette et de blanchissage. Quant à l'honneur d'être ici, ça ne compte pas pour grand'chose, vu que tout le quartier y est; nous demeurons à Batignolles, et il a fallu descendre en ville ce matin pour avoir une paire de gants blancs. Chez nous, partout la même réponse: 'Des gants blancs, madame, nous n'en avons plus. Presque toutes les dames du quartier vont au Palais-Bourbon ce soir, et depuis hier il nous reste que des petites pointures (sizes), des sept et des sept et demies.'"

As for the "élu du peuple souverain," when he had failed to draw his "vieille" into the mazy dance, and been snubbed for his pains in the bargain, he returned to his fellow-deputies, many of whom might be easily recognized by the golden-fringed tricolour rosette in their buttonholes, though some had merely kept it in their pockets. The "élu du peuple" did not dance himself. Perhaps the most

curious group was that of the young attachés and clerks of the Foreign Office who had come to enjoy themselves, who, even at that time, were nearly all of good birth, and who, to use a colloquial expression, looked not unlike brass knockers on a pigsty. This was the society Louis-Napoléon was to sweep away with the aid of men, some of whom I have endeavoured to sketch in subsequent notes. I would fain say a few words of a "shipwrecked one," of the preceding dynasty, whose acquaintance I did not make until the vessel he had steered so long had foundered, and of the self-constituted pilot of the interim régime. I am alluding to MM. Guizot and de Lamartine.

CHAPTER XII.

Guizot, Lamartine, and Béranger — Public opinion at sea with regard to the real Guizot — People fail to see the real man behind the politician — Guizot regrets this false conception — "I have not the courage to be unpopular" — A tilt at Thiers — My first meeting with him — A picture and the story connected with it — M. Guizot "at home" — His apartment — The company — M. Guizot on "the Spanish marriages" — His indictment against Lord Palmerston — An incident in connection with Napoléon's tomb at the Invalides — Nicolas I. and Napoléon — My subsequent intimacy with M. Guizot — Guizot as a father — His correspondence with his daughters — A story of Henry Mürger and Marguerite Thuillier — M. Guizot makes up his mind not to live in Paris any longer — M. Guizot on "natural scenery" — Never saw the sea until he was over fifty — Why M. Guizot did not like the country; why M. Thiers did not like it — Thiers the only man at whom Guizot tilted — M. Guizot died poor — M. de Lamartine's poverty did not inspire the same respect — Lamartine's impecuniosity — My only visit to Lamartine's house — Du Jellaby doré — With a difference — All the stories and anecdotes about M. de Lamartine relate to his improvidence and impecuniosity — Ten times worse in that respect than Balzac — M. Guizot's literary productions and M. de Lamartine's — The national subscription raised for the latter — How he anticipates some of the money — Béranger — My first acquaintance with him — Béranger's verdict on the Second Republic — Béranger's constant flittings — Dislikes popularity — The true story of Béranger and Mdlle. Judith Frère.

That sentence of Louis-Philippe to Lord ——, quoted elsewhere: "Guizot is so terribly respectable; I am afraid there is a mistake either about his nationality or his respectability, for they are badly matched," reflected the opinion of the majority of Frenchmen with regard to the eminent statesman. The historian who was supposed to know Cromwell and Washington as well as if he had lived with them, was credited at last with being a stern rigid Puritan in private life like the first, impatient of contradiction like the second—in short, a kind of walking copy-book moral, who never unbent, whose slightest actions were intended by him to convey a lesson to the rest of mankind. Unable to devote much time to her during the week, Guizot was in the habit of taking his mother for a stroll in the Park of St. Cloud on Sundays. The French, who are never tired of shouting, "Oh, ma mère! oh, ma mère!" resented such small attentions on the part of the son, because, they maintained, they were meant as exhibitions. Even such a philosopher as Ernest Renan failed to see that there were two dissimilar men in Guizot, the Guizot of public life and the Guizot of home life; that, behind the imperious, haughty, battlesome orator of the Chamber, with his almost marble mask, there was a tender and loving heart, capable of the most deep-seated devotion; that the cares of State once thrown off, the supercilious stare melted like ice beneath the sun of spring into a prepossessing smile, captivating every one with whom he came in contact.

Guizot regretted this erroneous conception the world had formed of his character. "But what can I do?" he asked. "In reality, I haven't the courage to be unpopular any more than other people; but neither have I the courage to prance about in my own drawing-room as if I were on wires"—this was a slight slap at M. Thiers,—"nor can I write on subjects with which I have no sympathy"—that was a second,—"and I should cut but a sorry figure on horseback"—that was a third;—"consequently people who, I am sure, wish me well, but who will not come and see me at home, hold me up as a misanthrope, while I know that I am nothing of the kind."

With this he took from his table an article by M. Renan on the first volume of his "Mémoires," an article couched in the most flattering terms, but giving the most conventional portrait of the author himself. "Why doesn't he come and see me? He would soon find that I am not the solitary, tragic, buckram figure that has already become legendary, and which, like most legendary figures, is absolutely false."

This conversation—or rather monologue, for I was careful not to interrupt him—took place in the early part of the Second Empire, in the house in the Rue de la Ville-Levêque he occupied for five and twenty years, and until 1860. The Coup d'État had irretrievably shattered Guizot's political career. It had destroyed whatever hopes may have remained after the flight of Louis-Philippe. Consequently Guizot's proper place is among the men of that reign; the reason why I insert him here is because my acquaintance with him only began after his disappearance from public life.

It occurred in this way. One evening, after dinner at M. de Morny's, we were talking about pictures, and especially about those of the Spanish school, when our host turned to me. "Have you ever seen

'the Virgin' belonging to M. Guizot?" he asked. I told him I had not. "Then go and see it," he said. "It is one of the finest specimens of its kind I ever saw, I might say the finest." Next day I asked permission of M. Guizot to come and see it, and, almost by return of post, I received an invitation for the following Thursday night to one of his "at homes."

Until then I had never met M. Guizot, except at one of his ministerial soirées under the preceding dynasty. The apartment offered nothing very striking: the furniture was of the ordinary kind to be found in almost every bourgeois drawing-room, with this difference—that it was considerably shabbier; for Guizot was poor all his life. The man who had said to the nation, "Enrichissez vous, enrichissez vous," had never acted upon the advice himself. I know for a fact that, while he was in power, he was asked to appoint to the post of receiver-general of the Gironde one of the richest financiers in France, who had expressed the intention to share the magnificent benefits of the appointment with him. M. Guizot simply and steadfastly refused to do anything of the kind.

On the evening in question, a lamp with a reflector was placed in front of the picture I had come to see, probably in my honour. M. de Morny had not exaggerated the beauty of it, but it bore no signature, and M. Guizot himself had no idea with regard to the painter. "There is a curious story connected with it," he said, "but I cannot tell it you now; come and see me one morning and I will. As an Englishman it will interest you; especially if you will take the trouble to read between the lines. I will tell you a few more, perhaps, but the one connected with the picture is 'la bonne bouche.'"

The company at M. Guizot's, on that and other occasions, mainly consisted of those who had been vanquished in the recent struggle with Louis-Napoléon, or thought they had been; for a great many were mere word-spinners, who had been quite as vehement in their denunciations of the man they were now surrounding when he was in power, as they were in their diatribes against the man who, after all, saved France for eighteen years from anarchy, and did not indulge more freely in nepotism, peculation, and kindred amenities than those who came after him. But, at the outset of these notes, I took the resolution to eschew politics, and I will endeavour to keep it as far as possible.

As a matter of course, I soon availed myself of M. Guizot's permission to call upon him in the morning, and it was then that he told me the following story connected with the picture.

"After the Spanish marriages, Queen Isabella wished to convey to me a signal mark of her gratitude —for what, Heaven alone knows, because it is the only political transaction I would willingly efface from my career. So she conferred upon me the dukedom of San Antonio, and sent me the patent with a most affectionate letter. Honestly speaking, I was more than upset by this proof of royal kindness, seeing that I had not the least wish to accept the title. I felt equally reluctant to offend her by declining the high distinction offered, I felt sure, from a most generous feeling. I went to see the King, and explained my awkward position, adding that the name of Guizot was all sufficient for me. 'You are right,' said the King. 'Leave the matter to me; I'll arrange it.' And he did, much to the disgust of M. de Salvandy, who had received a title at the same time, but who could not accept his while the Prime Minister declined.

"Then she sent me this picture. Some witty journalist said, at the time, that it was symbolical of her own married state; for let me tell you that the unfitness of Don Francis d'Assis was 'le secret de polichinelle,' however much your countrymen may have insisted that it only leaked out after the union. Personally I was entirely opposed to it, and, in fact, it was not a ministerial question at all, but one of court intrigue. Lord Palmerston chose to make it the former, and he, and your countrymen through him, are not only morally but virtually responsible for the subsequent errors of Isabella. Do you know what his ultimatum was when the marriage had been contracted, when there was no possibility of going back? You do not. Well, then, I will tell you. 'If Isabella has not a child within a twelvemonth, then there will be war between England and France.' I leave you to ponder the consequences for yourself, though I assure you that I washed my hands of the affair from that moment. But the French as well as the English would never believe me, and history will record that 'the austere M. Guizot,' for that is what they choose to call me, 'lent his aid to proceedings which would make the most debased pander blush with shame.'

"It is not the only time that my intentions have been purposely misconceived and misconstrued; nay, I have been taxed with things of which I was as innocent as a child. In 1846, almost at the same period that the Spanish imbroglio took place, Count de Montalembert got up in the Upper House one day and declared it a disgrace that France should have begged the tomb of Napoléon I. from Russia. Now, the fact was that France had not begged anything at all. The principal part of the monument at the Invalides is the sarcophagus. The architect Visconti was anxious that it should consist of red porphyry; M. Duchâtel and myself were of the same opinion. Unfortunately, we had not the remotest notion where such red porphyry was to be found. The Egyptian quarries, whence the Romans took it, were exhausted. Inquiries were made in the Vosges, in the Pyrenees, but without result, and we were going to abandon the porphyry, when news arrived at the Ministry of the Interior that the kind of stone we wanted existed in Russia.

"Just then my colleague, M. de Salvandy, was sending M. Léouzon le Duc to the north on a special mission, and I instructed him to go as far as St. Petersburg and consult Count de Rayneval, our ambassador, as to the best means of getting the porphyry. A few months later, M. le Duc sent me specimens of a stone from a quarry on the banks of the Onega Lake, which, if not absolutely porphyry, was the nearest to it to be had. M. Visconti having approved of it, I forwarded further instructions for the quantity required, and so forth.

"The quarry, it appears, belonged to the Crown, and had never been worked, could not be worked, without due permission and the payment of a certain tax. After a great many formalities, mainly raised by speculators who had got wind of the affair, and had bribed various officials to oppose, or, at any rate, intercept the petition sent by M. le Duc for the necessary authorization, Prince Wolkonsky, the Minister of State, acquainted the Czar himself with the affair, and Nicholas, without a moment's hesitation, granted the request, remitting the tax which M. le Duc had estimated at about six thousand francs. This took place at a cabinet council, and, unfortunately for me, the Czar thought fit to make a little speech. 'What a strange destiny!' he said, rising from his seat and assuming a solemn tone —'what a strange destiny this man's'—alluding to Napoléon—'even in death! It is we who struck him the first fatal blow, by the burning of our holy and venerable capital, and it is from us that France asks his tomb. Let the French envoy have everything he requires, and, above all, let no tax be taken.'

"That was enough; the German and French papers got hold of the last words with the rest; they confounded the tax with the cost of working, which amounted to more than two hundred thousand francs; and up to this day, notwithstanding the explanations I and my colleagues offered in reply to the interpellation of M. de Montalembert, the story remains that Russia made France a present of the tomb of Napoléon."

From that day forth I often called upon M. Guizot, especially in the daytime, when I knew that he had finished working; for when he found that his political career was irrevocably at an end, he turned very cheerfully—I might say gladly—to his original avocation, literature. Without the slightest fatigue, without the slightest worry, he produced a volume of philosophical essays or history every year; and if, unlike Alexandre Dumas, he did not roar with laughter while composing, he was often heard to hum a tune. "En effet," said one of his daughters, the Countess Henriette de Witt (both his daughters bore the same name and titles when married), "notre père ne chante presque jamais qu'en travaillant." This did not mean that work, and work only, had the effect of putting M. Guizot in good humour. He was, according to the same authority, uniformly sweet-tempered at home, whether sitting in his armchair, surrounded by his family, or gently strolling up and down his library. "C'est la politique qui le rendait méchant," said Madame de Witt, "heureusement il la laissait à la porte. Et très souvent il l'oubliait de parti-pris au milieu du conseil et alors il nous écrivait des lettres, mais des lettres, comme on n'en écrit plus. En voilà deux qu'il m'a écrites lorsque j'étais très jeune fille." Whereupon she showed me what were really two charming gossiping little essays on the art of punctuation. It appears that the little lady was either very indifferent to, or ignorant of the art; and the father wrote, "My dear Henriette, I am afraid I shall still have to take you to task with regard to your punctuation: there is little or none of it in your letters. All punctuation, commas or other signs, mark a period of repose for the mind—a stage more or less long—an idea which is done with or momentarily suspended, and which is being divided by such a sign from the next. You suppress those periods, those intervals; you write as the stream flows, as the arrow flies. That will not do at all, because the ideas one expresses, the things of which we speak, are not all intimately connected with one another like drops of water."

The second letter showed that Mdlle. Guizot must have taken her revenge, either very cleverly, or that she was past all redemption in the matter of punctuation; and as the latter theory is scarcely admissible, knowing what we do of her after-life, we must admit the former. The letter ran as follows:

> "My Dear Henriette,
>
> "I dare say you will find me very provoking, but let me beg of you not to fling so many commas at my head. You are absolutely pelting me with them, as the Romans pelted that poor Tarpeia with their bucklers."

It reminds one of Marguerite Thuillier, who "created Mimi" in Mürger and Barrière's "Vie de Bohème," when Mürger fell in love with her. "I can't do with him," she said to his collaborateur, who pleaded for him,—"I can't do with him; he is too badly dressed, he looks like a scarecrow." Barrière advised his friend to go to a good tailor and have himself rigged out in the latest fashion. The advice was acted upon; Barrière waited anxiously for the effect of the transformation upon the lady's heart. A fortnight elapsed, and poor Mürger was snubbed as usual. Barrière interceded once more. "I can do less with him than before," was the answer; "he is too well dressed, he looks like a tailor's dummy."

To return to M. Guizot, whom, in the course of the whole of our acquaintance, I have only seen once "put out." It was when the fiat went forth that his house was to come down to make room for the new Boulevard Malesherbes. The authorities had been as considerate as possible; they had made no attempt to treat the eminent historian as a simple owner of house-property fighting to get the utmost value; they offered him three hundred thousand francs, and M. Guizot himself acknowledged that the sum was a handsome one. "But I have got thirty thousand volumes to remove, besides my notes and manuscripts," he wailed. Then his good temper got the better of him, and he had a "sly dig" at his former adversary, Adolphe Thiers. "Serves me right for having so many books; happy the historian who prefers to trust to his imagination."

M. Guizot made up his mind to have his library removed to Val-Richer and never to live in Paris again; but his children and friends prevailed upon him not to forsake society altogether, and to take a modest apartment near his old domicile, in the Faubourg St. Honoré, opposite the English embassy, which, however, in those days had not the monumental aspect it has at present.

"It is doubtful," said M. Guizot afterwards to me, "whether the idea of living in the country would have ever entered my mind ten or fifteen years ago. At that time, I would not have gone a couple of miles to see the most magnificent bit of natural scenery: I should have gone a thousand to see a man

of talent."

And, in fact, up till 1830, when he was nearly forty-four, he had never seen the sea, "And if it had not been for an electoral journey to Normandy, I might not have seen it then." I pointed out to him that M. Thiers had never had a country house; that he did not seem to care for nature, for birds, or for flowers.

"Ah, that's different," he smiled. "I did not care much about the country, because I had never seen any of it. Thiers does not like it, because the birds, the flowers, the trees, live and grow without his interference, and he does not care that anything on earth should happen without his having a hand in it."

Thiers was the only man at whom M. Guizot tilted in that way. Though brought up in strict Protestant, one might almost say Calvinistic principles, he was an ardent admirer of Roman Catholicism, which he called "the most admirable school of respect in the world." No man had suffered more from the excesses of the first Revolution, seeing that his father perished on the scaffold, yet I should not like to say that he was not somewhat of a republican at heart, but not of a republic "which begins with Plato and necessarily ends with a gendarme." "The republic of '48," he used to say, "it had not even a Monk, let alone a Washington or a Cromwell; and Louis-Napoléon had to help himself to the throne. And depend upon it, if there had been a Cromwell, he would have crushed it as the English one crushed the monarchy. As for Washington, he would not have meddled with it at all."

"Yes," he said on another occasion, "I am proud of one thing—of the authorship of the law on elementary education; but, proud as I am of it, if I could have foreseen the uses to which it has been put, to which it is likely to be put when I am gone, I would sooner have seen half of the nation unable to distinguish an '*A* from a bull's foot,' as your countrymen say."

With Guizot died almost the last French statesman, "who not only thought that he had the privilege to be poor, but who carried the privilege too far;" as some one remarked when he heard the news of his demise. Towards the latter years of his life, he occupied a modest apartment, on the fourth floor, in the Rue Billaut (now the Rue Washington). Well might M. de Falloux exclaim, as he toiled up that staircase, "My respect for him increases with every step I take."

Since M. de Falloux uttered these words, and very long before, I have only known one French statesman whose staircase and whose poverty might perhaps inspire the same reflections and elicit similar praise. I am alluding to M. Rouher.

M. de Lamartine's poverty did not breed the same respect. There was no dignity about it. It was the poverty of Oliver Goldsmith sending to Dr. Johnson and feasting with the guinea the latter had forwarded by the messenger pending his own arrival. Méry had summed up the situation with regard to Lamartine's difficulties on the evening of the 24th of February, '48, and there is no reason to suspect that his statement had been exaggerated. The dynasty of the younger branch of the Bourbons had been overthrown because Lamartine saw no other means of liquidating the 350,000 francs he still owed for his princely journey to the East. I had been to Lamartine's house once before that revolution, and, though his wife was an Englishwoman, I felt no inclination to return thither. The household gave me the impression of "Du Jellaby doré." The sight of it would have furnished Dickens with as good a picture as the one he sketched. The principal personage, however, was not quite so disinterested as the future mother-in-law of Prince Turveydrop. Of course, at that time, there was no question of a republic, but the politics advocated and discussed during the lunch were too superfine for humble mortals like myself, who instinctively felt that—

> "Quelques billets de mille francs feraient bien mieux l'affaire"

of the host. And the instinct was not a deceptive one. Four months after February, 1848, M. de Lamartine had virtually ceased to exist, as far as French politics were concerned. From that time until the day of his death, the world only heard of him in connection with a new book or new poem, the avowed purpose of which was, not to make the world better or wiser, but to raise money. He kept singing like the benighted musician on the Russian steppes keeps playing his instrument, to keep away the wolves.

I knew not one but a dozen men, all of whom visited M. de Lamartine. I have never been able to get a single story or anecdote about him, not bearing upon the money question. He is ten times worse in that respect than Balzac, with this additional point in the latter's favour—that he never whines to the outside world about his impecuniosity. M. Guizot produces a volume every twelvemonth, and asks nothing of any one; he leaves the advertising of it to his publisher: M. de Lamartine spends enormous sums in publicity, and subsidizes, besides, a crowd of journalists, who devour his creditors' substance while he keeps repeating to them that his books do not sell. "If, henceforth, I were to offer pearls dissolved in the cup of Cleopatra, people would use the decoction to wash their horses' feet." And, all the while, people bought his works, though no one cared to read the later ones. The golden lyre of yore was worse than dumb; it emitted false and weak sounds, the strings had become relaxed, the golden tongue alone remained.

When a national subscription is raised to pay his debts, the committee are so afraid of his wasting the money that they decide to have the proceeds deposited at the Comptoir d'Escompte, and that de Lamartine shall not be able to draw a farthing until all his affairs are settled. One morning he deputes a friend to ask for forty thousand francs, in order to pay some bills that are due. They refuse to

advance the money. De Lamartine invites them to his own house, but they stand firm at first. Gradually they give way. "How much do you really want?" is the question asked at last. "Fifty thousand francs," is the answer; "but I fancy I shall be able to manage with thirty thousand francs."

"If we gave you fifty thousand francs," says M. Émile Pereire, "would you give us some breathing-time?"

"Yes."

And Lamartine pockets the fifty thousand francs, thanks to his eloquence.

A better man, though not so great a poet, was Béranger, whom I knew for many years, though my intimacy with him did not commence until a few months after the February revolution, when I met him coming out of the Palais-Bourbon. "I shall feel obliged," he said, "if you will see me home, for I am not at all well; these violent scenes are not at all to my taste." Then, with a very wistful smile, he went on: "I have been accused of having held 'the plank across the brook over which Louis-Philippe went to the Tuileries.' I wish I could be the bridge across the channel on which he would return now. Certainly I would have liked a republic, but not such a one as we are having in there," pointing to the home of the Constituent Assembly. A short while after, Béranger tendered his resignation as deputy.

He lived at Passy then, in the Rue Basse; the number, if I mistake not, was twenty-three. He had lived in the same quarter fifteen years before, for I used to see him take his walks when I was a lad, but it was difficult for Béranger to live in the same spot for any length of time. He was, first of all, of a very nomadic disposition; secondly, his quondam friends would leave him no peace. There was a constant inroad of shady individuals who, on the pretext that he was "the people's poet," drained his purse and his cellar. Previous to his return to Passy, he had been boarding with a respectable widow in the neighbourhood of Vincennes. He had adopted the name of Bonnin, and his landlady took him to be a modest, retired tradesman, living upon a small annuity. When his birthday came round, she and her daughters found out that they had entertained an angel unawares, for carriage after carriage drove up, and in a few hours the small dwelling was filled with magnificent flowers, the visitors meanwhile surrounding Béranger, and offering him their congratulations. As a matter of course, the rumour spread, and Béranger fled to Passy, where he invited Mdlle. Judith Frère to join him once more. The retreat had been discovered, and he resigned himself to be badgered more than usual for the sake of the neighbourhood—the Bois de Boulogne was hard by; but the municipal council of Passy, in consideration of the honour conferred upon the arrondissement and Béranger's charity, took it into their heads to pass a resolution offering Béranger the most conspicuous place in the cemetery for a tomb. The poet fled once more, this time to the Quartier-Latin; but the students insisting on pointing him out to their female companions, who, in their enthusiasm, made it a point of embracing him on every possible occasion, especially in the "Closerie des Lilas"—for to the end Béranger remained fond of the society of young folk,—Béranger was compelled to flit once more. After a short stay in the Rue Vendôme, in the neighbourhood of the Temple, he came to the Quartier-Beaujon, where I visited him.

There have been so many tales with regard to Béranger's companion, Mdlle. Judith Frère, and all equally erroneous, that I am glad to be able to rectify them. Mdlle. Frère was by no means the kind of upper servant she was generally supposed to be. A glance at her face and a few moments spent in her company could not fail to convince any one that she was of good birth. She had befriended Béranger when he was very young, they had parted for some time, and they ended their days together, for the poet only survived his friend three months. Béranger was a model of honesty and disinterestedness. Ambition he had little or none; he was somewhat fond of teasing children, not because he had no affection for them, but because he loved them too much. His portrait by Ary Scheffer is the most striking likeness I have ever seen; but a better one still, perhaps, is by an artist who had probably never set eyes on him. I am alluding to Hablot Browne, who unconsciously reproduced him to the life in the picture of Tom Pinch. As a companion, Béranger was charming to a degree. I have never heard him say a bitter word. The day I saw him home, I happened to say to him, "You ought to be pleased, Victor Hugo is in the same regiment with you." "Yes," he answered, "he is in the band." He would never accept a pension from Louis-Napoléon, but he had no bitterness against him. Lamartine was very bitter, and yet consented to the Emperor's heading of the subscription-list in his behalf. That alone would show the difference between the two men.

CHAPTER XIII.

Some men of the Empire — Fialin de Persigny — The public prosecutor's opinion of him expressed at the trial for high treason in 1836 — Superior in many respects to Louis-Napoléon — The revival of the Empire his only and constant dream — In order to realize it, he appeals first to Jérôme, ex-King of Westphalia — De Persigny's estimate of him — Jérôme's greed and Louis-Napoléon's generosity — De Persigny's financial embarrassments — His charity — What the Empire really meant to him — De Persigny virtually the moving spirit in the Coup d'État — Louis-Napoléon might have been satisfied with the presidency of the republic for life — Persigny seeks for aid in England — Palmerston's share in the Coup d'État — The submarine cable — Preparations for the Coup d'État — A warning of it sent to England — Count Walewski issues invitations for a dinner-party on the 2nd of December — Opinion in London that Louis-Napoléon will get the worst in the

struggle with the Chamber — The last funds from London — General de Saint-Arnaud and Baron Lacrosse — The Élysée-Bourbon on the evening of the 1st of December — I pass the Élysée at midnight — Nothing unusual — London on the 2nd of December — The dinner at Count Walewski's put off at the last moment — Illuminations at the French Embassy a few hours later — Palmerston at the Embassy — Some traits of De Persigny's character — His personal affection for Louis-Napoléon — Madame de Persigny — Her parsimony — Her cooking of the household accounts — Chevet and Madame de Persigny — What the Empire might have been with a Von Moltke by the side of the Emperor instead of Vaillant, Niel, and Lebœuf — Colonel (afterwards General) Fleury the only modest man among the Emperor's entourage — De Persigny's pretensions as a Heaven-born statesman — Mgr. de Mérode — De Morny — His first meeting with his half-brother — De Morny as a grand seigneur — The origin of the Mexican campaign — Walewski — His fads — Rouher — My first sight of him in the Quartier-Latin — The Emperor's opinion of him at the beginning of his career — Rouher in his native home, Auvergne — His marriage — Madame Rouher — His father-in-law.

"A man endowed with a strong will and energy, active and intelligent to a degree, with the faculty of turning up at every spot where his presence was necessary either to revive the lagging plot or to gain fresh adherents; a man better acquainted than all the rest with the secret springs upon which the conspiracy hung."

This description of M. de Persigny is borrowed from the indictment at the trial for high treason in 1836. Every particular of it is correct, yet it is a very one-sided diagnosis of the character of Napoléon's staunchest henchman. If I had had to paint him morally and mentally in one line, I should, without intending to be irreverent, have called him the John the Baptist of the revived Napoleonic legend. There could be no doubt about his energy, his activity, and his intelligence; in respect to the former two he was absolutely superior to Louis-Napoléon, but they, the activity and energy and intelligence, would only respond to the bidding of one voice, that of the first Napoléon from the grave, which, he felt sure, had appointed him the chief instrument for the restoration of the Empire. It was the dream that haunted his sleep, that pursued him when awake. Let it not be thought, though, that Louis-Napoléon appeared to him as the one selected by Providence to realize that dream. Loyal and faithful as he was to him from the day they met until his (Persigny's) death, he would have been equally loyal and faithful, though perhaps not so deeply attached, to Jérôme, the ex-King of Westphalia, to whom he appealed first. But the youngest of the great Napoléon's brothers did not relish adventures, and he turned a deaf ear to Persigny's proposals, as he did later on to those of M. Thiers, who wished him to become a candidate for the presidency of the Second Republic.

I was talking one day on the subject of the latter's refusal to De Persigny, several years after the advent of the Empire, and commending Jérôme for his abnegation of self and his fealty to his nephew. There was a sneer on Persigny's face such as I had never seen there before; for though he was by no means good-tempered, and frequently very violent, he generally left the members of the Imperial family alone. He noticed my surprise, and explained at once. "It is very evident that you do not know Jérôme, nor did I until a few years ago. There is not a single one of the great Napoléon's brothers who really had his glory at heart; it meant money and position to them, that is all. Do you know why Jérôme did not fall in with my views and those of M. Thiers? Well, I will tell you. He was afraid that his nephew Louis and the rest of the family would be a burden on him; he preferred that others should take the chestnuts out of the fire and that he should have the eating of them. That is what his self-abnegation meant, nothing more."

I am afraid that De Persigny was not altogether wrong in his estimate of the ex-King of Westphalia. He was insatiable in his demands for money to his nephew. In fact, with the exception of Princesse Mathilde, the whole of the Emperor's family was a thorn in his side.

The Emperor himself was absolutely incapable of refusing a service. I have the following story on very good authority. De Persigny, who was as lavish as his Imperial master, was rarely ever out of difficulties, and in such emergencies naturally appealed to the latter. He had wasted on, or sunk enormous sums in, his country estate of Chamarande, where he entertained with boundless hospitality. As a matter of course, he was always being pursued by his creditors. One early morn—Persigny always went betimes when he wanted money—he made his appearance in the Emperor's private room, looking sad and dejected. Napoléon refrained for a while from questioning him as to the cause of his low spirits, but finally ventured to say that he looked ill.

"Ah, sire," was the answer, "I am simply bent down with sorrow. This Chamarande, which I have created out of nothing as it were"—it had cost nearly two millions of francs—"is ruining me. I shall be forced to give it up."

De Persigny felt sure that he would be told there and then not to worry himself; but the Emperor was in a jocular mood, and took delight in prolonging his anxiety. "Believe me, my dear duc," said Napoléon with an assumed air of indifference, "it is the best thing you can do. Get rid of Chamarande; it is too great a burden, and you'll breathe more freely when it's gone."

De Persigny turned as white as a ghost; whereupon Napoléon, who was soft-hearted to a degree, took a bundle of notes from his drawer and handed them to him. De Persigny went away beaming.

It must not be inferred from this that De Persigny was grasping like Prince Jérôme and others, who constantly drained Napoléon's purse. De Persigny's charity was proverbial, but he gave blindly, and as a consequence, was frequently imposed upon. When young he had joined the Saint-Simoniens; his great aim was to make everybody happy. To him the restoration of the Empire meant not only the revival of Napoléon's glory, but the era of universal happiness, of universal material prosperity. As a rule, he was thoroughly unpractical; the whole of his life's work may be summed up in one line—he conceived and organized the Coup d'État. As such he was virtually the founder of the Second Empire. In that task practice went hand in hand with theory; when the task was accomplished, his inspiration was utterly at fault.

Historians have been generally content to attribute the principal rôle in the Coup d'État, next to that of Louis-Napoléon, to M. de Morny. Of course, I am speaking of those who conceived it, not of those who executed it. The parts of Generals Magnan and De Saint-Arnaud, of Colonel de Bèville and M. de Maupas, scarcely admit of discussion. But the fact is that De Morny did comparatively nothing as far as the conception was concerned. The prime mover was undoubtedly De Persigny, and it is a very moot question whether, but for him, it would have been conceived at all. I know I am treading on dangerous ground, but I have very good authority for the whole of the following notes relating to it. In De Persigny's mind the whole of the scheme was worked out prior to Louis-Napoléon's election to the presidency, though of course the success of it depended on that election. He did not want a republic, even with Louis-Napoléon as a president for life; he wanted an empire. I should not like to affirm that Prince Louis would *not* have been content with such a position; it was Persigny who put down his foot, exclaiming, "*Aut Cæsar, aut nullus!*" That the sentence fell upon willing ears, there is equally no doubt, and when the Prince-President had his foot upon the first rung of the ladder, he would probably have rushed, or endeavoured to rush, to the top at once, regardless of the risk involved in this perilous ascent, for there would have been no one, absolutely no one, to steady the ladder at the bottom. De Persigny held him back while he busied himself in finding not only the *personnel* that was to hold the latter, but the troops that would prevent the crowd from interfering with the ladder-holders. It was he who was the first to broach the recall of De Saint-Arnaud from Africa; it was he who drew attention to M. de Maupas, then little more than an obscure prefect; it was he who was wise enough to see that "the ladder-holders" would have to be sought for in England, and not in France. "The English," he said to Napoléon, "owe you a good turn for the harm they have done to your uncle. They are sufficiently generous or sufficiently sensible to do that good turn, if it is in their interest to do so; look for your support among the English."

I fancy it was Lord Palmerston's dislike of Louis-Philippe on account of "the Spanish marriages," rather than a sentiment of generosity towards Louis-Napoléon, that made him espouse his cause, but I feel certain that he did espouse it. I have good ground for saying that his interviews with Comte Walewski were much more frequent than his ministerial colleagues suspected, or the relations between England and France, however friendly they may have been, warranted. But everything was not ready. Palmerston and Walewski on the English side of the Channel, Louis-Napoléon and De Persigny on the French side, were waiting for something. What was it? Nothing more nor less than the laying of the submarine cable between Dover and Calais, the concession for which was given on the 8th of January, 1851, and on which occasion the last words to Mr. Walker Breit were to hurry it on as much as possible, "*seeing that it is of the utmost importance for the French Government to be in direct and rapid communication with the Cabinet of St. James*." The Cabinet meant Lord Palmerston. Nevertheless, it is not until ten months later that the cable is laid, and from that moment events march apace. Let us glance at them for a moment. Telegraphic communication between Dover and Calais is established on the 13th of November. On the 15th, General Saint-Arnaud gives orders that the degree of 1849, conferring on the president of the National Assembly the right of summoning and disposing of the military forces which had hitherto been hung up in every barracks throughout the land, shall be taken down. On the 16th, Changarnier, Leflo, and Baze, with many others, decide that a bill shall be introduced immediately, conferring once more that right on the president of the Assembly. The opponents of the Prince-President are already rubbing their hands with glee at the thought of their success, for it means that Prince Louis and his adherents will be in their power, and in their power means removal to Vincennes or elsewhere, as prisoners of State. On the 18th, the bill is thrown out by a majority of 108, and the Assembly is virtually powerless henceforth against any and every attack from the military. It was on that very evening that the date of the Coup d'État was fixed for the 2nd of December, notwithstanding the hesitation and wavering of Louis-Napoléon. On the 26th a young attaché is despatched from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the French Embassy in London, instead of the ordinary cabinet (or queen's) messenger, which proves that the despatches are more important than usual. They contain letters from the Prince-President himself to Comte Walewski, the contents of which are probably known to the Marquis de Turgot, but which are despatched in that way, instead of being sent directly from the Élysée by a trustworthy person, because the presidential residence is watched day and night by the "counter-police" of the Assembly. The reason why the Marquis de Turgot selects a young aristocrat is because he feels certain that he cannot be tampered with. On the 29th of November a connection of mine receives a letter from a friend in London, who is supposed to be behind the scenes, but who this time is utterly in the dark. It is to the following effect: "There is something in the wind, but I know not what. Both yesterday morning (27th) and to-day Walewski has been closeted for more than two hours each time with Palmerston. There is to be a grand dinner at Walewski's on the second of next month, to which I received an invitation. Can you tell me what mischief is brewing?"

The recipient of the letter was neither better nor worse informed than the rest of us, and in spite of all the assertions to the contrary which have been made since, no one foresaw the crisis in the shape it came upon us. On the contrary, the general opinion was that in the end Louis-Napoléon would get

the worse, in spite of the magic influence of his name with the army. It was expected that if the troops were called upon to act against the National Assembly, they would refuse and turn against their leaders. I am by no means certain that the Prince-President did not entertain a similar opinion up to the last moment, for I have it on excellent authority that as late as the 26th of November he endeavoured to postpone the affair for a month. It was then that De Persigny showed his teeth, and insisted upon the night of the 1st or 2nd of December as the latest. The interview was a very stormy one. On that very morning De Persigny had received a letter from London, not addressed to his residence. It contained a draft for £2000, but with the intimation that these would be the last funds forthcoming. He showed the Prince-President the letter, and Napoléon gave in there and then. The letters spoken of just now were despatched on the same day. It was with that money that the Coup d'État was made, and all the stories about a million and a half of francs being handed respectively to De Morny, De Maupas, Saint-Arnaud, and the rest are so much invention.

Up to six o'clock in the afternoon of the 1st of December, General de Saint-Arnaud was virtually undecided, not with regard to the necessity of the Coup d'État, but with regard to the opportuneness of it within the next twelve hours. I have the following story from the lips of Baron Lacrosse, who was one of the actors in it. On the eve of the Coup d'État he was Minister of Public Works, and as such was present at the sitting of the Assembly on the 1st of December. A member ascended the tribune to interpellate the Minister for War, and, the latter being absent, the question was deferred until next day. That same evening, 1st of December, there was an official dinner at M. Daviel's, the Minister of Justice, and at the termination of the sitting, M. Lacrosse called in his carriage at the Ministry for War to take his colleague. "You may make up your mind for a warm half-hour to-morrow," he said with a smile, as he entered General Saint-Arnaud's room. "Why?" asked the general. "You are going to be interpellated." "I expected as much, and was just considering my answer. I am glad you warned me in time. I think I know what to say now."

I do not believe that Baron Lacrosse had the faintest inkling of the real drift of the remark, nor have I ever asked him directly whether he had. As far as I could gather afterwards from one or two people who were there, the Élysée presented no unusual feature that night. The reception was well attended, as the ordinary receptions on Mondays generally were, for the times had gone by when the courtyard was a howling wilderness dotted with two, or perhaps three, hackney cabs. It would appear that a great many well-known men and a corresponding number of pretty women moved as usual through the salons, only one of which was shut up, that at the very end of the suite, and which did duty as a council-chamber, and contained the portrait of the then young Emperor of Austria, Francis-Joseph. But this was scarcely noticed, nor did the early withdrawal of the Prince-President provoke any comment, for it happened pretty often. Very certain is it that at twelve o'clock that night the Élysée was wrapt in darkness, for I happened to pass there at that hour. Standing at the door, or rather inside it, was the captain of the guard, smoking a cigar. I believe it was Captain Desondes of the "Guides," but I will not be sure, for I was not near enough to distinguish plainly. The Faubourg St. Honoré was pretty well deserted, save for a few individuals prowling about; they were probably detectives in the pay of the Prince-President's adversaries.

Let me return for a moment to London, and give an account of what happened there on the 2nd of December, as supplied by the writer of the above-mentioned letter, in an epistle which reached Paris only on the 7th.

It appears that on the day of the Coup d'État London woke up amidst a dense fog. Virtually the news of what happened in Paris early that morning did not spread until between two and three o'clock. Our informant had been invited to a dinner-party at the French Embassy that night, and though in no way actively connected with politics, he was asking himself whether he should go or stay away, when, at five o'clock, he received a note from the Embassy, saying that the dinner would not take place. The fact was that at the eleventh hour the whole of the corps diplomatique had sent excuses. Our friend went to his club, had his dinner, and spent part of the evening there. At about eleven a crony of his came in, and seeing him seated in the smoking-room, exclaimed, "Why, I thought you were going to Walewski's dinner and reception." "So I was," remarked our friend, "but it was countermanded at five." "Countermanded? Why, I passed the Embassy just now, and it was blazing with light. Come and look."

They took a cab, and sure enough the building was positively illuminated. Our friend went in, and the salons were crammed to suffocation. Lord Palmerston was talking animatedly to Count Walewski; the whole corps diplomatique accredited to the court of St. James was there. The fact was that about nine or half-past the most favourable news from Paris had reached London. The report soon spread that Lord Palmerston had officially adhered to the Coup d'État, and that he had telegraphed in that sense to the various English embassies abroad without even consulting his fellow-ministers.

I believe our friend was correctly informed, for it is well known that Palmerston did not resign, but was virtually dismissed from office. He never went to Windsor to give up the seals; Lord John Russell had to do it for him. Persigny, therefore, considered that he had fallen in the cause of Louis-Napoléon, and as such he became little short of an idol. The Prince-President himself was not far from sharing in that worship. Not once, but a hundred times, his familiars have heard him say, "Avec Palmerston on peut faire des grandes choses." Nevertheless, Palmerston appealed more to De Persigny's imagination than to Louis-Napoléon's. After all, he was perhaps much more of a Richelieu than a constitutional minister in a constitutional country has a right to be nowadays, and that was what Persigny admired above all things. His long stay in England had by no means removed his inherent dislike to parliamentary government, and, rightly or wrongly, he credited Palmerston with a similar sentiment.

De Persigny was amiable and obliging enough, provided one knew how to manage him, and with those whom he liked, but exceedingly thin-skinned and often violent with those whom he disliked. He was, moreover, very jealous with regard to Louis-Napoléon's affection for him. I doubt whether he really minded the influence wielded by the Empress, De Morny, and Walewski over the Emperor, but he grudged them their place in the Emperor's heart. This was essentially the case with regard to the former. He would have been glad to see his old friend and Imperial master contract a loveless marriage with some insignificant German or Russian princess, who would have borne her husband few or many children, in order to secure the safety of the dynasty, but the passion that prompted the union with Eugénie de Montijo he considered virtually as an injury to himself. I give his opinion on that subject in English, because, though expressed in French, it had certainly been inspired by his sojourn in England. "When love invades a man's heart, there is scarcely any room left for friendship. You cannot drive love for a woman and friendship for a man in double harness, you are obliged to drive them tandem; and what is worse in a case like that of the Emperor, friendship becomes the leader and love the wheeler. Of course, to the outsider, friendship has the place of honour; in reality, love, the wheeler, is in closest contact with the driver and the vehicle, and can, moreover, have a sly kick at friendship, the leader. Personally, I am an exception—I may say a phenomenal exception—because my affection for the Emperor is as strong as my love for my wife."

Those who knew both the Emperor and Madame de Persigny might have fitly argued that this equal division of affection was a virtual injustice to the sovereign, who was decidedly more amiable than the spouse. The former rarely did a spiteful thing from personal motives of revenge; I only know of two. He never invited Lady Jersey to the Tuileries during the Empire, because she had shown her dislike of him when he was in London; he exiled David d'Angers because the sculptor had refused to finish the monument of Queen Hortense after the Coup-d'État. David d'Angers was one of the noblest creatures that ever lived, and I mean to speak of him at greater length. On the other hand, Madame de Persigny made her husband's life, notwithstanding his love for her, a burden by her whimsical disposition, her vindictive temperament, and her cheeseparing in everything except her own lavish expenditure on dress. She was what the French call "une femme qui fait des scènes;" she almost prided herself upon being superior in birth to her husband, though in that respect there was really not a pin to choose between her grandfather, Michel Ney, the stable-boy, who had risen to be a duke of the First Empire, and her husband, the sergeant-quartermaster Fialin, who became Duc de Persigny under the second. She was always advocating retrenchment in the household. "True," said Persigny, "she cuts down her dresses too, but the more she cuts, the more they cost." For in his angry moments he would now and then tell a story against his wife. Here is one. Persigny, as I have already said, was hospitable to a fault, but he had always to do battle when projecting a grand entertainment. "There was so much trouble with the servants, and as for the chef, his extravagance knew no bounds." So said madame; and sick at last of always hearing the same complaints, he decided to let Chevet provide. All went well at first, because he himself went to the Palais-Royal to give his orders, merely stating the number of guests, and leaving the rest to the famous caterers, than whom there are no more obliging or conscientious purveyors anywhere. After a little while he began to leave the arrangements to madame; she herself sent out the invitations, so there could be no mistake with regard to the number. He soon perceived, however, that the dinners, if not inferior in quality to the former ones, were decidedly inferior in quantity. At last, one evening, when there were twenty-six people round the board, there was not enough for twenty, and next day De Persigny took the road to the Palais-Royal once more to lodge his complaint personally. "Comment, monsieur le comte," was the reply of one of the principals, "vous dites qu'il y avait vingt-six convives et qu'il n'y avait pas de quoi nourrir vingt; je vous crois parfaitement; voilà la commande de madame la comtesse, copiée dans notre registre: 'Dîner chez M. de Persigny pour seize personnes.'"

Madame had simply pocketed, or intended to pocket, fifteen hundred francs—for Chevet rarely charged less than a hundred and fifty francs per head, wines included—and had endeavoured to make the food for sixteen do for twenty-six. Of course there was a scene. Madame promised amendment, and the husband was only too willing to believe. The amendment was worse than the original offence, for one night the whole of the supper-table, set out à la Française, *i. e.*, with everything on it, gave way, because, her own dining-table having proved too small, she had declined Chevet's offer of providing one at a cost of seven or eight francs, and sent for a jobbing carpenter to put together some boards and trestles at the cost of two francs. Chevet managed to provide another banquet within three quarters of an hour, which, with the one that had been spoiled, was put in the bill. Within a comparatively short time of her husband's death, early in the seventies, Madame de Persigny contracted a second marriage, in direct opposition to the will of her family.

Most of the men in the immediate entourage of the Emperor were intoxicated with their sudden leap into power, but of course the intoxication manifested itself in different ways. A good many considered themselves the composers of the Napoleonic Opera—for it was really such in the way it held the stage of France for eighteen years, the usual tragic finale not even being wanting. With the exception of De Persigny, they were in reality but the orchestral performers, and he, to give him his utmost due, was only the orchestrator of the score and part author of the libretto. The original themes had been composed by the exile of St. Helena, and were so powerfully attractive to, and so constantly haunting, the ears of the majority of Frenchmen as to have required no outward aid to remembrance for thirty-five years, though I do not forget either Thiers' works, Victor Hugo's poetry, Louis-Philippe's generous transfer of the great captain's remains to France, nor Louis-Napoléon's own attempts at Strasburg and Boulogne, all of which contributed to that effect. Nevertheless, all the artisans of the Coup d'État considered themselves nearly as great geniuses as the intellectual and military giant who conceived and executed the 19th Brumaire, and pretended to impose their policy upon Europe by imposing their will upon the Emperor, though not one could hold a candle to him in statecraft. Napoléon with a

Moltke by his side would have been a match for Bismarck, and the left bank of the Rhine *might* have been French; Alsace-Lorraine would certainly not have been German. It is not my purpose, however, to enter upon politics. I repeat, De Persigny, De Morny, and to a certain extent Walewski, endeavoured to exalt themselves into political Napoléons at all times and seasons; De Saint-Arnaud felt convinced that the strategical mantle of the great warrior had fallen upon him; De Maupas fancied himself another Fouché. The only one who was really free from pretensions of either kind was Colonel (afterwards General) Fleury. He was the only modest man among the lot.

The greatest offender in that way was, no doubt, De Persigny. During his journey to Rome in 1866 he did not hesitate to tender his political advice to such past masters in diplomacy as Pius IX. and Cardinal Antonelli. Both pretended to profit by the lesson, but Mgr. de Mérode,[52] who was not quite so patient, had many an animated discussion with him, in which De Persigny frequently got the worst. One evening the latter thought fit to twit him with his pugnaciousness. "I suppose, monsignor," he said, "it's the ancient leaven of the trooper getting the upper hand now and then." "True," replied the prelate; "I was a captain in the foreign legion, and fought in Africa, where I got my cross of the Legion of Honour. But you, monsieur le duc, I fancy I have heard that you were more or less of a sergeant-quartermaster in a cavalry regiment."

Mgr. de Mérode could have done De Persigny no greater injury than to remind him of his humble origin. He always winced under such allusions; his constant preoccupation was to make people forget it, and he often exposed himself to ridicule in the attempt. He knew nothing about art, and yet he would speak about it, not as if he had studied the subject, but as if he had been brought up in a refined society, where the atmosphere had been impregnated with it. As a matter of course, he became an easy victim to the picture-dealers and bric-à-brac merchants. I remember his silver being taken to the mint during the Siege. He had paid an enormous price for it on the dealer's representation that it was antique: "C'est du Louis XV. tout pur." "Tellement pur que c'est du Victoria," said a connoisseur; and he was not mistaken, for it had been manufactured by a firm of London silversmiths. But it was a compliment for all that to the Queen.

With all his faults, De Persigny was at heart a better man than De Morny, who affected to look down upon him. True, the latter had none of his glaring defects, neither had he any of his sterling virtues. One evening, in January, 1849, when the Prince-President had been less than a month at the Élysée, a closed carriage drove into the courtyard and stopped before the flight of steps leading to the hall, which, like the rest of the building, was already wrapt in semi-darkness. A gentleman alighted who was evidently expected, for the officer on duty conducted him almost without a word to the private apartments of the President, where the latter was walking up and down, the usual cigarette between his lips, evidently greatly preoccupied and visibly impatient. The door had scarcely opened when the Prince's face, generally so difficult to read, lighted up as if by magic. Before the officer had time to announce the visitor, the prince stepped forward, held out his hand, and with the other clasped the new-comer to his breast. The officer knew the visitor. It was the Comte Auguste de Morny. As a matter of course he retired, and saw and heard no more. I had the above account from his own lips, and he felt certain that this was the first time the brothers had ever met.

The Comte de Morny was close upon forty then, and for at least half of that time had been emancipated from all restraint; he was a well-known figure in the society of Louis-Philippe's reign; he had been a deputy for one of the constituencies in Auvergne; at the period of his first meeting with Louis-Napoléon he was at the head of an important industrial establishment down that way, and one fain asks one's self why he had waited until then to shake his brother's hand. The answer is not difficult. There is an oft-repeated story about De Morny having been at the Opéra-Comique during the evening of the 1st of December, 1851. Rumours of the Coup d'État were rife, and a lady said, "Il paraît qu'on va donner un fameux coup de balai. De quel côté serez vous, M. de Morny?" "Soyez sure, madame, que je serai du côté du manche." Morny always averred that he had said nothing of the kind. "They invented it afterwards, perhaps because they credited me with the instinctive faculty of being on the winning side, the side of the handle, in any and every emergency."

I think one may safely accept that version, and that is why he refrained from claiming his brother's friendship and acquaintance until he felt almost certain that the latter was fingering the handle of the broom that was to make a clean sweep of the Second Republic. It is difficult to determine how much or how little he contributed to the success of that sweep, but I have an idea that it was very little. One thing is very certain, for I have it on very good—I may say, the best—authority. He did not contribute any money to the undertaking; he endeavoured to raise funds from others, but he himself did not loosen his purse-strings; when, curiously enough, he was the only one among the immediate entourage of Louis-Napoléon whose purse-strings were worth loosening.

Allowing for the difference of sex, better breeding and better education, De Morny often reminded one of Rachel. They possessed the same powers of fascination, and were, I am afraid, equally selfish at heart. To read the biographies of both—I do not mean those that pretend to be historical—one would think that there had never been a grande dame on the stage of the Comédie-Française before Rachel or contemporary with her, though Augustine Brohan was decidedly more grande dame than Rachel in every respect. It is the same with regard to De Morny. To the chroniqueur during the Second Empire he was the only grand seigneur—the rest were only seigneurs; but I am inclined to think that the chroniqueur of those days had seen very few real grand seigneurs. To use a popular locution, "they did not go thirteen to the dozen" at the court of Napoléon III.; and among the people with whom De Morny came habitually in contact, in the course of his financial and industrial schemes, a grand seigneur was even a greater rarity than at the Tuileries. If a kind of quiet impertinence to some of one's fellow-creatures, and a tacitly expressed contempt for nearly the whole of the rest, constitute

the grand seigneur, then certainly De Morny could have claimed the title. I have elsewhere noted the meeting of Taglioni with her husband at De Morny's dinner-party. If it had been arranged by the host with the view of effecting a reconciliation between the couple, then nothing could have been more praiseworthy; but I am not at all sure of it. If it were not, then it became an unpardonable joke at the woman's expense, and in the worst taste; but the chroniqueur of those days would have applauded it all the same.

Here are two stories which, at different times, were told by De Morny's familiars and sycophants in order to stamp him the grand seigneur. Late in the fifties he was an assiduous frequenter of the salons of a banker, whose sisters-in-law happened to be very handsome. One evening, while talking to one of them, they came to ask him to take a hand at lansquenet. He had evidently no intention of leaving the society of the lady for that of the gaming-table, and said so. Of course, his host was in the wrong in pressing the thing, nevertheless one has yet to learn that "two wrongs make one right."

"What will you play?" they asked, when they had as good as badgered him away from his companion.

"The simple rouge and the noir. That's the quickest."

"How much for?"

"Ten thousand francs."

The stake seemed somewhat high, and no one cared to take it up. But the host himself felt bound to set the example, and the sum was made up. De Morny lost, and was about to rise from the table, when they said—

"Have your revenge."

"Very well; ten thousand on the black."

He lost again. Most grand seigneurs would have got up without saying anything. Twenty thousand francs was, after all, not an important sum to him, and I feel, moreover, certain that it was not the loss of the money that vexed him. But he felt bound to emphasize his indifference.

"There, that will do. I trust I shall be left in peace now."

My informant considered this exceedingly *talon rouge*; I did not.

A story of a similar kind, when he was a simple deputy. A bigwig, with an inordinate ambition to become a minister, invited him to dinner. He had been told that his host was in the habit of drinking a rare Bordeaux which was only offered to one or two guests, quietly pointed out by the former to the servant. At the question of the latter whether he (M. de Morny) would take Brane-Mouton or Ermitage, he pointed to the famous bottle that had been hidden away. The servant, as badly trained as the master, looked embarrassed, but at last filled De Morny's glass with the precious nectar. De Morny simply poured it into a tumbler and diluted it with water.

Ridiculous as it may seem, De Morny often spoke and acted as if he had royal blood in his veins, and in that respect scarcely considered himself inferior to Colonna Walewski, of whose origin there could be no doubt. A glance at the man's face was sufficient. Both frequently spoke and acted as if Louis-Napoléon occupied the Imperial throne by their good will, and that, therefore, he was, in a measure, bound to dance to their fiddling. Outwardly these two were fast friends, up to a certain period; I fancy that their common hatred of De Persigny was the strongest link of that bond. In reality they were as jealous of one another and of their influence over the Emperor as they were of De Persigny and his. The latter, who was well aware of all this, frankly averred that he preferred Walewski's undisguised and outspoken hostility to De Morny's very questionable cordiality. "The one would take my head like Judith took Holofernes', the other would shave it like Delilah shaved Samson's, provided I trusted myself to either, which I am not likely to do."

It was De Persigny who told me the substance of the following story, and I believe every word of it, because, first, I never caught De Persigny telling a deliberate falsehood; secondly, because I heard it confirmed many years afterwards in substance by two persons who were more or less directly concerned in it.

In the latter end of 1863 one of the sons of Baron James de Rothschild died; I believe it was the youngest of the four, but I am not certain. The old baron, who was generosity itself when it came to endowing charitable institutions, was absolutely opposed to any waste of money. Amidst the terrible grief at his loss, he was still the careful administrator, and sent to M. Émile Perrin, the then director of the Grand Opéra, and subsequently the director of the Comédie-Française, asking him to dispose of his box on the grand tier, under the express condition that it should revert to him after a twelvemonth. It was the very thing M. Perrin was not empowered to do. Though nominally the director, he was virtually the manager under Comte Bacciochi, the superintendent of the Imperial theatres; that is, the theatres which received a subsidy from the Emperor's civil list. The subscriber who wished to relinquish his box or seat, for however short a time—of course without continuing to pay for it—forfeited all subsequent claim to it. In this instance, though, apart from the position of Baron James, the cause which prompted the application warranted an exception being made; still M. Perrin did not wish to act upon his own responsibility, and referred the matter to Comte Bacciochi, telling him at the same time that Comte Walewski would be glad to take the box during the interim. The latter had but

recently resigned the Ministry of State by reason of an unexpected difficulty in the "Roman Question;" [53] the ministerial box went, as a matter of course, with the appointment, and Comte Walewski regretted the loss of the former, which was one of the best in the house, more than the loss of the latter, and had asked his protégé—M. Perrin owed his position at the Opéra to him—to get him as good a one as soon as possible.

It so happened that Comte Bacciochi had a grudge against Walewski for having questioned certain of his prerogatives connected with the superintendence of the Opéra. The moment he heard of Walewski's wish, he replied, "M. de Morny applied to me several months since for a better box, and I see no reason why Comte Walewski should have it over his head."

Vindictive like a Corsican, he laid the matter directly before the Emperor, and furthermore did his best to exasperate the two postulants against one another. De Morny had the box; Bacciochi had, however, succeeded so well that the two men were for a considerable time not on speaking terms.

Meanwhile the Mexican question had assumed a very serious aspect. In spite of his undoubted interest in the Jecker scheme, or probably because it had yielded all it was likely to yield, De Morny had of late been on the side of Walewski, who strongly counselled the withdrawal of the French troops. But the moment the incident of the opera-box cropped up, there was a change of front on his part. He became an ardent partisan for continuing the campaign, systematically siding against Walewski in everything, and tacitly avoiding any attempt of the latter to draw him into conversation. Walewski felt hurt, and gave up the attempt in despair. A little before this, Don Gutierrez de Estada had landed in Europe with a deputation of notable Mexicans to offer the crown to Maximilian. The latter made his acceptance conditional on the despatch of twenty thousand French troops and the promise of a grant of three hundred millions of francs.

In a council held at the Tuileries these conditions were unhesitatingly declined. "That was, if I am not mistaken, on a Saturday," said De Persigny; "and it was taken for granted that everything was settled. On Monday morning the council was hurriedly summoned to the Tuileries, and having to come from a good distance, Walewski arrived when it had been sitting for more than an hour. What had happened meanwhile? Simply this. Don Gutierrez had been informed of the decision of the Emperor's advisers, and Maximilian had been communicated with by telegraph to the same effect. On the Sunday morning the Archduke telegraphed to the Mexican envoy that unless his conditions were subscribed to *in toto* he should decline the honour. Don Gutierrez, determined not to return without a king, rushed there and then to De Morny's and offered him the crown. The latter immediately accepted, in the event of Maximilian persisting in his refusal. The Emperor was simply frantic with rage, but nothing would move De Morny. The only one who really had any influence over him was 'the other prince of the blood,' meaning Walewski, for, according to him, the real and legitimate Bonapartes counted for nothing. Walewski was telegraphed for, as I told you, early in the morning. When he came he found the council engaged in discussing the means of raising a loan. The Empress begged him to dissuade De Morny from his purpose, telling him all I have told you. Walewski refused to be the first to speak to De Morny. I think that both Walewski and De Morny have heaped injury and insult upon me more than upon any man; I would have obeyed the Empress for the Emperor's sake, but 'the two princes of the blood' only consulted their own dignity. I need not tell you what effect the elevation of De Morny to the throne of Mexico would have produced in Europe, let alone in France. Rather than risk such a thing, the money was found; Bazaine was sent, and that poor fellow, Maximilian, went to his death, because M. Bacciochi had sown dissension between the brother and the cousin of the Emperor about an opera-box. Such is history, my friend."

I repeat, De Persigny was a better man at heart than De Morny, or perhaps than Walewski, though the latter had only fads, and never stooped to the questionable practices of his fellow "prince of the blood" in the race for wealth. The erstwhile sergeant-quartermaster refrained from doing so out of sheer contempt for money-hunters, and from an inborn feeling of honesty. The son of Napoléon I., though illegitimate, felt what was due to the author of his being, and absolutely refused to be mixed up with any commercial transactions. He was never quietly insolent to any one, like the natural son of Hortense; he rarely said either a foolish or a wise thing, but frequently did ill-considered ones, as, for instance, when he wrote a play. "What induced you to do this, monsieur le comte?" said Thiers, on the first night. "It is so difficult to write a play in five acts, and it is so easy not to write a play in five acts." Among his fads was the objection to ladies in the stalls of a theatre. In 1861 he issued an order forbidding their admission to that part of the house, and could only be persuaded with difficulty, and at the eleventh hour, to rescind it. In many respects he was like Philip II. of Spain; he worried about trifles. One day he prevailed upon M. de Boitelle, the Prefect of police, a thoroughly sensible man, to put a stop to the flying of kites, because their tails might get entangled in the telegraph wires, and cause damage to the latter. I happened to meet him on the Boulevards on the very day the edict was promulgated. He felt evidently very proud of the conception, and asked me what I thought of it. I told him the story of "the cow on the rails," according to Stephenson. Napoléon, when he heard of Walewski's reform, sent for Boitelle. "Here is an 'order in council' I want you to publish," he said, as seriously as possible. It was to the effect that "all birds found perching on the wires would be fined, and, in default of payment, imprisoned." Curiously enough, though a man of parts, and naturally intelligent, satire of that kind was lost upon him, for not very long after he prevailed upon M. de Boitelle to revive an obsolete order with regard to the length of the hackney-drivers' whips and the cracking thereof. It was M. Carlier, the predecessor of M. de Maupas, who had originally attempted a similar thing. He was rewarded with a pictorial skit representing him on the point of drowning, while cabby was trying to save him by holding out his whip, which proved too short for the purpose.

Walewski had none of the vivacity of most of the Bonapartes. I knew him a good many years before,

and after the establishment of the Second Empire, and have rarely seen him out of temper. I fancy he must have made an admirable ambassador with a good chief at his back; he, himself, I think, had little spirit of initiative, though, like a good many of us, he was fully convinced of the contrary. He was, to use the correct word, frequently dull; nevertheless, it was currently asserted and believed that he was the only man Rachel ever sincerely cared for. "Je comprends cela," said George Sand one day, when the matter was discussed in her presence; "son commerce doit lui reposer l'esprit."

It is worthy of remark that during the reign which succeeded that of Louis-Philippe, the man who wielded the greatest power next to the Emperor was, in almost every respect but one, the mental and moral counterpart of "the citizen king." I am alluding to M. Eugène Rouher, sometimes called the vice-emperor.[54] I knew Eugène Rouher some years before he was thought of as a deputy, let alone as a minister—when, in fact, he was terminating his law courses in the Quartier-Latin; but not even the most inveterate Pumblechook would have dared to advance afterwards that he perceived the germs of his future eminence in him then. He was a good-looking young fellow, in no way distinguished from the rest. He was a not unworthy ornament of "La Chaumière," and did probably as much or as little poring over books as his companions. Still, there could be no doubt as to his natural intelligence, but the dunces in my immediate circle were very few. He was not very well off; but, as I have said elsewhere, the Crœsuses were also rare. At any rate, Eugène Rouher had entirely passed out of my recollection, and when, eleven or twelve years later, I saw his name in the list of Odilon Barrot's administration as Minister of Justice, I had not the remotest idea that it was the Eugène Rouher of my Quartier-Latin days. I am certain that a great many of our former acquaintances were equally ignorant, because, though I met several of them from time to time on the "fashionable side" of the Seine, I do not remember a single one having drawn my attention to him. It was only at one of the presidential receptions at the Élysée, in 1850, that I became aware of the fact. He came up to me and held out his hand. "Il me semble, monsieur, que nous nous sommes déjà rencontrés au Quartier-Latin," he said. Even then I was in the dark with regard to the position he was fast assuming; but the Prince-President himself enlightened me to a great extent in the course of the evening. "It appears that you and Rouher are old acquaintances," he said in English; and on my nodding in the affirmative, he added, "If you were a Frenchman, and inclined to go in for politics, or even an Englishman in need of patronage or influence, I would advise you to stick to him, for he is a very remarkable man, and I fancy we shall hear a good deal of him within the next few years." I may, therefore, say without exaggeration that I was one of the first who had a trustworthy tip with regard to a comparatively "dark political horse," and from a tipster in whom by that time I was inclined to believe.

Though I was neither "a Frenchman inclined to go in for politics," nor "even an Englishman in need of patronage or influence," my curiosity had been aroused; for, I repeat, at the time of our first acquaintance I had considered Eugène Rouher a fairly intelligent young fellow; but his intelligence had not struck me as likely to make a mark, at any rate so soon, seeing that he was considerably below forty when I met him at the Élysée. It is idle to assert, as the republicans have done since, that he gained his position by abandoning the political professions to which he owed his start in public life. Among the nine hundred deputies of the Second Republic, there were at least a hundred intelligent so-called republicans ready and willing to do the same with the prospect of a far less signal reward than fell eventually to Rouher's lot.

My curiosity was doomed to remain unsatisfied until two or three years later, when Rouher had already become a fixture in the political organization of the Empire. It was De Morny himself who gave me the particulars of Rouher's beginnings, and I have no reason to suppose that he painted them and the man in deliberately glowing colours, albeit that in one important crisis they acted in concert. Clermont-Ferrand was only about twelve miles from Riom, Rouher's native town. I have already remarked that De Morny, at the time he met with his brother for the first time, was at the head of an important industrial establishment. It was at the former place; De Morny, therefore, was in a position to know.

Eugène Rouher, it appears, like a good many men who have risen to political eminence, belonged to what, for want of a better term, I may call the rural bourgeoisie—that is, the frugal, thrifty, hard-headed, small landowner, tilling his own land, honest in the main, ever on the alert to increase his own property by a timely bargain, with an intense love of the soil, with a kind of semi-Voltairean contempt for the clergy, an ingrained respect largely admixed with fear for "the man of the law," to which profession he often brings up his son in order to have what he likes most—litigation—for nothing. Rouher's grandfather was a man of that stamp; he made an attorney of his son, and the latter established himself in the Rue Desaix, in a small, one-storied, uninviting-looking tenement, where, in the year 1814, Eugène Rouher was born.[55] Rouher's father was not very prosperous, yet he managed to send both his sons to Paris to study law. The elder son, much older than the future minister, had succeeded in getting a very good practice at the Riom bar, but he died a short time before Eugène returned from Paris, leaving a widow and a son, who, of course, was too young to take his father's place. The young barrister, therefore, stepped into a capital ready-made practice, and being exceedingly amiable, bright, hard-working, and essentially honest, soon made a host of friends.

"I have frequently found myself opposed to Rouher," said De Morny; "but his unswerving loyalty to the Empire and the Emperor is beyond question. I should not wonder but what he died poor.[56]

"As you know, Eugène Rouher was really very handsome. Mdlle. Conchon—that is Madame Rouher's maiden name—thought him the handsomest man in the world. True, her world did not extend beyond a few miles from Clermont-Ferrand; but I fancy she might have gone further and fared worse. You know old Conchon, and the pride he takes in his son-in-law. Well, he would not hear of the marriage at first. Conchon was a character in those days. Though he had but a poor practice at the Clermont bar,

he was clever; and if he had gone to Paris as a journalist, instead of vegetating down there, I am sure he would have made his way. He was very fond of his classics—of Horace and Tibullus above all—and turned out some pretty Anacreontic verses for the local 'caveau;' for Clermont, like every other provincial centre, prided itself on its 'caveau.'[57]

"A time came, however, when Conchon's fortunes took a turn for the better. You can form no idea of the political ignorance that prevailed in the provinces even as late as the reign of Louis-Philippe. Any measure advocated or promulgated by the Government was sure to be received with suspicion by the populations as affecting their liberties, and, what was of still greater consequence to them, their property. The First Republic had given them license to despoil others; any subsequent measure of the monarchies was looked upon by them as an attempt at reprisal. In 1842 a general census was ordered. You may remember the hostility it provoked in Paris; it was nothing to its effect in the agricultural and wine-growing centres. The Republican wire-pullers spread the report that the census meant nothing but the thin end of the wedge of a bill for the duties upon wine to be paid by the grower. There was a terrible row in Clermont-Ferrand and the neighbourhood; the 'Marseillaise' had to make way for the still more revolutionary 'Ça-ira.' Conchon was maire of Clermont-Ferrand, and he who was as innocent of all this as a new-born babe, had his house burned over his head. The Government argued that if the mob had burned the maire's dwelling in preference to that of the prefect, it was because the former was a more influential personage than the latter; for there could be no other reason for their giving him the 'Legion of Honour,' and appointing him to a puisne judgeship on the bench of Riom, seeing that he had neither made an heroic defence of his property, nor endeavoured to carry out the provisions of the census bill by armed force. In fact, the latter step would have been an impossibility on Conchon's part. You and I know well enough how difficult it is to make Frenchmen hold their tongues by means of troops; to endeavour to make them speak—in distinction to yelling—by similar means is altogether out of the question. You cannot take every head of a family, even in a comparatively small town like Clermont-Ferrand, and put him between two gendarmes to make him tell you his name, his age, and those of his family. I fancy, moreover, that Conchon was not at Clermont at all when the mob made a bonfire of his dwelling; it was on a Sunday, and he had probably gone into the country. At any rate, as I told you, they gave him the cross and a judgeship. It never rains but it pours. Contrary to the ordinary principles of French mobs of hating a man in proportion to his standing well with the Government, they started a subscription to indemnify Conchon for the loss of his house, which subscription amounted to a hundred thousand francs.

"Conchon had become a somebody, and refused to give his daughter to a mere provincial barrister now that he belonged to 'la magistrature assise.'[58] The young people were, however, very fond of one another, and had their way. They were a very handsome couple, and became the life and soul of the best society of Clermont-Ferrand, which, exclusive as it was, admitted them as they had admitted the widow of the elder brother. The younger Madame Rouher was by no means as sprightly or as clever as she has become since. She was somewhat of a spoilt child, but her husband was a very brilliant talker indeed, though, unlike many brilliant talkers, there was not an ounce of spite in his cleverest remarks. The electors might have done worse than send him to Paris the first time he invited their suffrages in '46, under the auspices of Guizot. Nevertheless, he was beaten by a goodly majority, and he had to wait until after the Revolution of February, when he was returned on the Republican list."

So far De Morny. Consulting my personal recollections of Eugène Rouher, whom I still see now and then, I find nothing but good to say of him. I am not prepared to judge him as a politician, that kind of judgment being utterly at variance with the spirit of these notes, but I know of no French statesman whose memory will be entitled to greater respect than Rouher's, with the exception, perhaps, of Guizot's. Both men committed grave faults, but no feeling of self-interest actuated them. The world is apt to blame great ministers for clinging to power after they have apparently given the greatest measure of their genius. They do not blame Harvey and Jenner for having continued to study and to practise after they had satisfactorily demonstrated, the one the theory of the circulation of the blood, the other the possibility of inoculation against small-pox; they do not blame Milton for having continued to write after he had given "Paradise Lost," Rubens for having continued to paint after he had given "The Descent from the Cross," Michael-Angelo for not having abandoned the sculptor's chisel after he had finished the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. The bold stroke of policy that made England a principal shareholder in the Suez Canal, the Menai Bridge, the building of the Great Western Railway, were achievements of great men who had apparently given all there was in them to give; why should Rouher have retired when he was barely fifty, and not have endeavoured to retrieve the mistake he evidently made when he allowed Bismarck to humiliate Austria at Sadowa, and to lay the foundations of a unified Germany? Richelieu made mistakes also, but he retrieved them before his death.

Be this as it may, Rouher was both in public and private life an essentially honourable and honest man—as honest as Louis-Philippe in many respects, far more honest in others, and absolutely free from the everlasting preoccupation about money which marred that monarch's character. He was as disinterested as Guizot, and would have scorned the tergiversations and hypocrisy of Thiers. He never betrayed his master's cause; he never consciously sacrificed his country to his pride. The only blame that can be laid to his charge is that he allowed his better sense to be overruled by a woman; but that woman was the wife of his sovereign.

He was, above all, a staunch friend to those who had known him in his early days. "There will be no Auvergnats left in Clermont-Ferrand and Riom if this goes on," said a witty journalist, seeing Rouher constantly surrounded by the natives of that particular province, to the exclusion of every one else. "We'll send an equal quantity of Parisians to Auvergne; it will do them good, and teach them to work,"

replied Rouher, when he heard of the remark. "And in another generation or two Paris will see what it has never seen before, namely, frugal Parisians, doing a day's labour for a day's wage, for we'll have their offspring back by then." For Rouher could be very witty when he liked, and never feared to hit out straight. He was a delightful talker, and, next to Alexandre Dumas, the best raconteur I have ever met. It was because he had a marvellous memory and a distinct talent for mimicry. Owing to this latter gift, he was unlike any other parliamentary orator I have ever heard. He would sit perfectly still under the most terrible onslaught of his opponents, whoever they were. No sign of impatience or weariness, not an attempt to take a note; his eyes remained steadily fixed on his interlocutor, his arms folded across his chest. Then he would rise slowly from his seat and walk to the tribune, when there was one, take up the argument of his adversary, not only word for word, but with the latter's intonation and gestures, almost with the latter's voice—which used to drive Thiers wild—and answer it point by point.

He used to call that "fair debating;" in reality, it was the masterly trick of a great actor, who mercilessly wielded his power of ridicule; but we must remember that he had originally been a lawyer, and that the scent of the French law-courts hung over him till the very end. "I am not always convinced of the honesty of my cause, but I hold a brief for the Government, and I feel convinced that it would not be honest to let the other party get the victory," he said.

He was, and remained, very simple in his habits. He would not have minded entertaining his familiars every night of the week, but he did not care for the grand receptions he was compelled to give. He was very fond of the game of piquet. His father-in-law, who had been promoted to a judgeship in one of the Paris courts, had been a foeman worthy of his steel; "but I am afraid," laughed Rouher, "that his exaggerated admiration for me affects his play."

Rouher was right; M. Conchon was inordinately proud of his son-in-law. He lived, as it were, in the Minister of State's reflected glory. His great delight was to go shopping, in order to have the satisfaction of saying to the tradesmen, "You'll have this sent to my son-in-law, M. Rouher." The stir and bustle of the Paris streets confused him to the last, but he did not mind it, seeing that it afforded him an opportunity of inquiring his way. "I want to get back to the Ministry of State—to my son-in-law, M. Rouher." It was not snobbishness; it was sheer unadulterated admiration of the man to whom he had somewhat reluctantly given his daughter.

CHAPTER XIV.

Society during the Second Empire — The Court at Compiègne — The English element — Their opinion of Louis-Napoléon — The difference between the court of Louis-Philippe and that of Napoléon III. — The luggage of M. Villemain — The hunts in Louis-Philippe's time — Louis-Napoléon's advent — Would have made a better poet than an Emperor — Looks for a La Vallière or Montespan, and finds Mdlle. Eugénie de Montijo — The latter determined not to be a La Vallière or even a Pompadour — Has her great destiny foretold in her youth — Makes up her mind that it shall be realized by a right-handed and not a left-handed marriage — Queen Victoria stands her sponsor among the sovereigns of Europe — Mdlle. de Montijo's mother — The Comtesse de Montijo and Halévy's "Madame Cardinal" — The first invitations to Compiègne — Mdlle. de Montijo's backers for the Imperial stakes — No other entries — Louis-Napoléon utters the word "marriage" — What led up to it — The Emperor officially announces his betrothal — The effect it produced — The Faubourg St.-Germain — Dupin the elder gives his views — The engaged couple feel very uncomfortable — Negotiations to organize the Empress's future household — Rebuffs — Louis Napoléon's retorts — Mdlle. de Montijo's attempt at wit and sprightliness — Her iron will — Her beauty — Her marriage — She takes Marie-Antoinette for her model — She fondly imagines that she was born to rule — She presumes to teach Princess Clotilde the etiquette of courts — The story of two detectives — The hunts at Compiègne — Some of the mise en scène and *dramatis personæ* — The shooting-parties — Mrs. Grundy not banished, but specially invited and drugged — The programme of the gatherings — Compiègne in the season — A story of an Englishman accommodated for the night in one of the Imperial luggage-vans.

I was a frequent visitor to Compiègne throughout the Second Empire. I doubt whether, besides Lord H—— and myself, there was a single English guest there who went for the mere pleasure of going. Lords Palmerston, Cowley, and Clarendon, and a good many others whom I could name, had either political or private ends to serve. They all looked upon Napoléon III. as an adventurer, but an adventurer whom they might use for their own purpose. I am afraid that the same charge might be preferred against persons in even a more exalted station. Prince Albert averred that Napoléon III. had sold his soul to the devil; Lord Cowley, on being asked by a lady whether the Emperor talked much, replied, "No, but he always lies." Another diplomatist opined "that Napoléon lied so well, that one could not even believe the contrary of what he said."

Enough. I went to the Compiègne of Napoléon III., just as I had gone to the Compiègne of the latter years of Louis-Philippe—simply to enjoy myself; with this difference, however,—that I enjoyed myself

much better at the former than at the latter. Louis-Philippe's hospitality was very genuine, homely, and unpretending, but it lacked excitement—especially for a young man of my age. The entertainments were more in harmony with the tastes of the Guizots, Cousins, and Villemains, who went down en redingote, and took little else; especially the eminent professor and minister of public education, whose luggage consisted of a brown paper parcel, containing a razor, a clean collar, and the cordon of the Legion of Honour. There were some excellent hunts, organized by the Grand Veneur, the Comte de Girardin, and the Chief Ranger, the Baron de Larminat; but the evenings, notwithstanding the new theatre built by Louis-Philippe, were frightfully dull, and barely compensated for by the reviews at the camp of Compiègne, to which the King conducted his Queen and the princesses in a tapissière and four, he himself driving, the Duc and Duchesse de Montpensier occupying the box seat, the rest of the family ensconced in the carriage, "absolument en bons bourgeois." With the advent of Louis-Napoléon, even before he assumed the imperial purple, a spirit of change came over the place. Hortense's second son would probably have made a better poet than an emperor. His whole life has been a miscarried poem, miscarried by the inexorable demands of European politics. He dreamt of being L'Empereur-Soleil, as Louis XIV. had been Le Roi-Soleil. Visions of a nineteenth-century La Vallière or Montespan, hanging fondly on his arm, and dispelling the harassing cares of State by sweet smiles while treading the cool umbrageous glades of the magnificent park, haunted his brain. He would have gone as far as Louis le Bien-Aimé, and built another nest for another Pompadour. He did not mean to make a Maintenon out of a Veuve Scarron, and, least of all, an empress out of a Mademoiselle Eugénie de Montijo. Mdlle. de Montijo, on the other hand, was determined not to be a Mdme. de Maintenon, let alone a La Vallière or a Pompadour. At any rate, so she said, and the man most interested in putting her assertion to the test was too infatuated to do so. "Quand on ne s'attend à rien, la moindre des choses surprend." The proverb holds good, more especially where a woman's resistance is concerned. Mdlle. de Montijo was a Spaniard, or at least half a one, and that half contained as much superstition as would have fitted out a score of her countrywomen of unmixed blood. One day in Granada, while she was sitting at her window, a gipsy, whose hand "she had crossed with silver," is said to have foretold her that she should be queen. The young girl probably attached but little importance to the words at that time; "but," said my informant, "from the moment Louis-Napoléon breathed the first protestations of love to her, the prophecy recurred to her in all its vividness, and she made up her mind that the right hand and not the left of Louis-Napoléon should set the seal upon its fulfilment." My informant was an Englishman, very highly placed, and distinctly *au courant* of the private history of the Marquise de Montijo y Teba, as well as that of her mother. Without the least fear of being contradicted, I may say that the subsequent visit of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert was due to his direct influence. I will not go as far as to assert that Louis-Napoléon's participation in the Crimean war could not have been had at that moment at any other price, or that England could not have dispensed with that co-operation, but he, my informant, considered then that the alliance would be more closely cemented by that visit. Nor am I called upon to anticipate the final verdict of the social historian with regard to "that act of courtesy" on the part of the Queen of England, not the least justified boast of whose reign it is that she purified the morals of her court by her own example. Still, one may safely assume, in this instance, that the virtue of Mdlle. de Montijo would have been proof against the "blandishments of the future Emperor," even if she had not had the advice and countenance of her mother, whose Scotch blood would not have stood trifling with her daughter's affections and reputation. But to make the fortress of that heart doubly impregnable, the Comtesse de Montijo scarcely ever left her second daughter's side. It was a great sacrifice on her part, because Mdlle. Eugénie de Montijo was not her favourite child; that position was occupied by her elder, the Duchesse d'Albe. "Mais, on est mère, ou on ne l'est pas?" says Madame Cardinal.[59]

Mdlle. de Montijo, then, became the guiding spirit of the fêtes at the Élysée. She and her mother had travelled a great deal, so had Louis-Napoléon; the latter not enough, apparently, to have learnt the wisdom of the French proverb, "Gare à la femme dont le berceau a été une malle, et le pensionnat une table d'hôte."

I have spoken elsewhere of the Coup d'État and of the company at the Élysée, immediately previous to it and afterwards; early in 1852—

> "The little done *did* vanish to the mind,
> Which forward *saw* how much remained to do."

The Prince-President undertook a journey to the southern parts of France, which he was pleased to call "an interrogation to the country." It was that to a certain extent, only the country had been crammed with one reply to it, "Vive l'empereur." Calmly reviewing things from a distance of a quarter of a century, it was the best reply the nation could have made. "Society has been too long like a pyramid turned upside down. I replaced it on its base," said Louis-Napoléon, on the 29th of March, 1852, when he opened the first session of the Chambers, and inaugurated the new constitution which was his own work. "He is right," remarked one of his female critics, "and now we are going to dance on the top of it. À quand les invitations?"

The invitations were issued almost immediately after the journey just mentioned, and before the plébiscite had given the Prince-President the Imperial crown. One of the first was for a series of fêtes at Compiègne. The château was got ready in hot haste; but, of course, the "hunts" were not half so splendid as they became afterwards.

The most observed of all the guests was Mdlle. de Montijo, accompanied by her mother, but no one suspected for a single moment that the handsome Spanish girl who was galloping by Louis-Napoléon's side would be in a few months Empress of the French. Only a few knowing ones offered to back her

for the Imperial Stakes at any odds; I took them, and, of course, lost heavily. This is not a figure of speech, but a literal fact. There were, however, no quotations "for a place," backers and bookies alike being agreed that she would be first or nowhere in the race.

How it would have fared with the favourite had there been any other entries, it would be difficult to say, but there were none; the various European sovereigns declined the honour of an alliance with the house of Bonaparte, so Mdlle. Eugénie de Montijo simply walked over the course. One evening the rumour spread that Louis-Napoléon had uttered the magic word "marriage," in consequence of a violent fit of coughing which had choked the word "mistress" down his throat. Not to mince matters, the affair happened in this way, and I speak on excellent authority. The day before, there had been a hunt, and between the return from the forest and the dinner-hour, Napoléon had presented himself unannounced in Mdlle. de Montijo's apartment. Neither I nor the others who were at the château at the time could satisfactorily account for the prologue to this visit, but that there was such a prologue, and that it was conceived and enacted by at least two out of the three actors in the best spirit of the "comédie d'intrigue," so dear to the heart of Scribe, admits of no doubt; because, though the first dinner-bell had already rung, Mdlle. de Montijo was still in her riding-habit, consequently on the alert. Nay, even her dainty hunting-crop was within her reach, as the intruder found to his cost; and reports were rife to the effect that, if the one had failed, the mother, who was in the next room, would have come to the rescue of her injured daughter.

The Comtesse de Montijo was spared this act of heroism; Lucrece herself sufficed for the task of defending her own honour: nevertheless, the mother's part was not at an end, even when the decisive word had been pronounced. According to her daughter, she objected to the union, from a sincere regard for her would-be-son-in-law, from an all-absorbing love for her own darling. The social gulf between the two was too wide ever to be bridged, etc. "And though it will break my heart to have to obey her, I have no alternative," added Mdlle. de Montijo, if not in these selfsame words, at least in words to that effect. "There remains but one hope. Write to her."

And Louis-Napoléon did write. The letter has been religiously preserved by the Montijo family. In less than three mouths afterwards France was officially or semi-officially apprised of the Emperor's intended union; but, of course, the news had spread long before then, and a very varied effect it produced. Candidly speaking, it satisfied no one, and every one delivered judgment in two separate, if not different, capacities—as private citizens and as patriotic Frenchmen. The lower classes, containing the ultra-democratic element, would have perhaps applauded the bold departure from the old traditions that had hitherto presided at sovereign unions, if the bride had been French, instead of being a foreigner. They were sensible enough not to expect their new Emperor to choose from the bourgeoisie; but, in spite of their prejudices against the old noblesse, they would, in default of a princess of royal blood, have liked to see one of that noblesse's daughters share the Imperial throne. They were not deceived by Napoléon's specious argument that France had better assume openly the position of a parvenu rather than make the new principle of the unrestricted suffrage of a great nation pass for an old one by trying to introduce herself at any cost into a family of kings.

The bourgeoisie itself was more disgusted still. Incredible as it may seem, they did resent Napoléon's slight of their daughters. "A défaut d'une princesse de sang royal, une de nos filles eut fait aussi bien qu'une étrangère, dont le grand père, après tout, était négociant comme nous. Le premier empire a été fait avec le sang de garçons d'écurie, de tonnelliers; le second empire aurait pu prendre un pen de ce sang sans se mésallier." The bourgeois Voltairien was more biting in his sarcasm. In his speech to the grand officers of State and corporations, Napoléon had alluded to Empress Joséphine: "France has not forgotten that for the last seventy years foreign princesses have only ascended the steps of the throne to see their race scattered and proscribed, either by war or revolution. One woman alone appears to have brought the people better luck, and to have left a more lasting impression on their memory, and that woman, the modest and kindly wife of General Bonaparte, was not descended from royal blood." Then, speaking of the empress that was to be, he concluded, "A good and pious Catholic, she will, like myself, offer up the same prayers for the welfare and happiness of France; I cherish the firm hope that, gracious and kind as she is, she will, while occupying a similar position, revive once more the virtues of Joséphine." All of which references to the undoubtedly skittish widow of General de Beauharnais made the satirically inclined bourgeois, who knew the chronique scandaleuse of the Directoire quite as well as Louis-Napoléon, sneer. Said one, "It is a strange present to put into a girl's trousseau, the virtues of Joséphine; the Nessus-shirt given to Hercules was nothing to it."

The Faubourg St.-Germain made common cause for once with the Orleanists salons, which were avenging the confiscation of the princes' property; and both, if less brutal than the speaker just quoted, were not less cruel. The daughter had to bear the brunt of the mother's reputation. Public securities went down two francs at the announcement of the marriage. There was but one man who stood steadfast by the Emperor and his bride, Dupin the elder; but his ironical defence of the choice was nearly as bad as his opposition to it could have been. "People care very little as to what I say and think, and perhaps they are right," he remarked; "but still, the Emperor acts more sensibly by marrying the woman he likes than by eating humble-pie and bargaining for some strait-laced, stuck-up German princess, with feet as large as mine. At any rate, when he kisses his wife, it will be because he feels inclined, and not because he feels compelled."[60]

Nevertheless, amidst all this flouting and jeering, the Emperor and his future consort felt very uncomfortable, but they showed a brave front. He inferred, rather than said to one and all who advanced objections, that his love for Mdlle. de Montijo was not the sole motive for his contemplated union. He wished to induce them into the belief that political motives were not foreign to it—that he

was, as it were, flinging the gauntlet to monarchical Europe, which, not content with refusing him a wife, was determined to throw a spoke in his matrimonial wheel.

Unfortunately, he and his bride felt that they could not altogether dispense with the pomp and circumstance of courts. Like his uncle, Napoléon III. was exceedingly fond of grand ceremonial display, and he set his heart upon his Empress having a brilliant escort of fair and illustrious women on the day of her nuptials. To seek for such an escort among the grandes dames of the old noblesse would, he knew, be so much waste of time; but he was justified in the hope that the descendants of those who owed some of their titles and most of their fortunes to his uncle would prove more amenable. In this he was mistaken: both the Duchesse de Vicence and the Duchesse des Lesparres, besides several others to whom the highest positions in the Empress's household were offered, declined the honour. The Duc de Bassano did worse. Much as the De Caulaincourts and the De Lesparres owed to the son of the Corsican lawyer, the Marets owed him infinitely more. Yet their descendant, but a few days before the marriage, went about repeating everywhere that he absolutely objected to see his wife figure in the suite of the daughter of the Comtesse de Montijo, "who" (the daughter) "was a little too much of a posthumous child." He not only relented with regard to the duchesse at the eleventh hour, but accepted the office of Grand Chambellan, which office he filled to the end of his life.

In fact, honours and titles went absolutely a-begging in those days. Let me not be misunderstood. There were plenty of men and women ready to accept both, and to deck out their besmirched, though very authentic, scutcheons with them; but of these the Empress, at any rate, would have none. She would have willingly thrown overboard the whole of her family with its doubtful antecedents, which naturally identified it with that brilliant and cosmopolitan society, "dans laquelle en fait d'hommes, il n'y a que des déclassés, et en fait de femmes que des trop-bien classées." The Bonapartes themselves had, after all, a by no means cleaner bill of health, but, as usual, the woman was made the scapegoat; for though a good many men of ancient lineage, such as the Prince Charles de Beauveau, the Duc de Crillon, the Duc de Beauveau-Craon, the Duc de Montmorency, the Marquis de Larochejaquelein, the Marquis de Gallifet, the Duc de Mouchy, etc., rallied to the new régime, most of them refused at first to bring their wives and daughters to the Tuileries, albeit that they went themselves. When a man neglects to introduce his womenkind to the mistress of the house at which he visits, one generally knows the opinion he and the world entertain—rightly or wrongly—of the status of the lady; and the rule is supposed to hold good everywhere throughout civilized society. Yet the Emperor tolerated this.

Knowing what I do of Napoléon's private character, I am inclined to think that, but for dynastic and political reasons, he would have willingly dispensed with the rigidly virtuous woman at the Tuileries, then and afterwards. But at that moment he was perforce obliged to make advances to her, and the rebuffs received in consequence were taken with a sang-froid which made those who administered them wince more than once. At each renewed refusal he was ready with an epigram: "Encore une dame qui n'est pas assez sure de son passé pour braver l'opinion publique;" "Celle-là, c'est la femme de César, hors de tout soupçon, comme il y a des criminels qui sont hors la loi;" "Madame de ——; il n'y a pas de faux pas dans sa vie, il n'y a qu'un faux papa, le père de ses enfants."

For Louis-Napoléon could be exceedingly witty when he liked, and his wit lost nothing by the manner in which he delivered his witticisms. Not a muscle of his face moved—he merely blinked his eyes.

"Si on avait voulu me donner une princesse allemande," he said to his most intimate friends, "je l'aurais épousée: si je ne l'avais pas autant aimée que j'aime Mademoiselle de Montijo, j'aurais au moins été plus sûr de sa bêtise; avec une Espagnole on n'est jamais sûr."

Whether he meant the remark for his future consort or not, I am unable to say, but Mademoiselle de Montijo was not witty. There was a kittenish attempt at wit now and then, as when she said, "Ici, il n'y a que moi de légitimiste;" but intellectually she was in no way distinguished from the majority of her countrywomen.[61] On the other hand, she had an iron will, and was very handsome. A woman's beauty is rarely capable of being analyzed; he who undertakes such a task is surely doomed to the disappointment of the boy who cut the drum to find out where the noise came from.

I cannot say wherein Mdlle. de Montijo's beauty lay, but she was beautiful indeed.

Her iron will ably seconded the Emperor's attempts at gaining aristocratic recruits round his standard, and when the Duc de Guiche joined their ranks—the Duc de Guiche whom the Duchesse d'Angoulême had left close upon forty thousand pounds a year—Mdlle. de Montijo might well be elated with her success. Still, at the celebration of her nuptials, the gathering was not le dessus du panier. The old noblesse had the right to stay away; they had not the right to do what they did. I am perfectly certain of my facts, else I should not have committed them to paper.

As usual, on the day of the ceremony, portraits of the new Empress and her biography were hawked about. There was nothing offensive in either, because the risk of printing anything objectionable would have been too great. In reality, the account of her life was rather too laudatory. But there was one picture, better executed than the rest, which bore the words, "*The portrait and the virtues of the Empress*; *the whole for two sous*;" and that was decidedly the work of the Legitimists and Orleanists combined. I have ample proof of what I say. I heard afterwards that the lithograph had been executed in England.

For several months after the marriage nothing was spoken or thought of at the Tuileries but rules of

precedence, court dresses, the revival of certain ceremonies, functions and entertainments that used to be the fashion under the ancien régime. The Empress was especially anxious to model her surroundings, her code of life, upon those of Marie-Antoinette,—"mon type," as she familiarly called the daughter of Marie-Thérèse. If, in fact, after a little while, some one had been ill-advised enough to tell her that she had not been born in the Imperial purple, she would have scarcely believed it. When a daughter of the House of Savoy had the misfortune to marry Napoléon's cousin, the Empress thought fit to give the young princess some hints as to her toilette and sundry other things. "You appear to forget, madame," was the answer, "that I was born at a court." Empress Eugénie was furious, and never forgave Princess Clotilde. Her anger reminds me of that of a French detective who, having been charged with a very important case, took up his quarters with a colleague in one of the best Paris hotels, exclusively frequented by foreigners of distinction. He assumed the rôle of a retired ambassador, his comrade enacted the part of his valet, and both enacted them to perfection. For a fortnight or more they did not make a single mistake in their parts. The ambassador was kind but distant to his servant, the latter never omitted to address him as "Your Excellency." When their mission was at an end, they returned to their ordinary duties; but the "ambassador" had become so identified with his part that, on his colleague addressing him in the usual way, he turned round indignantly, and exclaimed, "You seem to forget yourself. What do you mean by such familiarity?"

Of all the entertainments of the ancien régime lending themselves to sumptuary and scenic display, "la chasse" was undoubtedly the one most likely to appeal to the Imperial couple. Louis-Napoléon had, at any rate, the good sense not to attempt to rival Le Roi-Soleil in spectacular ballet, or to revive the Eglinton tournament on the Place du Carrousel. But—

"Il ne fallait au fier Romain
Que des spectacles et du pain;
Mais aux Français, plus que Romain,
Le spectacle suffit sans pain."

No one was better aware of this tendency of the Parisian to be dazzled by court pageants than the new Emperor, but he was also aware that, except at the risk of making himself and his new court ridiculous, some sort of raison d'être would have to be found for such open-air displays in the capital; pending the invention of a plausible pretext, "les grandes chasses" at Compiègne were decided upon. They were to be different from what they had been on the occasion referred to above: special costumes were to be worn, splendid horses purchased; the most experienced kennel and huntsmen, imbued with all the grand traditions of "la Vénerie," recruited from the former establishments of the Condés and Rohans;—in short, such éclat was to be given to them as to make them not only the talk of the whole of France, but of Europe besides. The experiment was worth trying. Compiègne was less than a hundred miles from Paris; thousands would flock, not only from the neighbouring towns, but from the capital also, and the glowing accounts they would be sure to bring back would produce their effect. There would be, moreover, less risk of incurring the remarks of an irreverent Paris mob, a mob which instinctively finds out the ridiculous side of every ceremonial instituted by the court, except those calculated to gratify its love of military pomp and splendour. As yet, it was too early to belie the words, "L'empire, c'est la paix;" we had not got beyond the "tame eagle" period, albeit that those behind the scenes, among others a near connection of mine, who was more than half a Frenchman himself, predicted that the predatory instincts would soon reveal themselves, against the Russian bear, probably, and in conjunction with the British lion,—if not in conjunction with the latter, perhaps against him.

At any rate, les grandes chasses et fêtes de Compiègne formed the first item of that programme of "La France qui s'amuse,"—a programme and play which, for nearly eighteen years, drew from all parts of the civilized world would-be critics and spectators, few of whom perceived that the theatre was undermined, the piece running to a fatal dénoûment, and the bill itself the most fraudulent concoction that had ever issued from the sanctum of a bogus impressario. But had not Lamartine, only a few years previously, suggested, as it were, the tendency of the piece, when, in the Chamber of Deputies, he said, "Messieurs, j'ai l'honneur et le regret de vous avertir que la France s'ennuie"? Louis-Napoléon was determined that no such reproach should be made during his reign. He probably did not mean his fireworks to end in the conflagration of Bazeilles, and to read the criticism on his own drama at Wilhelmshöhe, but he should have held a tighter hand over his stage-managers. Some of these were now getting their reward for having contributed to the efficient representation of the prologue, which one might entitle "the Coup d'État." General Magnan was appointed grand veneur—let us say, master of the buckhounds,—with a stipend of a hundred thousand francs; Comte Edgar Ney, his chief coadjutor, with forty thousand francs. History sees the last of the latter gentleman on a cold, dull, drizzly September morning, of the year 1870. He is seated in an open char-à-bancs, by the side of some Prussian officers, and the vehicle, in the rear of that of his Imperial master, is on its way to the Belgian frontier, en route for Cassel. He is pointing to some artillery which, notwithstanding its French model, is being driven by German gunners. "A qui ces canons-là?" "Ils ne sont pas des nôtres, monsieur," is the courteous and guarded reply. Verily, his father's exit, after all is said and done, was a more dignified one. Michel Ney, at any rate, fell pierced by bullets; the pity was that they were not the enemy's. In addition to the grand veneur and premier veneur, there were three lieutenants de vénerie, a capitaine des chasses à tir,—whom we will call a sublimated head-gamekeeper;—and all these dignitaries had other emoluments and charges besides, because Louis-Napoléon, to his credit be it said, never forgot a friend.

The whole of the "working personnel" was, as I have already said, recruited from the former establishments of the Condés at Chantilly, of the late Duc d'Orléans, the Ducs de Nemours and d'Aumale; and such men as La Feuille, whose real name was Fergus, and La Trace could not have

failed to make comparisons between their old masters and the new, not always to the advantage of the latter. For though the spectacle was magnificent enough, there was little or no hunting, as far as the majority of the guests were concerned. After a great deal of deliberation, dark green cloth, with crimson velvet collars, cuffs, and facings, and gold lace, had been adopted. In Louis XV.'s time, and in that of the latter Bourbons, the colour had been blue with silver lace; but for this difference the costume was virtually the same, even to the buckskins, jackboots, and the "lampion," also edged with gold instead of silver.[62] The Emperor's and Empress's had a trimming of white ostrich-feathers. The dress could not be worn, however, by any but the members of the Imperial household, without special permission. The latter, of course, wore it by right; but even men like the Duc de Vicence, the Baron d'Offrémont, the Marquis de Gallifet, the Marquis de Cadore, women like the Comtesse de Pourtalès, the Comtesse de Brigode, the Marquise de Contades, who held no special charge at court, had to receive "le bouton" before they could don it.[63]

The locale of these gatherings differed according to the seasons. Fontainebleau was chosen for the spring ones, but throughout the reign Compiègne always offered the most brilliant spectacle, especially after the Crimean war, when Napoléon III. was tacitly admitted to the family circle of the crowned heads of Europe. The shooting-parties were a tribute offered to the taste of the English visitors, who, after that period, became more numerous every succeeding autumn, and who, accustomed as they were to their own magnificent meets and lavish hospitality at the most renowned country seats, could not help expressing their surprise at the utterly reckless expenditure; and, if the truth must be told, enjoyed the freedom from all restraint, though it was cunningly hidden beneath an apparently very formidable code of courtly etiquette. As one of these distinguished Englishmen said, "They have done better than banish Mrs. Grundy; they have given her a special invitation, and drugged her the moment she came in."

The Court invariably arrived on the first of November, and generally stayed for three weeks or a month, according to the date fixed for the opening of the Chambers. From that moment the town, a very sleepy though exceedingly pretty one, became like a fair. Unless you had engaged your room beforehand at one of the hotels, the chances were a thousand to one in favour of your having to roam the streets; for there were hundreds and hundreds of sight-seers, French as well as foreign, desirous of following the hounds, which every one was free to do. In addition to these, many functionaries, not sufficiently important to be favoured with an invitation to the Château, but eager for an opportunity of attracting the notice of the sovereign—for Napoléon was a very impulsive monarch, who often took sudden fancies—had to be accommodated, not to mention flying columns of the demi-monde, "pas trop bien assurées sur la fidélité de leurs protecteurs en-titre et voulant les sauvegarder contre les attaques de leurs rivales dans l'entourage impérial." What with these and others, a room, on the top story, was often quoted at sixty or seventy francs per day. I know a worthy lieutenant of the cavalry of the Garde who made a pretty sum, for two years running, by engaging three apartments at each of the five good hotels, for the whole of the Emperor's stay. His regiment was quartered at Compiègne, and, as a matter of course, his friends from Paris applied to him.

An amusing incident happened in connection with this scarcity of accommodation. The French railways in those days got a great many of their rails from England. The representative of one of these English makers found out, however, that the profits on his contracts were pretty well being swallowed up by the baksheesh he had to distribute among the various government officials and others. In his perplexity, he sought advice of an English nobleman, who had his grandes et petites entrées to the Tuileries, and the latter promised to get him an audience of the Emperor. It so happened that the Court was on the eve of its departure, but Napoléon wrote that he would see the agent at Compiègne. On the day appointed, the Englishman came. Having made up his mind to combine pleasure with business, he had brought his portmanteau in order to stay for a day or so. Previous to the interview he had applied at every hotel, at every private house where there was a chance of getting a room, but without success. His luggage was in a cab on the Place du Château. Napoléon was, as usual, very kind, promised him his aid, but asked him to let the matter rest until the next day, when he would have an opportunity of consulting a high authority on the subject who was coming down that very afternoon. "Give me your address, and I will let you know, the first thing in the morning, when I can see you," said the Emperor in English.

The Englishman looked very embarrassed. "I have no address, sire. I have been unable to get a room anywhere," he replied.

"Oh, I dare say we can put you up somewhere here," laughed the Emperor, and called to one of his aides-de-camp, to whom he gave instructions.

The Englishman and the officer departed together, but the Château was quite as full as the rest of the town.

"I'll ask Baptiste," said the officer at last, having tried every possible means.

Baptiste was one of the Emperor's principal grooms, and very willing to help; but, alas! he had only a very small room himself, and that was shared by his wife.

"If monsieur don't mind," said Baptiste, "I will make him up a good bed in one of the fourgons"—one of the luggage-vans.

So said, so done. The Englishman slept like a top, being very tired,—too much like a top, for he never stirred until he found himself rudely awakened by a heavy bundle of rugs and other

paraphernalia being flung on his chest. He was at the station. Baptiste had simply forgotten to mention the fact of his having transformed the fourgon into a bedroom; the doors that stood ajar during the night had been closed without the servant looking inside; and when the occupant was discovered he was, as Racine says—

"Dans le simple appareil
D'une beauté qu'on vient d'arracher au sommeil."

When he told the Emperor, the latter laughed, "as he had never seen him laugh before," said the aide-de-camp, who had been the innocent cause of the mischief by appealing to Baptiste.

The victim of the misadventure did not mind it much. For many years afterwards, he averred that the sight of Compiègne in those days would have compensated for the inconvenience of sleeping on a garden seat. What was more, he and his firm were never troubled any more with inexorable demands for baksheesh.

He was right; the sight of Compiègne in those days was very beautiful. There was a good deal of the histrionic mixed up with it, but it was very beautiful. In addition to the bands of the garrison, a regimental band of the infantry of the Garde played in the courtyard of the Château; the streets were alive with crowds dressed in their best; almost every house was gay with bunting, the only exceptions being those of the Legitimists, who, unlike Achilles, did not even skulk in their tents, but shut up their establishments and flitted on the eve of the arrival of the Court, after having despatched an address of unswerving loyalty to the Comte de Chambord. After a little while, Napoléon did not trouble about these expressions of hostility to his dynasty, though he could not forbear to ask bitterly, now and then, whether the Comte de Chambord or the Comte de Paris under a regency could have made the country more prosperous than he had attempted to do, than he succeeded in doing. And truth compels one to admit that France's material prosperity was not a sham in those days, whatever else may have been; for in those days, as I have already remarked, the end was still distant, and there were probably not a thousand men in the whole of Europe who foresaw the nature of it, albeit that a thirtieth or a fortieth part of them may have been in Compiègne at the very time when the Emperor, in his elegantly appointed break, drove from the Place du Château amidst the acclamations of the serried crowds lining the roads.

On the day of the arrival of the Emperor—the train reached Compiègne about four—there was neither dinner-party nor reception at the Château. The civil and military authorities of Compiègne went to the station to welcome the Imperial couple, the rangers of Compiègne and Laigue forests waited upon his Majesty to arrange the programme, and generally joined the Imperial party at dinner; but the fêtes did not commence until the second day after the arrival, *i. e.* with the advent of the first batch of guests, who reached the Château exactly twenty-four hours after their hosts.

CHAPTER XV.

Society during the Empire — The series of guests at Compiègne — The amusements — the absence of musical taste in the Bonapartes — The programme on the first, second, third, and fourth days — An anecdote of Lafontaine, the actor — Theatrical performances and balls — The expenses of the same — The theatre at Compiègne — The guests, male and female — "Neck or nothing" for the latter, uniform for the former — The rest have to take "back seats" — The selection of guests among the notabilities of Compiègne — A mayor's troubles — The Empress's and the Emperor's conflicting opinions with regard to female charms — Bassano in "hot water" — Tactics of the demi-mondaines — Improvement from the heraldic point of view in the Empress's entourage — The cocodettes — Their dress — Worth — When every pretext for a change of toilette is exhausted, the court ladies turn themselves into ballerinas — "Le Diable à Quatre" at Compiègne — The ladies appear at the ball afterwards in their gauze skirts — The Emperor's dictum with regard to ballet-dancers and men's infatuation for them — The Emperor did not like stupid women — The Emperor's "eye" for a handsome woman — The Empress does not admire the instinct — William I. of Prussia acts as comforter — The hunt — Actors, "supers," and spectators — "La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas" — The Imperial procession — The Empress's and Emperor's unpunctuality — Louis-Napoléon not a "well-dressed man" — The Empress wished to get back before dark — The reason of this wish — Though unpunctual, punctual on hunt-days — The police measures at those gatherings — M. Hyrvoix and M. Boitelle — The Empress did not like the truth, the Emperor did — Her anxiety to go to St. Lazare.

The guests were divided into five series, each of which stayed four days exclusive of the day of their arrival and that of their departure. Each series consisted of between eighty and ninety guests.

The amusements provided were invariably the same for each series of guests. On the day of their arrival there was the dinner, followed by charades, and a carpet dance to the accompaniment of the piano—or, to speak by the card, of the piano-organ. It was an instrument similar to that which

nowadays causes so much delight to the children in the streets of London, and, as far as I can remember, the first of its kind I had ever seen. The male guests, and not always the youngest, relieved one another in turning the handle. Mechanical as was the task, it required a certain ear for time, and they were often found sadly wanting in that respect. It was rather comical to see a grave minister of State solemnly grinding out tunes, and being called to task every now and again for his incapacity. The worst offender, the most hopeless performer, was undoubtedly the Emperor himself. The Bonapartes are one and all devoid of the slightest taste for music. I think it is De Bourriènne—but I will not be certain—who speaks of the founder of the dynasty humming as he went along from one apartment to another. "Et Dieu sait comme il chantait faux," adds the chronicler in despair. That part of the great man's mantle had decidedly fallen upon his nephew. I remember the latter trying to distinguish himself on that piano-organ one evening. M. de Maupas, who was the prefect of police at the time of the Coup d'État, and minister of police afterwards, was among the guests. The ambulant musician in Paris has to get a kind of licence from the prefecture of police, the outward sign of which is a brass badge, which he is bound to wear suspended from his button-hole. While the Emperor was trying to make the company waltz, one of the ladies suddenly turned round to M. de Maupas: "Si jamais l'empereur vous demande la permission de jouer dans la rue, refusez lui, monsieur; refusez lui, pour l'amour du ciel et de la musique," she said aloud: and the Emperor himself could not help smiling at the well-deserved rebuke. "Madame," he replied, "if ever I am reduced to such a strait, I will take you into partnership: I will make you sing, and I will collect the pence." In spite of his musical deficiencies the Emperor was right; the lady was Madame Conneau, who had and has still one of the most beautiful voices ever heard on the professional or amateur stage.

On the first day following that of the arrival of the guests, there was a shooting-party, or, rather, there were two—one in the home park for the Emperor himself, who was not a bad shot, and a dozen of the more important personages; another in the forest. Those who did not care for sport were at liberty to remain with the ladies, who, under the direction of the Empress, proceeded to the lawn. Croquet, as far as I know, had not been invented then, but archery lent itself to posing and flirtation quite as well, and the costumes worn on such occasions were truly a sight for the gods.

On the evening of that day, there was a performance in the theatre, built for the express purpose by Louis-Philippe, but which had been considerably embellished since. The companies of the Comédie-Française, the Odéon, the Gymnase, the Vaudeville, and the Palais-Royal took it in turns. Only the members of the Comédie-Française had the privilege of paying their respects in the Imperial box. It was during one of the performances of the Gymnase company that the following amusing incident occurred. They were playing "Le Fils de Famille" of Bayard and De Biéville,[64] and the Emperor was strolling in the lobbies before the performance, when he noticed an old colonel of lancers, whom he did not remember to have seen among the guests during the daytime, but who seemed perfectly at home. He had not even donned his full regimentals.

"Voilà un vrai, beau militaire," said the sovereign to one of his aides-de-camp; "allez demander son nom."

The aide-de-camp returned in a moment. "Il s'appelle Lafontaine, sire; et il appartient au régiment du Gymnase."

"Comment, au régiment du Gymnase?"

"Mais oui, sire; c'est Lafontaine, le comédien."

In fact, the assumption was so thoroughly realistic, that even a better judge than Louis-Napoléon might have been deceived by it.

Those performances were really most brilliant affairs, and an invitation to them was only less highly prized than that to the ball which always followed the play on November 15th, the Empress's fête-day. [65] The cost of each performance was estimated at between twenty and thirty thousand francs, according to the company performing. I am repeating the official statement, though inclined to think it somewhat exaggerated. Except the Opéra or Opéra-Comique, there was not then, nor is there now, a theatre in Paris whose nightly receipts, with "the greatest success," exceed seven or eight thousand francs. Allowing for an additional three thousand francs for railway travelling and sundry expenses, I fail to see how the remainder of the sum was disbursed, unless it was in douceurs to the performers. There is less doubt, however, about the expenses of the Château during this annual series of fêtes. It could not have been less than forty-five thousand francs per diem, and must have often risen to fifty thousand francs, exclusive of the cost of the theatrical performances, because the luxe displayed on these occasions was truly astonishing—I had almost said appalling.

The theatre was built on the old-fashioned principle, and what we call stalls were not known in those days. There was something analogous to them at the Opéra and the Théâtre-Français, but they were exclusively reserved to the male sex. Both these theatres still keep up the same traditions in that respect. At Compiègne the whole of the ground floor, parterre, or pit, as we have misnamed it —"groundlings" is a much more appropriate word, perhaps, than "pittites"—was occupied by the officers of all grades of the regiments quartered at Compiègne and in the department. The chefs de corps and the chief dignitaries of State filled the amphitheatre, which rose in a gentle slope from the back of the parterre to just below the first tier of boxes, or rather to the balcony tier, seeing that the only box on it was the Imperial one. The latter, however, took up much more than the centre, for it had been constructed to seat about two hundred persons. Only a slight partition, elbow high, divided it from the rest of the tier, whence the sterner sex was absolutely banished. The display of bare arms

and shoulders was something marvellous, for they were by no means equally worthy of admiration, and the stranger, ignorant of the court regulations, must have often asked himself why certain ladies should have been so reckless as to invite comparison with their more favoured sisters. It was because there was no choice. The slightest gauze was rigorously prohibited, and woe to the lady who ventured to disobey these regulations. One of the chambellans was sure to request her to retire. "L'épaule ou l'épaulette" was the title of a comic song of those days, in allusion to the Empress's determination to suffer none but resplendent uniforms and ball dresses within sight of her. If I remember aright, the chorus went like this—

"Je ne porte pas l'épaulette,
Je ne puis me décoll'ter,
Je ne suis qu'un vieux bonhomme,
Donc, je ne suis pas invité."

For even the guests in plain evening dress were mercilessly relegated to the tier above that of the Imperial box, and, even when there, were not permitted to occupy the first rows. These also were reserved for the fairer portion of humanity.

This fairer portion of humanity, thus ostensibly privileged, embittered the lives of the poor mayor and sub-prefect of Compiègne. The wives of the local notabilities and of the government officials, in addition to those of some of the landed gentry of the Empire, were not only anxious to be present at these gatherings, but generally insisted on having the front seats, at any rate in the second circle. Their applications, transmitted by these dignitaries to the Duc de Bassano, were always in excess of the room at his disposal, and, being an utter stranger to all these ladies, he had virtually to choose at random, or, if not at random, to be guided by the mayor and sub-prefect, who were consulted, not with regard to the greater or lesser degree of opulent charms and comeliness of features of these fair applicants, but with regard to their social status and fair fame. Now, it so happens that in France "L'amour fait des siennes" in the provinces as well as in the capital; he only disdains what Mirabeau used to call "les fées concombres." The Empress, provided the shoulders and arms were bare, did not trouble much about either their colour or "moulded outline;" the Emperor, on the contrary, objected, both from personal as well as artistic reasons, to have the curved symmetry of the two circles marred by the introduction of so many living problems of Euclid; and it really seemed as if the devil wanted to have all the good shapes to himself, for the reputedly virtuous spinsters, widows, and matrons were angular enough to have satisfied a tutor of mathematics. There was a dilemma: if they were put in the front rows, the Emperor scolded Bassano, who in his turn scolded the mayor and the sub-prefect. If the less virtuous but more attractive were put in the front rows, there was frequently a small scandal; for the Empress, at the first sight of them, had them expelled, after which she scolded Bassano, who avenged himself for his having been reprimanded on the mayor and sub-prefect. Furthermore, the contingent from Paris, some of whom were often provided with letters of introduction from influential personages to the latter gentleman, were not always without reproach though ever without fear; but how were two provincial magistrates to know this? Those sirens could almost impose upon them with impunity, and did; so, upon the whole, the magistrates did not have a pleasant time of it, for in the case of the former damsels or veuves de Malabar both the Emperor and the Empress were equally strict—though, perhaps, from utterly different motives.

Nevertheless, the esclandres were comparatively rare, and the house itself presented a sight unparalleled perhaps throughout the length and breadth of Europe. At nine o'clock, Comte Bacciochi, the first chambellan, in his court dress descended the few steps leading from the foyer to the Imperial box, and, advancing to the front, announced, "The Emperor." Every one rose and remained standing until the Emperor and Empress, who entered immediately afterwards, had seated themselves in the crimson velvet and gilt arm-chairs which the gentlemen-in-waiting (les chambellans de service) rolled forward.

I have spoken elsewhere of the immediate entourage of the Imperial hosts, and may therefore pass them over in silence here. As the Napoleonic dynasty became apparently more consolidated both at home and abroad, this entourage gradually changed—though no truthful observer could have honestly averred that the change was for the better. The décavés and the déclassées of the first period disappeared altogether, or underwent a truly marvellous financial and social metamorphosis: the men, by means of speculations, chiefly connected with the "Haussmannizing" of Paris, the successful carrying out of which was greatly facilitated by their position at court; the women by marriages, the conditions of which I prefer not to discuss. An undoubtedly genuine leaven of names to be found in "D'Hozier,"[66] came to swell the ranks of the hitherto somewhat shady courtiers of both sexes. Unfortunately, their blood was not only thicker than water, and consequently more easily heated, but they presumed upon the blueness of it to set public opinion at defiance.

"Ce qui, chez les mortels, est une effronterie
Entre nous autres demi-dieux
N'est qu'honnête galanterie."

Thus wrote the Duchesse du Maine[67] to her brother, of whom she was perhaps a little more fond than even their blood-relationship warranted. This privilege of stealing the horse, while the meaner-born might not even look over the hedge, was claimed by the sons and the daughters of the old noblesse, who condescended to grace the court of Napoléon III., with a cynicism worthy of the most libertine traditions of the ancien régime; and neither the Empress nor the Emperor did anything to discountenance the claim. The former, provided that "tout se passait en famille," closed her eyes to many things she ought not to have tolerated. At the Tuileries, a certain measure of decorum was

preferred; at Compiègne and Fontainebleau, where the house was "packed" as it were, the most flagrant eccentricities, to call them by no harsher name, were not only permitted, but tacitly encouraged by the Empress. This was especially the case when the first series of guests was gone. It generally included the most serious portion of the visitors, "les ennuyeurs, les empêcheurs de danser en rond,"[68] as they were called. The ladies belonging to, or classed in that category, presented, no doubt, a striking contrast to those of the succeeding series, in which the English element was not always conspicuous by its absence. The costumes of the latter were something wonderful to behold. The cloth skirt, which had then been recently introduced from England, and the cloth dress, draped elegantly over it, enabled their wearers to defy all kinds of weather. And as they went tramping down the muddy roads, their coquettish little hats daintily poised on enormous chignons, their walking boots displaying more than the regulation part of ankle, the less sophisticated Compiègnois stared with all their might at the strange company from the Château, and no wonder. Still, the surprise of the inhabitants was small compared to that of the troopers of the garrison at the invasion of their riding-school by such a contingent, which indulged in ring-tilting, not unfrequently in tent-pegging, and, more frequently still, "in taking a header into space," to the great amusement of their companions.

In those days, Worth was not quite king; the cocodettes of the Imperial circle were still prophesying on their own account. The "arsenal des modes," as Madame Émile de Girardin had boastingly called Paris but ten years previously, had as yet not been boldly taken by storm by a native of bucolic Lincolnshire. But in a very short time he became the absolute autocrat in matters of feminine apparel. It was not even an enlightened despotism. His will was law. Every different entertainment required its appropriate costume, and the costume was frequently the sole pretext for the entertainment. And when the ingenuity in devising both was in danger of becoming exhausted, the supreme resource of these ladies was to turn themselves into ballerinas; not into ballerinas as King Bomba, or the Comte Sosthène de la Rochefoucauld, or M. Rouher would have had them, but into ballerinas with the shortest of gauze skirts and pink silk fleshings.

One year, I am not certain of the exact one,—I know that the future Emperor of Germany was there,—the ladies hit upon the idea of giving a surprise to the Emperor and Empress on the occasion of the latter's fête-day. A ballet-master was sent for in hot haste from Paris, and "Le Diable à Quatre" put in rehearsal. Unlike Peter the Great, who had a soldier hanged—he said shooting was too good for him—for having represented a disreputable character on the stage, the Emperor professed himself exceedingly pleased; and the ladies, among whom was Princess von Metternich, were sent for from the Imperial box to be complimented by the sovereign. At the ball which followed the entertainment, they appeared in their theatrical dresses. Every one was delighted. "Après tout," said Napoléon, blinking his eyes, "avec cette manie des hommes de courir après des danseuses, il vaut mieux leur en fournir de bonne maison."

The philosophy was unassailable, and, to a certain extent, acted upon by its professor. Napoléon only admired dancers on the stage. He thought, with Balzac, that the extraordinary physical strain upon the lower extremities necessarily interfered with the intellectual development "at the other end." "L'esprit de la danseuse est dans ses jambes, et je n'aime pas les femmes bêtes," he remarked; for the Emperor, like most of the members of his family, did not scruple to apply the right word, when talking to his familiars.

Nevertheless, until he was assured of the stupidity of a woman by more intimate acquaintance, he was too much inclined to be attracted by the first handsome face he saw, or, to speak by the card, by the first handsome face he picked out for himself. The moment he was seated by the side of the Empress in the Imperial box, during one of those performances I mentioned just now, he swept the house with his opera-glass, and unerringly the glass stopped at what was really the handsomest woman in the house, whether she was seated on the tier with him or in the upper one—of course, I mean "the handsomest woman" among the strangers, because on such occasions the Emperor paid but little attention to those who were generally around him. The Empress was fain to put up with these peccadilloes: she could not be always running away to Schwalbach or to Scotland; besides, she knew that she would have to come back again. Some months previous to the performance of "Le Diable à Quatre," she went to the former place to hide her mortification. William of Prussia was at Baden-Baden at the time, and he immediately left the delightful society and the magnificent roulades of Pauline Lucca to offer his sympathies to the Griselda who had fled from her home troubles, forgetting that there was another one at home, who would have even been more glad of his company.

On the day after the shooting-party and the theatrical performance, there was generally an excursion to Pierrefonds, and afterwards to the magnificent Roman remains at Champlieu. In the evening there were charades and carpet dances as usual.

The third day was always reserved for the most important part of the programme—the stag-hunt. Candidly speaking, I doubt whether Napoléon, though a very excellent horseman, cared much for this sport, as conducted on the grand traditional lines of the French "code of vénerie." His main object personally was a good stiff run with the hounds, such as he had been used to in England, troubling himself little whether the pack kept the scent or not. In fact, there were generally two packs out, one of purely English breed, which was followed by the Emperor and his guests; the other French, followed by the serious lovers of sport, who, as a rule, caught at every pretext to get away from the magnificently apparelled crowd, driving or riding in the wake of the sovereign. Among the former there was a considerable sprinkling of the landed gentry of the neighbourhood, monarchists and legitimists to a man, some of whom did not even condescend to honour the Emperor with a salute. Compiègne, Sénart, etc., were, after all, public property, and they could do as they liked, though I have got an idea that this wilful slight was an instance of singular bad taste on the part of these

gentlemen.

The spot fixed for the meet was invariably the large clearing known as the Carrefour du Puits-du-Roi, whence radiated eight immense avenues, stretching as far as the uttermost confines of the forest of Compiègne. The spot, apart from its associations with royalty, from the days of Clovis up to our own, was admirably chosen, the mise-en-scène worthy of the greatest stage-manager on record. The huge centre itself was kept clear by the gendarmes de chasse—a cross between a mounted constable and a ranger—from any but the officers of the garrison on horseback and other persons privileged to join the Emperor's suite. Six of the avenues were free to the pedestrians, who could watch every movement from their vantage point; the seventh was set apart for carriages of all sorts, from the humble shandrydan of the local notary and doctor to the magnificent break of the neighbouring landed proprietor, or the less correctly but more showily appointed barouches of the leaders of provincial society, who rarely missed an opportunity of attending these gatherings, where there were so many chances of coming in contact with the court. Relegated for at least ten months of the year—allowing for an annual visit to the capital—to the dull, humdrum, though often pretentious round of entertainments of her own circle, the Comtesse d'Esbargnas,[69] whether young or old, handsome or the reverse, matron or widow, of patrician or plebeian origin, sedulously watched the yearly recurring time and tide that might lead to a permanent footing at the Tuileries. What has happened once may happen again. Agnès Sorel, Diane de Poitiers, Gabrielle d'Estrées, Louise de la Vallière, let alone Jeanne Bécu and Jeanne Poisson,[70] had by no means exhausted the possibilities of sudden elevations to within a step of the throne. These new aspirants would be content with a less giddy position. And who could say what might happen? Had not Alfred de Musset, the daring poet of "les grandes passions," written a play entitled "Il ne faut jurer de rien"? Assuredly what had happened once might happen again. Meanwhile the pleasure of watching all this splendour was worth coming for.

The latter proposition hardly admitted of discussion. The sight was truly worth coming for. Though the Imperial suite never made its appearance before one, the main arteries of the forest became crowded as early as eleven. Half an hour later came La Trace and La Feuille with their équipage.[71] The kennelmen and huntsmen in full dress gathered round a roaring fire, their hounds lying at their feet. The stablemen and grooms, in undress livery of green and brown, walking the hunters of the Emperor and his suite to and fro, presented a picture full of colour and animation.

As a rule the Imperial cortége was punctual on those occasions, though it was often remiss in that respect at gatherings of a different nature. Among the familiars at the Tuileries the blame for this general unpunctuality was attributed in an equal measure to both the Emperor and the Empress. The latter dressed very slowly, and the former wanted to dress too quickly. The result of this difference of habit was always manifest to the most casual observer. The Empress, after the most fatiguing day or soirée, always looked as if she had just left her dressing-room, the Emperor at the beginning of the same as if he had scarcely been in it. But on "grand hunt-days" the Empress was never a minute late; and the reason, apart from the natural wish to exercise "la politesse des rois," exactitude, was a curious one, but for the truth of which I can vouch. It gets dark early in November, and the Empress dreaded to be overtaken by darkness in the forest, even amidst a crowd. It reminded her of a disagreeable episode during her first stay at Compiègne, when she was still Mdlle. Eugénie de Montijo. She and her future husband had got separated from the rest of the party. It was never accurately known what happened, but she was found sitting quietly but sorely distressed on her horse by M. de Saint-Paul, the sub-ranger, who escorted her back to the Château. She explained her lonely and uncomfortable position by the fact that her companion's horse had suddenly taken the bit between its teeth. The explanation was a lame one, seeing that the Prince-President, on his return, hours before, had looked perfectly composed and not as much as mentioned her name. The truth leaked out afterwards. Enraged at Mdlle. de Montijo's refusal to grant him a clandestine interview for that night, her princely suitor had left her to find her way back as best she could.

Invariably, then, at the stroke of one, the Imperial procession was signalled, for it was nothing less than a procession. At its head rode the chief ranger of Compiègne, Baron de Wimpffen, in a magnificent hunting-coat of green and gold, the laced tricornered hat, surmounted by a bunch of black plumes, jackboots, and white doeskins. Then came the Imperial break, drawn by six horses, mounted by postilions in powdered wigs, the Imperial host and hostess on the front seat, the members of the family, or some illustrious guests, behind; the rest of the breaks were only four-horsed, and the procession was closed by the carriage of M. Hyrvoix, the chief of the secret police. In Paris this arrangement was reversed, and M. Hyrvoix, who had the rank of a prefect, and took his place as such at all public functions, preceded instead of following the Imperial carriage.

I am inclined to think, notwithstanding the frequent outcries against the secret police during the second empire, that M. Hyrvoix was a thoroughly upright and conscientious servant. Unfortunately for himself and his Imperial masters, his position was a difficult one; for though professedly employed to gauge public opinion with regard to the dynasty, his reports to that effect were not always received with the consideration due to honest truth, at any rate by the Empress. Throughout these pages, I have endeavoured as far as possible to jot down my recollections in a kind of chronological order, rather than in the order they occurred to me; but in this, as in many other instances, I have been obliged to anticipate the course of events lest they should slip my memory, for I had no documents to go by, and also to avoid unnecessary repetitions. This particular part of my somewhat disjointed narrative was meant to deal with the festivities at Compiègne and the company there; on reading it over, I find that it has developed into a fragment of biography of the Emperor and his Consort. As such, the following stories will throw a valuable side light on their different dispositions.

When the news of Emperor Maximilian's death reached Paris, there was the rumbling of a storm

which foreboded no good. For days before, there had been vague rumours of the catastrophe. It had been whispered at the annual distribution of prizes at the Collége de France, where one of the young Cavaignacs had refused to receive his reward at the hands of the Prince Imperial. In short, indignation was rife among all classes. The Empress, on hearing of the insult, had burst into hysterical tears, and been obliged to leave the reception-rooms. In short, a dark cloud hung over the Tuileries. I have spoken elsewhere of the Mexican expedition, so need not enlarge upon it here. We will take it that both Napoléon and his wife were altogether blameless in the affair—which was by no means the case, —but a moment's reflection ought to have shown them that appearances were against them, and that the discontent expressed was so far justified. I am under the impression that Napoléon himself looked at it in that way; he bowed to the storm; he regretted, but did not resent people speaking ill of him. Not so the Empress; the truth was only welcome to her when it flattered her; she really fancied herself an autocrat by the Grace of God, as the previous Bourbons interpreted the term. In spite of all that has been said about her amiability, about her charity, Eugénie was in reality cruel at heart. No woman, not cruel, could have taken the principal part in a scene which I will describe presently. But she was vindictive also, and, what was worse, blindly vindictive. Though firmly convinced that she reigned by right divine, she had felt more than once that private revenge on "the people" who abused her was beyond her power. She not only fretted accordingly, but often vented her wrath on the first victim that came to hand, albeit that the latter was generally the mere innocent conveyance through which the voice of "the people" reached her. M. Hyrvoix, in virtue of his functions, often found himself the echo of that voice. He was generally the first of all the officials to present his daily report. The Emperor gave him his cue by asking, "What do the people say?"

On that particular morning, after the death of Maximilian had become known, the answer came not as readily as usual; for the chief of the secret police was not in the habit of mincing matters. This time, however, M. Hyrvoix kept silent for a while, then replied, "The people do not say anything, sire."

Napoléon must have noticed the hesitating manner; for he said at once, "You are not telling me the truth. What do the people say?"

"Well, sire, if you wish to know, not only the people, but every one is deeply indignant and disgusted with the consequences of this unfortunate war. It is commented upon everywhere in the selfsame spirit. They say it is the fault of ——"

"The fault of whom?" repeated Napoléon.

Whereupon M. Hyrvoix kept silent once more.

"The fault of whom?" insisted Napoléon.

"Sire," stammered M. Hyrvoix, "in the time of Louis XVI. people said, 'It is the fault of the Austrian woman.'"

"Yes, go on."

"Under Napoléon III. people say, 'It is the fault of the Spanish woman.'"

The words had scarcely left M. Hyrvoix' lips, when a door leading to the inner apartments opened, and the Empress appeared on the threshold. "She looked like a beautiful fury," said M. Hyrvoix to his friend, from whom I have got the story. "She wore a white dressing-gown, her hair was waving on her shoulders, and her eyes shot flames. She hissed, rather than spoke, as she bounded towards me; and, ridiculous as it may seem, I felt afraid for the moment. 'You will please repeat what you said just now, M. Hyrvoix,' she gasped in a voice hoarse with anger.

"'Certainly, madame,' I replied, 'seeing that I am here to speak the truth, and, as such, your Majesty will pardon me. I told the Emperor that the Parisians spoke of "the Spanish woman," as they spoke seventy-five and eighty years ago of the Austrian woman.'"

"'The Spanish woman! the Spanish woman!' she jerked out three or four times—and I could see that her hands were clenched;—'I have become French, but I will show my enemies that I can be Spanish when occasion demands it.'

"With this she left as suddenly as she had come, taking no notice of the Emperor's uplifted hand to detain her. When the door closed upon her, I said to the Emperor, 'I am more than grieved, sire, that I spoke.'

"'You did your duty,' he said, grasping my hand."

As a matter of course, the threat to show her enemies that she could be Spanish when occasion required was, in this instance, an empty one, because "the enemies" happened to be legion. A scapegoat was found, however, in the honest functionary who had, in the exercise of his duty, frankly warned the Emperor of the ugly things that were said about her. Next morning, M. Hyrvoix was appointed Receiver-General for one of the departments—that is, exiled to the provinces.

This system of ostracism was indiscriminately applied to all who happened to offend her. Unfortunately, the slightest divergence of opinion on the most trifling matter was construed into an offence; hence in a few years the so-called counsellors around the Emperor were simply so many automata, moving at her will, and at her will only. Men who ventured to think for themselves were

removed, or else voluntarily retired from the precincts of the court sooner than submit to a tyranny, not based like that of Catherine II. or Elizabeth upon great intellectual gifts, but upon the wayward impulses of a woman in no way distinguished mentally from the meanest of her sex, except by an overweening ambition and an equally overweening conceit.

And as nothing is so apt to breed injustice as injustice, men, who might have proved the salvation of the Second Empire in its hour of direst need, were absolutely driven into opposition, and so blinded by resentment as to be unable to distinguish any longer between France and those who impelled her to her ruin.

Lest I should be taxed with exaggeration, a few instances among the many will suffice. One evening, in the course of those charades of which I have already spoken, some of the performers, both men and women, had thrown all decorum to the winds in their improvised dialogue. A young colonel, by no means strait-laced or a hypocrite, who was a great favourite with the Emperor and Empress, professed himself shocked, in the hearing of the latter, at so much licence in the presence of the sovereigns. In reality, it was an honest but indirect comment upon the Empress's blamable latitude in that respect. The Empress took up the cudgels for the offenders. "Vous n'êtes pas content, colonel; hé bien! je m'en *fiche*, *refiche* et *contrefiche*." ("You don't like it, colonel; well, I don't care a snap, nor two snaps, nor a thousand snaps."[72]) The Emperor laughed, and applauded his Consort; the colonel took the hint, and was seen at court no more. Shortly afterward he went to Mexico, where all who saw him at work concurred in saying that he was not only a most valuable soldier, but probably the only one in the French army, of those days, capable of handling large masses. Nevertheless, when the war of '70 broke out, he was still a colonel, and no attempt at offering him a command was made. The republicans, for once in a way, were wiser in their generation: at this hour he holds a high position in the army, and is destined to occupy a still higher. It was he who counselled Bazaine, in the beginning of the investment of Metz, to leave twenty or thirty thousand men behind to defend the fortress, and to break through with the rest. According to the best authorities of the German general staff, the advice, had it been followed, would have materially altered the state of affairs. It is not my intention to enlarge upon that soldier's career or capabilities; I have merely mentioned them to show that, when her resentment was roused, Eugénie threw all considerations for the welfare of France to the winds, and systematically ostracized men, whatever their merits; for I may add that the young colonel, at the time of the scene described above, was known to be one of the ablest of strategists.

We have heard a great deal of the Empress's charity. Truth to tell, that charity was often as indiscriminate as her anger; it was sporadic, largely admixed with the histrionic element, not unfrequently prompted by sentimentalism rather than by sentiment; and woe to him or to her who ventured to hint that it, the charity, was misplaced. In those days there was a prefect of police, M. Boitelle. He was a worthy man, endowed with a great deal of common sense, and, above all, honest to a degree. Belonging to the middle classes, he was free from the vulgar greed that so often distinguishes them in France; and, after leaving the army as a non-commissioned officer, had settled on a small farm left to him by his parents. Now, it so happened that M. de Persigny, whose real name was Fialin, had been a sergeant in the same regiment, and one day, after the advent of the Empire, being in the north, went to pay his former comrade a visit. I am perfectly certain that M. Boitelle, whom I knew, and with whose son I have continued the amicable relations subsisting between his father and myself, did not solicit any honours or appointment from the then powerful friend of the Emperor; nevertheless, Persigny appointed his fellow-messmate to the sub-prefectorship of St. Quentin. The emoluments, even in those days, were not large, but M. Boitelle was only a small farmer, and the promise of quick preferment may have induced him to leave his peaceful homestead; in short, M. Boitelle accepted, and, after several promotions, found himself at last at the Paris Prefecture of Police. In this instance the choice was really a good one. I have known a good many prefects of police, among others M. de Maupas, who officiated on the night of the Coup d'État, and who was also a personal friend; but I never knew one so thoroughly fitted for the arduous post as M. Boitelle. Though not a man of vast reading or brilliant education, he was essentially a man of the world in the best sense of the word. He was not a martinet, but a capable disciplinarian, and, what was better still, endowed with a feeling of great tolerance for the foibles of modern society. The soldier and the philosopher were so inextricably mixed up in him, that it would have been difficult to say where the one ended and the other began. M. de Maupas was at times too conscious of his own importance; there was too much of the French official in him. His successful co-operation in the Coup d'État had imbued him with an exaggerated notion of his own capabilities of "taking people by the scruff of the neck and running them in" (à empoigner les gens). An English friend of mine, to whom I introduced him, summed him up, perhaps, more fitly. "He is like the policeman who ran in a woman of sixty all by himself, and boasted that he could have done it if she had been eighty."

But M. Boitelle, though kind-hearted, had no sympathy whatsoever with mawkish philanthropy. The Empress, on the other hand, had absolute paroxysms of it. She was like the Spanish high-born dame who insisted upon a tombstone for the grave of a bull, the killing and torturing of which in the ring she had frantically applauded. One day she expressed her wish to M. Boitelle to pay a visit to Saint-Lazare. There is nothing analogous to that institution in England. The "unfortunate woman" who prowls about the streets before or after nightfall is—except in a few garrison towns—tacitly ignored by our legislators, and when she offends against the common law, treated by our magistrates like any other member of society. We have no establishments where the moral cancer eats deeper into the flesh and the mind by the very attempt to isolate those who suffer most from it; we have no system which virtually bars the way to a reformed life by having given official authority to sin, and by recording for evermore the names of those whom want alone compelled to have themselves inscribed as outcasts on those hellish registers. We have no Saint-Lazare, and Heaven be praised for it!

M. Boitelle knew the moral and mental state of most of the inmates of Saint-Lazare sufficiently well to foster no illusions with regard to the benefit to be derived by them from the solitary visit of so exalted a personage, while, on the other hand, he felt perfectly aware that it was morbid curiosity, however well disguised, that prompted the step. At the same time, the respect due to his sovereign made him reluctant to expose her, needlessly, to a possible, if not to a probable insult; in short, he considered the projected "tour of inspection" an ill-concerted one. He also knew that it would be idle to bring his fund of shrewd philosophy to bear upon the Empress, to make her relinquish her design, so he adopted instead the outspoken method of the soldier. "Whatever your charitable feelings may be for those who suffer, madame," he said, "your place is not among them." The words sound a shade more abrupt in French, but a moment's reflection would have shown the most fastidious lady that no offence on the speaker's part was intended. The Empress, however, drew herself up to her full height. "Charity can go any and everywhere, monsieur," she replied. "You will please take me to Saint-Lazare to-morrow."

I would fain say as little as possible about the occupants of that gloomy building at the top of the Faubourg St. Denis, but am compelled to state in common fairness that, when once they are incarcerated and behave themselves—of course, according to *their* lights—they are not treated with unnecessary harshness. I will go further, and say that they are treated more leniently than female prisoners in other penal establishments. The milder method is due to the presence in greater numbers than elsewhere of that admirable angel of patience, the Sister of Charity, who has no private grievances to avenge upon her own sex, who does not look upon the fallen woman as an erstwhile and unsuccessful rival for the favours of men, who consequently does not apply the *væ victis*, either by sign, deed, or word. During my long stay in Paris, I have been allowed to visit Saint-Lazare twice, and I can honestly say that, though the laws that relegate these women there are a disgrace to nineteenth-century civilization, their application inside Saint-Lazare is not at all brutal. This does not imply that they lie upon down beds, and that their food is of the most delicate description; but they are well cared for bodily. The Empress, however, in a gush of misplaced charity, thought fit to take objection to their daily meals not being concluded with dessert. Thereupon, M. Boitelle, whose sound common sense had already been severely tried during that morning, could not help smiling. "Really, madame," he said; "you allow your kindness to run away with your good sense. If they are to have a dessert, what are we to give to honest women?"

Next day, M. Boitelle was appointed a senator; that is, removed from his post as prefect of police, which he had so worthily filled, and where he had done a great deal of unostentatious good. The next time M. Boitelle came in contact with the Empress was at the last hour of the Empire, when he tried, but in vain, to overcome her resentment, caused by his unhappy speech of many years before.

Yet the woman who could indulge in sentiment about the absence of dessert in the Saint-Lazare refectory, would, at the end of the hunt, deliberately jump off her horse, plunge the gleaming knife in the throat of the panting stag, and revel in the sight of blood. Many who saw her do this argued that in the hour of danger she would as boldly face the enemies of herself and her dynasty. I need not say that they were utterly mistaken. She slunk away at the supreme hour; while the princess, whom she had presumed to teach the manners of a court, left like a princess in an open landau, preceded by an outrider. I am alluding to Princess Clotilde.

CHAPTER XVI.

The story of a celebrated sculptor and his model — David d'Angers at the funeral of Cortot, the sculptor — How I became acquainted with him — The sculptor leaves the funeral procession to speak to a woman — He tells me the story — David d'Angers' sympathy with Greece in her struggle for independence — When Botzaris falls at Missolonghi, he makes up his mind to carve his monument — Wishes to do something original — He finds his idea in the cemetery of Père-la-Chaise — In search of a model — Comes unexpectedly upon her in the Rue du Montparnasse, while in company of Victor Hugo — The model and her mother — The bronze Christ on the studio wall — David gives it to his model — The latter dismissed — A plot against the sculptor's life — His model saves him — He tries to find her and fails — Only meets with her when walking behind the hearse of Cortot — She appears utterly destitute — Loses sight of her again — Meets her on the outer boulevards with a nondescript of the worst character — He endeavours to rescue her, but fails — Canler, of the Paris police, reveals the tactics pursued with regard to "unfortunates" — David's exile and death — The Botzaris Monument is brought back to Paris to be restored — The model at the door of the exhibition — Her death.

In connection with the treatment of "fallen women" in Paris, I may give the following story, which becomes interesting in virtue of the personality of one of the actors. In 1843 the sculptor Cortot died, and I followed his funeral on foot, as was the custom in those days. I walked by the side of one of the greatest artists France, or, for that matter, the world, has ever produced—David d'Angers. The name of his native town was adopted to distinguish him from his celebrated namesake, the painter. I had become acquainted with the great sculptor a twelvemonth previously, in Delacroix's studio. All at once, as the procession went along the Quai Malaquais, I saw him start violently, and break through

what, for want of a more appropriate term, I must call the ranks of mourners. For a moment only; the next, he was back by my side: but I noticed that he was frightfully agitated. He probably saw my concern for him in my face, for, though I asked him no questions, he said of his own accord, "It is all right. I just caught sight of a woman who saved my life, and, by the looks of her, she is in great straits, but, by the time I got out of the crowd, she had disappeared. I have an idea of the errand she was bent upon, and will inquire to-morrow, but I am afraid it will be of very little use."

I kept silent for a moment or two, but my curiosity was aroused, for, I repeat, at that time, the artistic world was ringing with the name of David d'Angers.

"I did not know you had been in such great danger," I said at last.

"Very few people do know it," he replied sadly; "besides, it happened a good many years ago, when you were very young. The next time we meet I will tell you all about it."

A week or so afterwards, as I was leaving the Café de Paris one evening, and going to the tobacconist at the corner of the Rue Laffite, I ran against the celebrated sculptor. The weather was mild, and we sat outside Tortoni's, where he told me the story, part of which I give in his own words, as far as I can remember them after the lapse of more than forty years.

"If there were any need," he began, "to apologize to an Englishman for my sympathy with the Philhellenism which shortened the life of Byron, I might say that I sucked the principle of the independence of nations with the mother's milk, for I was born in 1789. Be that as it may, when Marcos Botzaris fell at Missolonghi I felt determined that he should have a monument worthy of his heroism and patriotism, as far as my talents could contribute to it. I was sufficiently young to be enthusiastic, and, at the same time, sufficiently presumptuous to imagine that I could do something which had never been done before. You have seen the engraving of the monument; you may judge for yourself how far I succeeded. But the idea of the composition, however out of the common, was, I am bound to admit, not the offspring of my own imagination. I was, perhaps, clever enough to see the poesy of it when presented to me, and to appropriate it; but the young, fragile girl lying on the tombstone and tracing the name of Marcos Botzaris was suggested to me by a scene I witnessed one day at Père-la-Chaise. I saw a child stooping over a gravestone, and trying to spell out the words carved on it. It was all I wanted. I own, from that moment, my composition took shape in my mind. I was, however, still at a loss where to find the ideal child. The little girl of whom I had caught a glimpse would not have done at all for my purpose, even if her parents would have consented to let her sit, which was not at all likely—she was the prosperous-looking demoiselle of a probably prosperous bourgeoise family, well-fed, plump, and not above seven or eight. I, on the contrary, wanted a girl double that age just budding into womanhood, but with the travail of the transition expressed in every feature, in every limb. She was to represent to the most casual observer the sufferings engendered by the struggle against tutelage for freedom. She was to bend over the tomb of Botzaris to drag the secret of that freedom from him. Dawning life was to drag the secret from the dead.

"That was my idea, and for several days I cudgelled my brain to find among my models one that would, physically and morally, represent all this. In vain; the grisettes of the Rue Fleurus and the Quartier-Latin, in spite of all that has been said of them by the poets and novelists of that time, were not at all the visible incarnations of lofty sentiment; whatever pain and grief an unrequited romantic passion might entail, they left no appreciable traces on their complexions or in their outline; they were saucy madams, and looked it. I had communicated my wants to some of my friends, and one of them sent me what he thought would suit. The face was certainly a very beautiful one, as an absolutely perfect ensemble of classical features I have never seen the like; but there was about as much expression in it as in my hand, and, as for the body, it was simply bursting out of its dress. I told her she would not do, and the reason why. 'Monsieur can't expect me to go into a consumption for two francs fifty an hour,' she remarked, bouncing out of the room.

"I was fast becoming a nuisance to all my cronies, when, one day, going to dine with Victor Hugo at La Mère Saget's, which was at the Barrière du Maine, I came unexpectedly, in the Rue du Montparnasse, upon the very girl for which I had been looking out for months. Notwithstanding her rags, she was simply charming. She was not above fourteen or fifteen, and, although very tall for her age, she had scarcely any flesh on her bones. I only knew her Christian name—Clémentine: I doubt whether she had any other. Next morning she came with her mother, an old hag, dissipation and drunkenness written in every line of her face. But the child herself was perfectly innocent—at any rate, as innocent as she could be with such a parent, and tractable to a degree. After a little while the old woman, tired of twirling her thumbs, disgusted, perhaps, at my want of hospitality in not offering her refreshments, left off accompanying her, Clémentine came henceforth alone.

"My studio was in the Rue de Fleurus in those days, and on the wall hung a very handsome bronze Christ on a velvet panel and in a dark satin frame. Curiously enough, I often caught the mother watching it; it seemed to have an irresistible fascination for her: and, one day, while the child was dressing, after two or three hours of hard work, she suddenly exclaimed, 'That's why my mother will not come here; she says she'd commit a robbery. She never leaves off talking about it. I wonder whether you'd like to part with it, M. David? A Christ like that would be beautiful in our attic. It would comfort and cheer me. If you like, I'll buy it of you. Of course, I have no money, but you can deduct it from my sittings. You can have as many as you like, not only for this statue, but for any other you may want later on.'

"We democrats, professed republicans, and more than suspected revolutionaries, are not credited by the majority with a great reverence for religious dogma; we are generally branded as absolute freethinkers, not to say atheists. This is frequently a mistake.[73] I have no occasion to recite my *credo* to you, but a great many of the republicans of '89 and of to-day were and are believers. At any rate, I fondly imagined that the Christ for which the mother and child were longing might exercise some salutary influence on their lives, so I simply took down the frame and its contents and handed them to her. She staggered under the weight. 'You want that Christ,' I said; 'here it is: and when you are tempted to do evil look at it, and think of me, who gave it you as a present.'

"'As a present?' she shrieked for joy; and hurried away as fast as her legs would carry her.

"In about six months from that day the statue was finished. I had no further need of Clémentine's services, and gradually all thought of her slipped from my mind. You may have heard that some time after my work was despatched to Greece, I was assaulted one night in the Rue Childebert, on my way to Gérard de Nerval's. My skull was split open in two places, I was left for dead in the street, and but for a workman who stumbled over me, took me home, and sat up with me until morning, I might not have lived to tell the tale. From the very first I suspected the identity of my assailant, though I have never breathed his name to any one. I am glad to say I never had many enemies, nor have I now, as far as I am aware; but I had offended the man by withholding my vote in a prize competition. He was, however, not responsible for his actions; for even at that time he must have been mad. A few years afterwards, the suspicion both of his madness and his attempt upon my life became a certainty, for he repeated the latter. You are very young, and youth is either very credulous or very sceptical. We should be neither. If what I am going to tell you now were to be represented to you at the Ambigu or Porte Saint-Martin, you, as an educated man, would shrug your shoulders, and look with a kind of good-natured contempt upon the grisette or workman or bourgeois who would sit spellbound and take it all in as so much gospel. Providence, fate, call it what you will, concocts more striking dramatic situations and a greater number of them than M. Scribe and all his compeers have constructed in the course of their professional careers. Listen, and you shall judge for yourself.

"About seven years after the attack in the Rue Childebert, I received a letter one morning, inviting me to attend a meeting that same night between twelve and one, at a house in the Faubourg Saint-Jacques, near the hospital of the Val-de-Grace. The letter told me how to proceed. There being no concierge in the house, I was to provide myself with a 'dark lantern,' and to go up four flights of stairs, where I should find a door with a cross chalked upon it. It would be opened by my giving a particular knock. My previous danger notwithstanding, I had not the least suspicion of this being a trap. I did not for one moment connect the letter with the other event, the recollection of which, strange as it may seem to you, did not obtrude itself at all then. But there was another reason for the absence of caution on my part. In one of its corners the letter bore a sign, not exactly that of a secret society, but agreed upon among certain patriots.

"In short, a little before twelve o'clock that night, I went to the place appointed. I had no difficulty in finding the house, and reached the fourth story without meeting a soul. There was the door, with the cross chalked on it. I knocked once, twice, without receiving an answer. Still, the thought of evil never entered my head. I began to think that I had been the victim of a hoax of some youngsters of the École des Beaux-Arts, most of whom were aware of my political opinions. I was just turning round to go down again, when a door by the side of that indicated was slowly opened, and a young girl with a lighted candle appeared on the threshold. Though both the candle and my lantern did not shed much light, I perceived that, at the sight of me, she turned very pale, but, until she spoke, I failed to recognize her. Then I saw it was Clémentine, my model. She scarcely gave me time to speak. 'It is you, M. David,' she said, in a voice trembling with fear and emotion. 'You,' she repeated. 'For Heaven's sake, go!—go as quickly as you can! If you stay another moment, you will be a corpse; for God's sake, go! And let me beg of you not to breathe a word of this to any one; if you do, my mother and I will pay for this with our lives. For God's sake, go. I did not know that you were the person expected. Go—go!'

"I do not think I answered a single word. I felt instinctively that this was no hoax, as I had imagined, but terrible reality. I went downstairs as fast as I could, but it was not until I got into the street that a connection between the two events presented itself to me. Then I decided to wait and watch. I hid myself in the doorway of a house a few steps away. Scarcely ten minutes had elapsed when half a dozen individuals arrived, one by one, and disappeared into the house that sheltered Clémentine and her mother. One of them, I feel sure, was the man whom I suspected of having attempted my life before. A few years more went by, during which I often thought of my former model; and then, one day, I felt I would like to see her again. In plain daylight this time, I repaired to the house of the Faubourg Saint-Jacques, clambered up the stairs, and knocked at the door I had such good cause to remember. The door was opened by a workman, and a rapid glance at the inside of the room showed me that he was a lastmaker. 'Mademoiselle Clémentine?' I asked. The man stared at me, and said, 'No such person lives here.' I made inquiries on all the lower floors—nobody had ever heard of her. Clémentine had disappeared. I never saw her again until a few days ago, when I walked by your side behind the body of Cortot. I should not have recognized her but for the bronze Christ she carried under her arm, and which attracted my notice. If what I surmise be correct, she must have reached the last stage of misery; for I feel convinced that nothing but absolute want would make her part with it. I have, however, failed to trace it in any of the bric-à-brac shops on the quays, and I believe that I have pretty well inquired at every one; so I must fain be content until fate throws her again across my path."

So far the story as told by the great sculptor himself. During the next eight years, in fact up to the Coup d'État, I met him frequently, and, curiously enough, rarely failed to inquire whether in his many

wanderings through Paris he had caught a glimpse of his former model. I felt unaccountably interested in the fate of that woman whom I had never seen, and, if we had been able to find her, would have endeavoured to find a decent home for her. But for about three years my inquiries always met with the same answer. Then, one evening in the latter end of '46 or beginning of '47, David told me that he had met her on the outer boulevards, arm in arm with one of those terrible nondescripts of which one is often compelled to speak again and again, and which, as far as I am aware, are nowhere to be found as a class except in the French metropolis and great provincial centres. Clémentine evidently wished to avoid David. A little while after, he met her again, and this time followed her, but, though by no means a coward, lacked the courage to enter the hovel into which she had disappeared with her companion. The last time he saw her was in the middle of '47, in the Rue des Boucheries. She seemed to have returned to her old quarters, and she was by herself. Until she spoke, David did not recognize her. Her face was positively seamed with horrible scars, "wounds inflicted by her lovers"—Heaven save the mark! She asked him to help her, and he did; but she had scarcely gone a few steps when she was arrested and taken to the prison of l'Abbaye de St. Germain, hard by, whither David followed to intercede for her. He was told to come back next morning, and that same evening communicated the affair to me. I decided there and then to accompany him, in order to carry out my plan of redeeming that human soul if possible. I failed, though through no fault of my own, but my attempt brought me in contact with a personage scarcely less interesting in his own way than David, namely, M. Canler, the future head of the Paris detective force. It was through him that I got an insight into some of the most revolting features of criminal life in Paris. But, before dealing with that subject, I wish to devote a few more lines to David, whom I had the honour of numbering among my friends till the day of his death, albeit that the last few years of his life were spent away from France, whither he returned, however, to die in '56. After the Coup d'État he was exiled by Louis-Napoléon—ostensibly, for his political opinions; in reality, because he had refused to finish the monument for Queen Hortense's tomb after her son's fiasco at Boulogne.

Writing about France and Frenchmen, I feel somewhat reluctant to make too lavish a use of the words "patriot" and "patriotism," especially with the patriots and the patriotism of the Third Republic around me. But I have no hesitation in saying that, to David d'Angers, these words meant something almost sacred. Sprung from exceedingly poor parents, he had amassed, by honest work, a fortune which, to men born in a higher sphere and with far more expensive tastes, might seem sufficient. Seeing that he was frugality and simplicity personified, that his income was mainly spent in alleviating distress, and that his daughter was even more simple-minded than her father, he had nothing to gain by the advent of a republic, nothing to lose by the establishment of a monarchy or empire, and his ardent championship of republican institutions—such as he conceived them—was prompted solely by his noble nature. That Louis-Napoléon should have exiled such a man was an error his warmest friends could scarcely forgive him. But David never complained, any more than he ever uttered a harsh word against the memory of Flaxman, who, in his youth, had shut his doors against him under the impression that he was a relation of Louis David who had voted for the death of Louis XVI. On the contrary, the memory of the great English sculptor was held in deep reverence.

And so David departed, a wanderer on the face of the earth with his daughter. He first endeavoured to settle in Brussels, but the irresistible desire to behold once more what he himself considered his greatest work, the monument to Marcos Botzaris, attracted him to Greece. A friend, to whom he communicated his intention, wrote to him, "Do not go." He gave him no further reason; he even withheld from him the fact that he had been at Missolonghi a twelvemonth previously. The explanation of this reticence may be gathered from David's letter to him a few days after his, David's, return. I have been allowed to copy it, and give it verbatim.

"Long before our vessel anchored near the spot where Byron died, I caught a glimpse of the tumulus erected at the foot of the bastion, in honour of Botzaris and his fellow-heroes. It made a small dark spot on the horizon, and above it was a speck, much smaller and perfectly white. I knew instinctively that this was my statue of the 'young Greek girl,' and I watched and watched with bated breath, fancying as the ship sped along that the speck moved. Of course, it was only my imagination, the presumptuous thought that the marble effigy would start into life at the approach of its creator.

"Alas, would I had proceeded no further—that I had been satisfied with the mirage instead of pushing on in hot haste towards the reality! For the reality was heart-rending, so heart-rending that I wept like a child, and clenched my fists like a giant in despair. The right hand of the statue, the index finger of which pointed to the name, had been broken; the ears had disappeared, one of the feet was broken to atoms, and the face slashed with knives. It was like the face of the girl that had sat for me, when I last saw it, under the circumstances which, you may remember, I told you. The whole was riddled with bullets, and some tourists, British ones probably, had cut their names on the back of the child. And so ends the most glorious chapter of my artist's career—the model itself fallen beyond redemption, the work mutilated beyond repair, the author of it in exile.

"I felt powerless to repair the mischief. I did not stay long. Perhaps I ought not to complain. I knew that Byron had been buried near the fortifications at Missolonghi, but all my efforts to find the spot have proved useless.[74] The house where he breathed his last had been pulled down. Why should the Greeks have more reverence for Botzaris or Mavrocordato than they had for the poet? and if these three are so little to them, what must I be, whose name they probably never heard? Still, as I stood at the stern of the departing vessel, I felt heart-broken. I have no illusions left."

I firmly believe that the injury done to the statue hastened David's death. His work has since been restored by M. Armand Toussaint, his favourite pupil, who gave his promise to that effect a few days before the great sculptor breathed his last. The monument was, however, not brought to Paris until

1861, and when M. Toussaint had finished his task, he invited the press and the friends of his famous master to judge of the results. It was at the door of his studio that I saw the woman, whose adventures I have told in the preceding notes, for the first time. A fortnight later, she died at the hospital of La Charité, at peace, I trust, with her Maker. "Fate, Providence, call it what you will," as David himself would have said, had brought me to the spot just in time to alleviate the last sufferings of one who, though not altogether irresponsible for her own errors, was to a still greater extent the victim of a system so iniquitous as to make the least serious-minded—provided he be endowed with the faintest spark of humanity—shudder. I allude to the system pursued by the Paris detective force in their hunt after criminals—a system not altogether abandoned yet, and the successful carrying out of which is paid for by the excruciating tortures inflicted upon defenceless though fallen women—but women still —by the *souteneur*. I refrain from Anglicizing the word; it will suggest itself after the perusal of the following facts, albeit that, fortunately with us, the creature itself does not exist as a class, and, what is worse, as a class recognized by those whose first and foremost duty it should be to destroy him root and branch.

The morning after Clémentine's arrest, David and I repaired to the prison of l'Abbaye Saint-German. When the sculptor sent in his name, the governor himself came out to receive us. But the woman was gone; she had been transferred, the previous night, to the dépôt of the préfecture de police, "where," he said, "if you make haste, you will still find her." He gave us a letter of introduction for the official charged to deal with refractory "filles soumises," or offending insoumises, because, then as now, these unfortunates were not tried by an ordinary police magistrate in open court, but summarily punished by said official, the sentences being subject, however, to revision or confirmation by his superior, the chief of the municipal police. Nay, the decisions were not even communicated to these women until they were safely lodged in Saint-Lazare, lest there should be a disturbance; for they were not examined one by one; and, as may be imagined, the contagion of revolt spread easily among those hysterical and benighted creatures.

When we reached the préfecture de police the judging was over, but, on our sending in our letter, we were admitted at once to the official's room. After David's description, he remembered the woman, and told us at once that she had not been sent to Saint-Lazare, but liberated. Some one had interceded for her—no less a personage than Canler, who, though at the time but a superintendent, was already fast springing into notice as a detective of no mean skill. "What had he done with her?" was David's question. "I could not tell you," was the courteous reply; "but I will give you his address, and he will no doubt give you all the information in his power and consistent with his duty." With this we were bowed out of the room.

We did not succeed in seeing Canler until two days afterwards, or, rather, on the evening of the second day; for, at that period, he was entrusted with the surveillance of the theatres on the Boulevard du Temple. I may have occasion to speak of him again, so I need not give his portrait here. He was about fifty, and, unlike one of his successors, M. Claude, the type of the old soldier. Of his honesty there never was, there could have never been, a doubt, nor was his intelligence ever questioned. And yet, this very honest, intelligent man, in his all-absorbing pursuit, the detection and chasing of criminals, was sufficiently dishonest and unintelligent to foster, if not to inaugurate, a system subversive of all morality.

David's name was a passport everywhere, and, no sooner had it been sent in, than Canler came out to him. The sculptor stated his business, and the police officer made a wry face. "I am afraid, M. David, I cannot help you in this instance. To speak plainly, I have restored her to her souteneur." We both opened our eyes very wide. "Yes," came the remark, "I know what you are going to say. I can sum up all your objections before you utter them. But I could not help myself; the fellow rendered me a service, and this was the price of it. Without his aid, one of the most desperate burglars in Paris would still be at large. As it is, I have got him safe under lock and key. Very shocking, no doubt; mais, à la guerre comme à la guerre." Then, seeing that we did not answer, he continued: "As a rule, I do not explain my tactics to everybody; but you, M. David, are not everybody, and, if you like to meet me when the theatre is over, I shall be pleased to have a chat with you."

At half-past twelve that night we were seated at a restaurant near the Porte Saint-Martin, and, after a few preliminary remarks, Canler explained.

However great an artist you may be, M. David, you could not produce a statue without the outlay for the marble, or for the casting of it in bronze. You, moreover, want to pay your *praticien*, who does the rough work for you. Our *praticiens* are the informers, and they want to be paid like the most honest workmen. The detection of crime means, no doubt, intelligence, but it means also money. Now, money is the very thing I have not got, and yet, when I accepted the functions I am at present fulfilling, I gave my promise to M. Delessert not to neglect the detective part of the business. I wish to keep my word, first of all, because I pledged it; secondly, because detection of crime is food and drink to me; thirdly, because I hope to be the head of the Paris detective force one day. The Government allows a ridiculously small sum every year for distribution among informers, and rewards among their own agents; it is something over thirty thousand francs, but not a sou of which ever reached my hands when I accepted my present appointment, and scarcely a sou of which reaches me now. I was, therefore, obliged to look out for auxiliaries, sufficiently disinterested to assist me gratuitously, but, knowing that absolute disinterestedness is very rare indeed, I looked for my collaborateurs among the very ones I was charged to watch, but who, in exchange for my protection in the event of their offending, were ready to peach upon their companions in crime and in vice. I need not trouble you by enumerating the various categories of my allies, but the souteneur, the most abject of them all, is,

perhaps, the most valuable.

"He is too lazy to work, and, as a rule, has not got the pluck of a mouse, consequently he rarely resorts to crime, requiring the smallest amount of energy or daring. He furthermore loves his Paris, where, according to his own lights, he enjoys himself and lives upon the fat of the land; all these reasons make him careful not to commit himself, albeit that at every minute of the day he comes in contact with everything that is vile. But he gets hold of their secrets, though the word is almost a misnomer, seeing that few of these desperadoes can hold their tongue about their own business, knowing all the while, as they must do, that their want of reticence virtually puts their heads into the halter. But if they have done 'a good stroke of business,' even if they do not brag about it in so many words, they must show their success by their sudden show of finery, by their treating of everybody all round, etc. The souteneur is, as it were, jealous of all this; for though he lives in comparative comfort from what his mistress gives him, he rarely makes a big haul. His mistress gone, the pot ceases to boil; in fact, he calls her his *marmite*. In a few days he is on his beams' ends, unless he has one in every different quarter, which is not often the case, though it happens now and then. But, at any rate, the incarceration of one of them makes a difference, and, under the circumstance, he repairs, as far as he dares, to the préfecture, and obtains her liberation in exchange for the address of a burglar or even a murderer who is wanted. I have known one who had perfected his system of obtaining information to such a degree as to be able to sell his secrets to his fellow-souteneurs when they had none of their own wherewith to propitiate the detectives. He has had as much as three or four hundred francs for one revelation of that kind, which means twenty or thirty times the sum the police would have awarded him. Of course, three or four hundred francs is a big sum for the souteneur to shell out; but, when the marmite is a good one, he sooner does that than be deprived of his revenues for six months or so. I have diverted some of those secrets into my own channel, and Clémentine's souteneur is one of my clients; that is why I gave her up. Very shocking, gentlemen, but à la guerre comme à la guerre."

M. Canler furthermore counselled us to leave Clémentine alone. He positively refused to give us any information as to her whereabouts; that is why I did not meet with her until five years after David's death, too late to be of any use to her in this world.

CHAPTER XVII.

Queen Victoria in Paris — The beginning of the era of middle-class excursions — English visitors before that — The British tourist of 1855 — The real revenge of Waterloo — The Englishman's French and the Frenchman's English — The opening of the Exhibition — The lord mayor and aldermen in Paris — The King of Portugal — All these considered so much "small fry" — Napoléon III. goes to Boulogne to welcome the Queen — The royal yacht is delayed — The French hotel proprietor the greatest artist in fleecing — The Italian, the Swiss, the German, mere bunglers in comparison — Napoléon III. before the arrival of the Queen — Pondering the past — Arrival of the Queen — The Queen lands, followed by Prince Albert and the royal children — The Emperor rides by the side of her carriage — Comments of the population — An old salt on the situation — An old soldier's retort — The general feeling — Arrival in Paris — The Parisians' reception of the Queen — A description of the route — The apartments of the Queen at St. Cloud — How the Queen spent Sunday — Visits the art section of the Exhibition on Monday — Ingres and Horace Vernet presented to her — Frenchmen's ignorance of English art in those days — English and French art critics — The Queen takes a carriage drive through Paris — Not a single cry of "Vive l'Angleterre!" a great many of "Vive la Reine" — England making a cats-paw of France — Deception at the Élysée-Bourbon — "Les Demoiselles de Saint-Cyr" at St. Cloud — Alexandre Dumas would have liked to see the Queen — Visit to Versailles — State-performances at the Opéra — Ball at the Hôtel de Ville — The Queen's dancing — Canrobert on "the Queen's dancing and her soldiers' fighting" — Another visit to the Exhibition — Béranger misses seeing the Queen — "I am not going to see the Queen, but the woman" — A review in the Champ-de-Mars — A visit to Napoléon's tomb — Jérôme's absence on the plea of illness — Marshal Vaillant's reply to the Emperor when the latter invites him to take Jérôme's place — His comments on the receptions given by the Emperor to foreign sovereigns — Fêtes at Versailles — Homeward.

Magnificent as were the quasi-private entertainments at Compiègne, and the more public ones at the Tuileries, they were as nothing to the series of fêtes on the occasion of Queen Victoria's visit to Paris, in 1855. For nearly three months before, the capital had assumed the aspect of a fair. The Exposition Universelle of '55 virtually inaugurated the era of "middle-class excursions," which since then have assumed such colossal proportions, especially with regard to the English. Previous to this the development of railways had naturally brought many of our countrymen to Paris, but they were of a different class from those who now invaded the French metropolis. They were either men of business bent on business, though not averse to enjoying themselves in the intervals, or else belonging or pretending to belong to "the upper ten," and travelling more or less *en grand seigneurs*.

They came singly, and left their cards at the Embassy, etc. The new visitors came in groups, though not necessarily acquainted or travelling with one another; they knew nothing of the Hôtel Meurice and the Hôtel Bristol or their traditions; they crowded the Palais-Royal and its cheap restaurants, and had, so to speak, no French at their command. Notwithstanding the exclamation of the Frenchman when he saw the statue of Wellington opposite Apsley House, it was then, and then only, that the *revanche* of Waterloo began. It has lasted ever since. It was '55 that marked the appearance in the shop-windows of small cards bearing the words, "English spoken here." Hitherto the English visitor to Paris was commonly supposed to have had a French tutor or governess, and though the French he or she did speak was somewhat trying to the ear, it was heavenly music compared to the English the Parisian shopkeeper now held it incumbent upon himself to "trot out" for the benefit of his customers, or that of the guide or valet de place, legions of whom infested the streets.

The Exhibition was opened on the 15th of May, but Queen Victoria was not expected until the middle of August. Meanwhile, the Parisians were treated to a sight of the Lord Mayor—Sir F. Moon, I believe—and the aldermen, who came in the beginning of June, and who were magnificently entertained by the Paris municipality, a deputation of which went as far as Boulogne to welcome them. Still, it was very evident that neither their visit nor that of the King of Portugal and his brother was to tax the ingenuity of upholsterers, carpenters, and caterers, or of the Parisians themselves in the matter of decoration; the watchword had apparently been given from the highest quarters to reserve their greatest efforts for what Napoléon up till then considered "the most glorious event of his reign." The Emperor, though he had gone to join the Empress, who was by this time known to be enceinte, at Eaux-Bonnes and Biarritz, returned to Paris at the end of July, and for more than a fortnight occupied himself personally and incessantly with the smallest details of the Queen's visit, the whole of the programme of which was settled by him.

I was one of the few privileged persons who travelled down to Boulogne with Louis-Napoléon, on Friday, the 17th of August, 1855. When we got to our destination, the yacht was not in sight, but we were already informed that, owing to its heavy tonnage, it would not be able to enter the harbour except at high tide, which would not be until 1 p.m., on Saturday. Shortly after that hour the vessel, accompanied by its flotilla, appeared in the offing; but the Queen remained on board, and we had to enjoy ourselves as best we could, which was not difficult, seeing that the whole of the town was absolutely in the streets, and that the latter were decidedly preferable to the stuffy attics at the hotels, for which we were charged the moderate sum of forty francs each. Uneventful as my life has been, it is only worth recording by reason of the celebrity of the persons with whom I have come in contact; nevertheless, I have travelled a good deal, and been present at a great many festive gatherings both in England and on the Continent. Commend me to the French hotel-proprietor for fleecing you in cold blood. The Swiss and the Italians, no mean masters of the art, are not in it with him; and as for the Germans, they are mere 'prentices compared with him. The Italian despoils you, like his countryman of operatic fame, Fra-Diavolo; the Swiss, like an English highwayman of the good old sort; the German, like a beggar who picks your pocket while you are looking in your purse for a coin to give him; the Frenchman, like the money-lender who is "not working for himself, but for a hard-hearted, relentless principal."

On the Saturday, the Emperor was astir betimes, and went to the camp occupied by the troops under the command of Marshal Baraguey-d'Hilliers. Louis-Napoléon's countenance was at all times difficult to read; I repeat, his eyes, like those of others, may have been "the windows of his soul," but their blinds were down most of the time. It was only at rare intervals that the impenetrable features were lighted up by a gleam from within, that the head, which generally inclined to the right, became erect. On that morning, the face was even a greater blank than usual. And yet that day, even to the fatalist he was, must have seemed a wonderful one; for the blind goddess of fortune, the "lucky star" in which he trusted, had never rewarded a mortal as she had rewarded him. A few years previously, during one of his presidential journeys, he had been hailed with enthusiasm at Strasburg, the city in which the scene of one of his bitterest fiascos had been laid. The contrast between those two days was startling indeed: on the one, he was hurried into a post-chaise as a prisoner to be taken to Paris, with an almost certain terrible fate overhanging him; on the other, he was greeted as the saviour of France, the Imperial Crown was within his grasp. But, startling as was this contrast, it could but have been mild compared to that which must have presented itself to his mind that autumn morning at Boulogne, when, a few hours later, the legions—his legions—took up their positions from Wimereux on the right to Porsel on the left, to do homage to the sovereign of a country which had been the most irreconcilable foe of the founder of his house; on the very heights at the foot of which he himself had failed to rouse the French to enthusiasm; on the very spot where he had become the laughing-stock of the world by his performance with that unfortunate tame eagle.

And yet, I repeat, not a gleam of pride or joy lighted up the Sphinx-like mask. To see this man standing there unmoved amidst the highest honours the world had to bestow, one could not help thinking of Voltaire's condemnation of fatalism as the guiding principal of life: "If perchance fatalism be the true doctrine, I would sooner be without such a cruel truth."

A regiment of lancers and one of dragoons lined the route from the landing-stage to the railway station, for in those days the trains did not stop alongside the boats; while on the bridge crossing the Liane, three hundred sappers, bearded like the Pard, shouldering their axes, wearing their white leathern aprons, stood in serried ranks, three deep.

The Queen's yacht had been timed to enter the harbour at one, but it was within a minute or so of two before it was moored amidst the salutes from the forts. The Emperor, who had been on horseback the whole of the morning—who, in fact, preferred that means of locomotion on all important

occasions, as it showed him off to greater advantage,—had been standing by the side of his charger. He crossed the gangway, beautifully upholstered in purple velvet and carpet to match, at once, and, after having kissed her hand, offered her his arm to assist her in landing, Prince Albert and the royal children coming immediately behind the Imperial host and his principal guest. A magnificent roomy barouche, capable of holding six persons and lined with white satin, but only drawn by two horses—such horses! for in that respect Napoléon had spent his time to advantage in England,—stood waiting to convey the Royal family. The Emperor himself, though, mounted his horse once more, and took his place by the right of the carriage, the left being taken by Marshal Baraguey-d'Hilliers. The head of the procession started amidst tremendous cheers from the crowd, but we who came on behind heard some curious comments upon this popular manifestation. Knowing that there would be a considerable delay in getting the train off, I walked instead of driving. I was accompanied by Lord ——, who was never averse to having his little joke. "Hé bien, mon ami," he said to an old weather-beaten sailor, who was short of his left leg—"hé bien, mon ami, nous voilà réconciliés."

"Oui, oui, je t'en fiche," was the answer; "mais puisqu'ils en sont à se faire des m'amours, ils devaient bien me rendre ma jambe que j'ai perdue dans leurs querelles."

"Imbécile," remarked an old soldier-looking man, who, though old, was evidently younger than the first speaker, and who was short of an arm, "ta jambe ne t'irait pas plus que mon bras; c'était ta jambe de garçon."

"C'est vrai," nodded the other philosophically; "tout de même, c'est drôle que nous nous soyons battus comme des chiens," pointing across the Channel in the direction of England, "pour en arriver à cela. Si le vieux (Napoléon I.) revenait, il serait rudement colère." And I may say at once that, notwithstanding the friendly attitude throughout of the rural as well as of the Parisian populations, that was the underlying sentiment. "Waterloo est arrangé, non pas vengé," said a Parisian; "il paraît qu'il y a des accommodements avec les rois, aussi bien qu'avec le ciel."

As a matter of course, we did not leave Boulogne much before three—the original arrangement had been for half-past one,—and when we reached Paris it was dark, too early for the illuminations which had been projected along the line of boulevards from the recently open Boulevard de Strasbourg to the Madeleine, not so much as a feature in the programme of reception, as in honour of the Queen generally. On the other hand, there was not sufficient daylight for the crowds to distinguish the sovereign's features, and a corresponding disappointment was the result. The lighted carriage lamps did not improve matters much. But the Parisians—to their credit be it said—knowing that Queen Victoria had expressed her wish to be conveyed to St. Cloud in an open carriage, instead of the closed State one used on such occasions, took note of the intention, and acknowledged it with ringing cheers. Victor Hugo has said that the Parisian loves to show his teeth—he must either be laughing or growling; and at the best of times it is an ungrateful task to analyse too thoroughly such manifestations of enthusiasm. There are always as many reasons why nations should hate as love each other. The sentiment, as expressed by the sailor and soldier alluded to just now, did exist—of that I feel sure; but amidst the truly fairy spectacle then presented to the masses that crowded the streets, it may have been forgotten for the moment.

For, in spite of the gathering darkness, the scene was almost unique. I have only seen another one like it, namely, when the troops returned from the Franco-Austrian War; and people much older than I declared that the next best one was that on the occasion of the return of the Bourbons in 1814.

Though the new northern station, erected on the site of the old, had been virtually finished for more than a twelvemonth, the approaches to it were, if not altogether magnificent projects, little more than magnificent mazes, stone and mortar Phœnixes, in the act of rising, not risen, from Brobdignagian dust-heaps, and altogether unfit for any kind of spectacular procession. Consequently, it had been decided to connect the northern with the eastern line immediately after entering the fortifications. The Strasbourg Station did not labour under the same disadvantages; the boulevard of that name stretched uninterruptedly as far as the Boulevard St. Denis, although, as yet, there were few houses on it. I have seen a good many displays of bunting in my time; I have seen Turin and Florence and Rome beflagged and decorated on the occasions of popular rejoicings; I have seen historical processions in the university towns of Utrecht and Leyden; I have seen triumphal entries in Brussels; I was in London on Thanksgiving day, but I have never beheld anything to compare with the wedged masses of people along the whole of the route, as far as the Bois de Boulogne, on that Saturday afternoon. The whole of the suburban population had, as it were, flocked into Paris. The regulars lined one side of the whole length of the Boulevards, the National Guards the other. And there was not a single house from the station to the southernmost corner of the Rue Royale that had not its emblems, its trophies, its inscriptions of "welcome." With that inborn taste which distinguishes the Parisians, the decorator had ceased trying to gild the gold and to paint the lily at that point, and had left the magnificent perspective to produce its own effect—a few Venetian masts along the Avenue de Champs-Élysées and nothing more. Among the notable features of the decorations in the main artery of Paris was the magnificent triumphal arch, erected by the management of the Opéra between the Rue de Richelieu and what is now the Rue Drouot. It rose to the fourth stories of the adjacent houses, and looked, not a temporary structure, but a monument intended to stand the wear and tear of ages. No description could convey an idea of its grandeur. The inside was draped throughout with bee-bespangled purple, the top was decorated with immense eagles, seemingly in full flight, and holding between their talons proportionately large scutcheons, bearing the interlaced monograms of the Imperial hosts and the Royal guests. In front of the Passage de l'Opéra stood an allegorical statue, on a very beautiful pedestal draped with flags; and further on, at the back of the Opéra-Comique, which really should have been its front,[75] an obelisk, the base of which was a correct representation, in

miniature, of the Palais de l'Industrie (the then Exhibition Building). By the Madeleine a battalion of the National Guards had erected, at their own cost, two more allegorical statues, France and England. A deputation from the National Guards had also presented her Majesty with a magnificent bouquet on alighting from the train.

By a very delicate attention, the private apartments of the Queen had, in many ways, been made to look as much as possible like those at Windsor Castle; and where this transformation was found impossible by reason of their style of decoration—such as, for instance, in the former boudoir of Marie-Antoinette,—the mural paintings and those of the ceiling had been restored by two renowned artists. In addition to this, the most valuable pictures had been borrowed from the Louvre to enhance the splendour of the reception and dining rooms, while none but crack regiments in full dress were told off for duty.

The day after the Queen's arrival being Sunday, the entertainment after dinner consisted solely of a private concert; on the Monday the Queen visited the Fine Arts' Section of the Exhibition, which was located in a separate building at the top of the Avenue Montaigne, and connected with the main structure by beautifully laid-out gardens. The Queen spent several hours among the modern masterpieces of all nations, and two French artists had the honour of being presented. I will not be certain of the names, because I was not there, but, as far as I can remember, they were Ingres and Horace Vernet.

While on the subject of art, I cannot help digressing for a moment. I may take it that in 1855 a good many Englishmen of the better middle classes, though not exactly amateurs or connoisseurs of pictures, were acquainted with the names, if not with the works, of the French masters of the modern school. Well, in that same year, the English school burst upon the corresponding classes in France like a revelation—nay, I may go further still, and unhesitatingly affirm that not a few critics, and those of the best, shared the astonishment of the non-professional multitude. They had heard of Sir Joshua Reynolds and Gainsborough, perhaps of Turner, but Constable and Moreland, Wilkie and Webster, Mulready, and the rest of the younger school, were simply so many names. But when the critics did become aware of their existence, their criticisms were simply a delightful series of essays, guiding the most ignorant to a due appreciation of those Englishmen's talents, not stinting praise, but by no means withholding blame, instinctively focussing merits and defects in a few brilliant paragraphs, which detected the painter's intention and conception as well as his execution both from a technical, as well as dramatic, graphic, and pictorial point of view; which showed, not only the influence of general surroundings, but dissected the result of individual tendencies. Many a time since, when wading through the adipose as well as verbose columns dealing with similar subjects in English newspapers, have I longed for the literary fleshpots of France, which contained and contain real nourishing substance, not the fatty degeneration of an ignoramus's brain, and, what is worse, of an ignoramus who speaks in numbers from a less valid reason than Pope's; for the most repellant peculiarity of these effusions are the numbers. It would seem that these would-be critics, having no more than the ordinary auctioneer's intellect, endeavour as much as possible to assimilate their effusions to a catalogue. They are an abomination to the man who can write, though he may know nothing about painting, and to the man who knows about painting and cannot write. The pictorial art of England must indeed be a hardy plant to have survived the approval and the disapproval of these barbarians.

To come back to the Queen, who, after leaving the Palais de l'Industrie, drove to several points of interest in Paris, notably to la Sainte-Chapelle. The route taken was by the Rue de Rivoli and the Pont-Neuf; the return journey was effected by the Pont-aux-Changes and the eastern end of the same street, which had only been opened recently, as far as the Place de la Bastille. Then, and then only, her Majesty caught sight of the Boulevards in the whole of their extent. The decorations of the previous day but one had not been touched, and the crowds were simply one tightly wedged-in mass of humanity. A journalistic friend had procured me a *permis de circuler*—in other words, "a police pass,"—and I made the way from the Boulevard Beaumarchais to Tortoni on foot. It may be interesting to those who are always prating about the friendship between England and France to know that I heard not a single cry of "Vive l'Angleterre!" On the other hand, I heard a great many of "Vive la Reine!" Even the unthinking crowd, though yielding to the excitement of the moment, seemed to distinguish between the country and her ruler. I am not commenting upon this: I am merely stating a fact. Probably it is not England's fault that she has not been able to inspire the French nation as a whole with anything like a friendly feeling, but it is as well to point it out. During the whole of the Crimean War, nine out of every ten educated Frenchmen openly asserted that France had been made a cat's-paw by England, that the alliance was one forced upon the nation by Napoléon from dynastic and personal, rather than from patriotic and national, motives; there were some who, at the moment of the Queen's visit, had the candour to say that this, and this only, would be France's reward for the blood and money spent in the struggle. At the same time, it is but fair to state that these very men spoke both with admiration and respect of England's sovereign.

At three o'clock there was a brilliant reception at the Élysée, when the members of the corps diplomatique accredited to the Tuileries were presented to the Queen. Shortly after five her Majesty returned to Saint-Cloud, where, in the evening, the actors of the Comédie-Française gave, at the Queen's special request, a performance of "Les Demoiselles de Saint-Cyr." She had seen the piece in London, and been so pleased with it that she wished to see it again. Though I was on very intimate terms with Dumas, we had not met for several weeks, which was not wonderful, seeing that I was frequently appealed to by the son himself for news of his father. "What has become of him? He might be at the antipodes for all I see of him," said Alexandre II. about a dozen times a year. However, two

or three days after the performance at Saint-Cloud, I ran against him in the Chaussée d'Antin. "Well, you ought to be pleased," I said; "it appears that not only has the Queen asked to see your piece, which she had already seen in London, but that she enjoyed it even much better the second than the first time."

"C'est comme son auteur," he replied: "plus on le connait, plus on l'aime. Je sais pourtant bien ce qui l'aurait amusée même d'avantage que de voir ma pièce, c'eut été de me voir moi-même, et franchement, ça m'aurait amusé aussi."

"Then why did not you ask for an audience? I am certain it would have been granted," I remarked, because I felt convinced that her Majesty would have been only too pleased to confer an honour upon such a man.

"En effet, j'y ai pensé," came the reply; "une femme aussi remarquable et qui deviendra probablement la plus grande femme du siècle aurait du se rencontrer avec le plus grand homme en France, mais j'ai eu peur qu'on ne me traite comme Madame de Staël traitât Saint-Simon. C'est dommage, parcequ'elle s'en ira sans avoir vu ce qu'il y de mieux dans notre pays, Alexandre, Roi du Monde romanesque, Dumas l'ignorant." Then he roared with laughter and went away.[76]

On Tuesday, the 21st, the Queen went to Versailles to inspect the picture-galleries established there by Louis-Philippe, and, in the evening, she was present at a gala-performance at the Opéra. Next day, she paid a second visit to the Palais de l'Industrie, but to the industrial section only. In the evening, there was a performance of "Le Fils de Famille" ("The Queen's Shilling"). On the 23rd, she spent several hours at the Louvre; after which, at night, she attended the ball given in her honour by the Municipality of Paris. I shall not attempt to describe that entertainment, the decorations and flowers of which alone cost three hundred and fifty thousand francs. The whole had been arranged under the superintendence of Ballard, the architect of the Halles Centrales. But I remember one little incident which caused a flutter of surprise among the court ladies, who, even at that time, had already left off dancing in the pretty old-fashioned way, and merely walked through their quadrilles. The royal matron of thirty-five, with a goodly family growing up around her, executed every step as her dancing master had taught her, and with none of the listlessness that was supposed to be the "correct thing." I was standing close to Canrobert, who had been recalled to resume his functions near the Emperor. After watching the Queen for a minute or so, he turned round to the lady on his arm. "Pardi, elle danse comme ses soldats se battent, 'en veux-tu, en voilà;' et corrects jusqu'à la fin." There never was a greater admirer of the English soldier than Canrobert. The splendour of that fête at the Hôtel-de-Ville has only been surpassed once, in 1867, when the civic fathers entertained a whole batch of sovereigns.

On the 24th, there was a third visit to the Exhibition, and I remember eight magnificent carriages passing down the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. They were, however, only drawn by two horses each. I was making my way to the Champ de Mars, where a review was to be held in honour of her Majesty, and had told the cab to wait in the Rue Beaujon, while I stepped into the main road to have a look at the beautiful scene. The moment the carriages were past I returned to the Rue Beaujon, and ran up against Béranger, who was living there. The old man seemed in a great hurry, which was rather surprising, because he was essentially phlegmatic, and rarely put himself out for anything. So I asked him the reason of his haste. "I want to see your queen," he replied. A year or two before he had refused to go to the Tuileries to see the Empress, who had sent for him; and the latter, who could be most charming when she liked, had paid him a visit instead.

"I thought you did not trouble yourself much about royalty," I remarked. "You refused to go and see the Empress, and you rush along to see the Queen?"

"Non; je vais voir la femme: s'il y avait beaucoup de femmes comme elle, je leur pardonnerais d'être reines."

Her Majesty has never heard of this. It was the most magnificent and, at the same time, most witty tribute to her private virtues. All this happened many, many years ago. Since then I have often wondered why Prince Albert, who, I feel certain, knew the worth of all these men as well as he knew the merit of the littérateurs of his own country, did not suggest to his august consort a reception such as she gave to the corps diplomatique. It would have been a most original thing to do; the recollection of it would have been more delightful even than the most vivid recollections of that very wonderful week.

In those days, France was still looked upon as the first military power in Europe. Her soldiers were probably not superior to those who fell in the Franco-German war, but their prestige had not been questioned. They were also more sightly than the ill-clad legions of the Third Republic, so the review was a very splendid affair. At its termination, her Majesty repaired to the Invalides, to the tomb of Napoléon, which, though it had been begun, as I have incidentally stated, under the premiership of M. Guizot in 1846-47, was not finished then, and only officially inaugurated nearly six years afterwards.

My ticket for the review had been given to me by Marshal Vaillant, the minister for war, and the only Marshal of the Second Empire with whom I was, at that time, intimately acquainted; though I became on very friendly terms with Marshals MacMahon and Lebrun subsequently.

I will devote, by-and-by, a few notes to this most original soldier-figure—he was only a type in some respects; meanwhile, I may mention here an anecdote, in connection with this visit of the Queen,

characteristic of the man. The governor of the Invalides was the late King of Westphalia, Jérôme Bonaparte. It was but natural that he should have been chosen as the custodian of his brother's last resting-place. It was equally natural that he should feel reluctant to meet at that tomb the sovereign of a country which, he considered, had tortured that brother to death. Consequently the last survivor of the elder Bonapartes, the one who had also fought at Waterloo, foreseeing, as it were, this pilgrimage on the part of her Majesty, had, a fortnight or so before the date of her intended visit, gone to Havre, whither he had been ordered by his doctor on account of his health, and whence he only returned when the Queen of England had left France.

The deputy-governor of the Invalides was, perhaps, not considered sufficiently important to do the honours to so illustrious a visitor, and Marshal Vaillant was sounded whether he would undertake the functions. He declined. "Je n'ai pas l'honneur, sire," he said, "d'appartenir à votre illustre famille et personne sauf la famille d'un grand homme a le droit d'oublier les souffrances que ses ennemis lui ont infligées." He was an honest, upright soldier, abrupt and self-willed, but kindly withal, and plainly perceived the faults of Louis-Napoléon's policy and of his frequently misplaced generosity—above all, of his system of conciliating the sovereigns of Europe by fêtes and entertainments. "Quand l'autre leur donnait des fêtes et des représentations de théâtre, c'était chez eux, et pas chez nous, ils en payaient les frais." More of him in a little while.

At the Queen's first visit to Versailles—the second took place on the Saturday before she left—she had been deeply moved at the sight of the picture representing her welcome at Eu by Louis-Philippe, to which ceremony I alluded in one of my former notes. But even before this she had expressed a wish to see the ruins of the Château de Neuilly, and the commemorative chapel erected on the spot where the Duc d'Orléans met with his fatal accident. "La femme qui est si fidèle à ses vieilles amitiés au milieu des nouvelles, surtout quand il s'agit de dynasties rivales, comme en ce moment, et quand cette femme est une reine, cette femme est une amie bien précieuse," said Jérôme's son. Both the Emperor and the Empress found that their cousin had spoken truly.

Saturday, the 25th, had been fixed for the fête at Versailles. In the morning, the Queen went to the palace of Saint-Germain, which no English sovereign had visited since James II. lived there. She returned to Saint-Cloud, and thence to the magnificent abode of Louis XIV., which she reached after dark—the Place d'Armes and the whole of the erstwhile royal residence being brilliantly illuminated.

The Imperial and Royal party entered by the Marble Court, in the centre of which the pedestal to the statue of Louis XIV. had been decorated with the rarest flowers. The magnificent marble staircase had, however, been laid with thick purple carpets, and the balustrades almost disappeared beneath masses of exotics; it was the first time, if I remember rightly, that I had seen mosses and ferns and foliage in such profusion. The Cent Gardes and the Guides de l'Impératrice were on duty, the former on the staircase itself, the latter below, in the vestibule. At the top, to the right and left, the private apartments of the Empress had been arranged, the Queen occupied those formerly belonging to Marie-Antoinette. I was enabled to see these a few days later; they were the most perfect specimens of the decorative art that flourished under Louis XVI. I have ever beheld. The boudoir was upholstered in light blue, festoons of roses running along the walls, and priceless Dresden groups distributed everywhere; the dressing-rooms were hung with pale green, with garlands upon garlands of violets. The toilet service was of Sèvres, with medallions after Lancret and Watteau. The historical Salle de l'Œil-de-Bœuf, which preceded her Majesty's apartments, had been transformed into a splendid reception-room for the use of the Imperial hosts and all their Royal guests, for there were one or two foreign princes besides, notably Prince Adalbert of Bavaria.

The ball was to take place in the famous Galerie des Glaces; the Empress herself had presided at its transformation, which had been inspired by a well-known print of "Une Fête sous Louis Quinze." More garlands of roses, but this time drooping from the ceiling and connecting the forty splendid lustres, which, together with the candelabra on the walls, could not have contained less than three thousand wax candles. At each of the four angles of the vast apartment a small orchestra had been erected, but very high up, and surrounded by a network of gilt wire.

At the stroke of ten those wonderful gardens became all of a sudden ablaze with rockets and Chinese candles; it was the beginning of the fireworks, the principal piece of which represented Windsor Castle. After this, the ball was opened by the Queen and the Emperor, the Empress and Prince Albert; but though the example had been given, there was very little dancing. I was a comparatively young man then, but I was too busy feasting my eyes with the marvellous toilettes to pay much heed to the seductive strains, which at other times would have set me tripping. I fancy this was the case with most of the guests.

On the Monday the Queen left for home.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Marshal Vaillant — The beginning of our acquaintance — His stories of the swashbucklers of the First Empire, and the beaux of the Restauration — Rabelaisian, but clever — Marshal Vaillant neither a swashbuckler nor a beau; hated both — Never cherished the slightest illusions about the efficiency of the French army — Acknowledged himself unable to effect the desired and necessary

reforms — To do that, a minister of war must become a fixture — Why he stayed — Careful of the public moneys, and of the Emperor's also — Napoléon III.'s lavishness — An instance of it — Vaillant never dazzled by the grandeur of court entertainments — Not dazzled by anything — His hatred of wind-bags — Prince de Canino — Matutinal interviews — Prince de Canino sends his seconds — Vaillant declines the meeting, and gives his reason — Vaillant abrupt at the best of times — A freezing reception — A comic interview — Attempts to shirk military duty — Tricks — Mistakes — A story in point — More tricks — Sham ailments: how the marshal dealt with them — When the marshal was not in an amiable mood — Another interview — Vaillant's tactics — "D——d annoying to be wrong" — The marshal fond of science — A very interesting scientific phenomenon himself — Science under the later Bourbons — Suspicion of the soldiers of the Empire — The priesthood and the police — The most godless republic preferable to a continuance of their régime — The marshal's dog, Brusca — Her dislike to civilians — Brusca's chastity — Vaillant's objection to insufficiently prepaid letters — His habit of missing the train, notwithstanding his precautions — His objection to fuss and public honours.

About two or three days after the ball at Versailles, I went to see Marshal Vaillant at the War Office, to thank him for his kindness in sending me the ticket for the review. Our acquaintance was already then of a couple of years' standing. It had begun at Dr. Véron's, who lived, at the time, at the corner of the Rue de Rivoli and the Rue de Castiglione. The old soldier—he was over sixty then—had a very good memory, and used to tell me garrison stories, love-adventures of the handsome swashbucklers of the First Empire and of the beaux of the Restauration. The language was frequently that of Rabelais or Molière, vigorous, to the point, calling a spade a spade, and, as such, not particularly adapted to these notes, but the narrator himself was neither a swashbuckler nor a beau; he hated the carpet-knight only one degree more than the sabreur, and when both were combined in the same man—not an unusual thing during the Second Empire, especially after the Crimean and Franco-Austrian wars—he simply loathed him. He fostered not the slightest illusions about the efficiency of the French army, albeit that, to an alien like myself and notwithstanding his friendship for me, he would veil his strictures. At the same time, he frankly acknowledged himself unable to effect the desired reforms. "It wants, first of all, a younger and abler man than I am; secondly, he must become a fixture. No change of ministry, no political vicissitudes ought to affect him. I do not play a political rôle, and never mean to play one; and if I could find a man who would carry out the reforms at the War Office, or, rather, reorganize the whole as it should be reorganized, I would make room for him to-morrow. I know what you are going to say. I derive a very comfortable income from my various offices, and I am a pluralist. If I did not take the money, some one else would who has not got a scrap more talent than I have. There is not a single man who dare tell the nation that its army is rotten to the core, that there is not a general who knows as much as a mere captain in the Austrian and Prussian armies; and if he had the courage to tell the nation, he would be hounded out of the country, his life would be made a burden to him. That is one of the reasons why I am staying, because I can do no good by going; on the contrary, I might do a good deal of harm. Because, as you see it, the three hundred and fifty thousand francs of my different appointments, I save them by looking after the money of the State. Not that I can do much, but I do what I can."

That was very true: he was very careful of the public moneys, and of the resources of the Emperor also, entrusted to him by virtue of his position as Grand-Maréchal du Palais; it was equally true that he could not do much. Napoléon was, by nature, lavish and soft-hearted; as a consequence, he became the butt of every impostor who could get a letter conveyed to him. His civil list of over a million and a half sterling was never sufficient. He himself was simple enough in his tastes, but he knew that pomp and state were dear to the heart of Frenchmen, and he indulged them accordingly. But his charity was a personal matter. He could have no more done without it than without his eternal cigarette. He called the latter "safety-valve of the brain; the former the safety-valve of pride." I remember an anecdote which was told to me by some one who was in his immediate entourage when he was only President. It was on the eve of a journey to some provincial town, and at the termination of a cabinet council. While talking to some of his ministers, he took a couple of five-franc pieces from his waistcoat, and spun them English fashion. "C'est tout ce qui me reste pour mon voyage de demain, messieurs," he said, smiling. One of them, M. Ferdinand Barrot, saw that he was in earnest, and borrowed ten thousand francs, which the President found on his dressing-table when retiring for the night. Four and twenty hours after, Napoléon had not even his two five-franc pieces: they and M. Barrot's loan had disappeared in subscriptions to local charities. Among the papers found at the Tuileries after the Emperor's flight, there were over two thousand begging letters, all dated within a twelvemonth, and all marked with their answer in the corner—that is, with the amount sent in reply. That sum amounted to not less than sixty thousand francs. And be it remembered that these were the petitions the Emperor had not entrusted to his secretaries or ministers as coming within their domain. The words of Marshal Vaillant, spoken many years before, "I cannot do much, but I do what I can," are sufficiently explained.

On the day alluded to above, the marshal was seriously complaining of the Emperor's extravagance. He did not hold with entertaining so many sovereigns. "I do not say this," he added, "with regard to yours, for her hospitality deserved such return as the Emperor gave her; but with regard to the others who will come, you may be sure, if we last long enough. Well, we'll see; perhaps you'll remember my words."

In fact, the old soldier was never much dazzled by the grandeur of those entertainments, nor did he foster many illusions with regard to their true value in cementing international friendships. The marshal was not dazzled by anything; and though deferential enough to the members of the emperor's family, he never scrupled to tell them his mind. The Emperor's cousin (Plon-Plon) could tell some curious stories to that effect. The marshal had a hatred of long-winded people, and especially of what Carlyle calls wind-bags. Another of Louis-Napoléon's cousins came decidedly under the latter description: I allude to the Prince de Canino. In order to get rid as much as possible of wordy visitors, Vaillant had hit upon the method of granting them their interviews at a *very, very* early hour in the morning; in the summer at 6.30 in the morning, in the winter at 7.15. "People do not like getting out of bed at that time, unless they have something serious to communicate," he said; and would not relax his rule, even for the softer sex. The old warrior, who had probably been an early riser all his life, found the arrangement work so well, that he determined at last not to make any exceptions. "I get the day to myself," he laughed. Now, it so happened that the Prince de Canino asked him for an interview; and, as a matter of course, Vaillant appointed the usual hour. Next morning, to Vaillant's great surprise, instead of the Prince, came two of his friends. The latter came to ask satisfaction of Vaillant for having dared to disturb a personage of the Prince's importance at so early an hour. "Mais je ne l'ai pas dérangé du tout: il n'avait qu'à ne pas venir, ce que du reste, il a fait," said Vaillant; then he added, "Mais, même, si je consentais à donner raison au prince de mon offense imaginaire, je ne me battrai pas à quatre heures de l'après-midi; donc, il aurait à se déranger; il vaut mieux qu'il reste dans son lit. Je vous salue, messieurs." With which he bowed them out. When the Emperor heard of it, he laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks, and Napoléon did not laugh outright very often or easily.

There are a great many stories about this objection of Marshal Vaillant to be troubled for nothing; and, as usual, they overshoot the mark. He is supposed to have acted very cavalierly with highly placed personages, and even with ladies in very high society. Of course, I was never present at interviews of that kind, but during my long acquaintance with him, I was often seated at his side when less exalted visitors were admitted. At the best of times his manner was abrupt, though rarely rude, unless there was a reason for it, albeit that the outsider might fail to fathom it at the first blush. I remember being with him in his private room, somewhere about the sixties, when his attendant brought him a card.

"Show the gentleman in," said Vaillant, after having looked at it.

Enter, a tall, well-dressed individual, the rosette of the Legion of Honour in his button-hole, evidently a retired officer.

"What is it you want with me?" asked the marshal, who had remained seated with his back towards the visitor.

"Being in Paris for the Christmas and New Year's holidays, your excellency, I thought it my duty to pay my respects to you."

"Is that all you want with me?" asked the marshal.

"That is all, your excellency," stammered the visitor.

"Very well: then I'll wish you good morning."

I suppose I must have looked somewhat shocked at this very unceremonious proceeding, for, when the door was closed, the marshal explained.

"You need not think that I have done him an injustice. When fellows like this present their respects it always means that they want me to present them with something else; that is why I cut them short."

Sometimes these interviews took a comical turn, for the marshal could be very witty when he liked. In the land of "equality," everybody is always on the look-out for greater privileges than his fellows, and in no case were and are favours more indiscriminately requested than with the view of avoiding military service. A thousand various pretexts, most of them utterly ridiculous, were brought forward by the parents to preserve their precious sons from the hated barrack life. In many instances, a few years of soldiering would have done those young hopefuls a great deal of good, because those who clamoured loudest for exemption were only spending their time in idleness and mischief. In the provinces there was a chance of influencing the *conseil de révision* by means of the préfet, if the parents were known to be favourable to the government; by means of the bishops, if they still had a hankering after the former dynasties; and, not to mince matters, if they were simply rich, by means of bribery. In Paris the matter was somewhat more difficult; the members of the council were frequently changed at the last moment, and at all times the recruits to be examined were too numerous for a parent to trust to the memory of those members. The military authorities had introduced a new rule, to the effect that the names of the recruits to be examined should not be called out until their examination was finished; and, with the best will in the world, it is often difficult to distinguish between un fils de famille and a downright plebeian if both happen to come before you "as God made them." Consequently, notwithstanding the considerable ingenuity of the parties interested to let the examining surgeon-major known "who was who," mistakes frequently occurred; the young artisan, who had no more the matter with him than the young wealthy bourgeois, was dismissed as unfit for the service, while the latter was pronounced apt in every respect.

Apropos of this, I know a good story, for the truth of which I can vouch, because it happened to a

member of the family with which I became connected by marriage afterwards. He had a son who was of the same age as his coachman's. Both the lads went to draw at the same time, both drew low numbers. The substitute system was still in force, but, just at that moment, there was a war-scare—not without foundation—and substitutes reached high prices. It would not have mattered much to the rich man. Unfortunately, he was tight-fisted, and the mother pleaded in vain. The wife was just as extravagant as the husband was mean; she had no savings, and she cudgelled her brain to find the means of preserving her darling from the vile contact of his social inferiors without putting her hand in her pocket—which, moreover, was empty. She went a great deal into society, was very handsome, clever, and fascinating. By dint of ferreting, she got to know the probable composition of the conseil de révision—barring accidents. History does not say how, but she wheedled the surgeon-major into giving her a distinct promise to do his best for her dear son. Of course, in order to do some good, the surgeon had to see the young fellow first; and there was the difficulty, because madame had made the acquaintance of the officer under peculiar circumstances, and could not very well introduce him to her home: besides, just on account of the war-scare, the authorities had become very strict, the practices of many officers were suspected, and it would never have done for the gentleman to give his superiors as much as a loophole for their suspicion by visiting the lady. Time was getting short; the acquaintance had ripened into friendship very quickly, because, three days before the time appointed for the sitting of the council, madame had never seen the surgeon, and on the eve of that sitting the final arrangement had been concluded. It was to this effect: that madame's son would pretend to have hurt his hand, and appear with a black silk bandage round his wrist. The thing is scarcely credible, but the coachman's son, an engine-fitter, had hurt his wrist, and put a strip of black ribbon round it. The coachman's family name began with a *B*, the lady's name with a *C*. The coachman's son was taken for the other, and declared unfit for military service by reason of his chest, to his great surprise and joy, as may be imagined. But the surprise, though not the joy, of the examining officer was greater still when, in the next batch, another young fellow appeared with a strip of black ribbon round his wrist. To ask his name was an impossibility. The surgeon was afraid that he had been betrayed, or that his secret had leaked out, and, without a moment's hesitation, declared the real Simon Pure sound in lungs and limb.

I am afraid I have drifted a little bit from Marshal Vaillant's comical interviews, but am coming back to them in a roundabout way. The common, or garden trick to get those young fellows exempted, where bribery was impossible or private influence out of the question, was to make them sham short-sightedness, or deafness, or impediment in the speech. We have heard before now of professors who cure people of stammering: it is a well-known fact that in those days there was a professor who taught people to stammer; while, personally, I know an optician on the Boulevard des Italians whose father made a not inconsiderable fortune by spoiling young fellows' sights—that is, by training them, for a twelvemonth before the drawing of lots, to wear very powerful lenses. Of course, this had to be done gradually, and his fee was a thousand francs. I have known him to have as many as twenty or thirty pupils at a time. No doubt the authorities were perfectly aware of this, but they had no power to interfere. The process for "teaching deafness" was even a more complicated one, but it did succeed for a time in imposing upon the experts, until, by a ministerial decree, it was resolved to draft all these clever stammerers, and even those who were really suffering from the complaints the others simulated, into the transport and medical services.

It was then that Marshal Vaillant was overwhelmed with visits from anxious matrons who wanted to save their sons, and that the comical interviews took place.

"But, excellency, my son is really as deaf as a post," one would exclaim.

"All the better, madame: he won't be frightened at the first sound of serious firing. Nearly all young recruits are terror-stricken at the first whizzing of the bullets around them. I was, myself, I assure you. He'll make an admirable soldier."

"But he won't be able to hear the word of command."

"Not necessary, madame; he'll only have to watch the others, and do as they do. Besides, we'll draft him into the cavalry: it is really the charger that obeys the signals, not the trooper. It will be an advantage to him to be deaf in the barrack-room, for there are many things said there that would bring a blush to his nice innocent cheeks; and, upon the whole, it is best he should not hear them. I have the honour to wish you good morning, madame."

And though the woman knew that the old soldier was mercilessly chaffing her and her milksop son, the thing was done so politely and so apparently seriously on the marshal's part, that she was fain to take no for an answer.

On one occasion, it appears—for the marshal liked to tell these tales, and he was not a bad mimic—he had just dismissed a lady similarly afflicted with a deaf son, when another entered whose offspring suffered from an impediment in his speech. "Madame," the marshal said, without moving a muscle, "your son will realize the type of the soldier immortalized by M. Scribe in 'Les Huguenots.' You know what Marcel sings." And, striking a theatrical attitude, he trolled—

> "'Un vieux soldat sait souffrir et se taire
> Sans murmurer.'

With this additional advantage," he went on, "that your son will be a young one. I can, however, promise you another comfort. A lady has just left me whose son is as deaf as a post. I'll not only see

that your son is drafted into the same company, but I'll make it my special business to have their beds placed side by side. The young fellow can go on stammering as long as he likes, it won't offend his comrade's hearing."

"But my son is very short-sighted, as blind as a bat, your excellency; he won't be able to distinguish the friend from the foe," expostulated a third lady.

"Don't let that trouble you, madame," was the answer; "we'll put him in the infantry: he has only got to blaze away, he is sure to hit some one or something."

These were the scenes when the marshal was in an amiable mood; when he was not, he would scarcely suffer the slightest remark; but, if the remark was ventured upon, it had to be effectual, to be couched in language as abrupt as his. "Soft-sawder" he hated above all things; and even when he was wrong, he would not admit it to any one who whined or spoke prettily. On the other hand, when the visitor or petitioner became as violent as he was himself, he often reversed his decision. One day, while waiting for the marshal, I met in the anteroom an individual who, by his surly looks, was far from pleased. After striding up and down for a while, he began to bang on the table, and to shout at the top of his voice, calling the old soldier all kinds of names. Out came the marshal in his shirt-sleeves—the moment the lady-visitors were gone he always took off his coat. "Come back, monsieur," he said to the individual. In a few moments, the latter came out of the marshal's private room, his face beaming with joy. Then I went in, and found the marshal rubbing his hands with glee. "A capital fellow, after all, a capital fellow," he kept on saying.

"He may be a capital fellow," I remarked, "but he is not very choice in his language."

"That's only his way; he does not like to be refused things, but he is a capital fellow for all that, and that's why I granted his request. If he had whined about it, I should not have done so, though I think he is entitled to what he came for."

Strategical skill, in the sense the Germans have taught us since to attach to the word, Marshal Vaillant had little or none. Most of his contemporaries, even the younger generals, were scarcely better endowed than their official chief. They were all good soldiers when it came to straightforward fighting, as they had been obliged to do in Africa, but there was not a great leader, scarcely an ordinary tactician, among them. As I have already shown, among the men most painfully aware of this was the marshal himself; nevertheless, when he once made up his mind to a course of action, it was almost impossible to dissuade him from it. He had set his heart upon Marshal Niel occupying the Aland island during the winter of '54-55, in the event of Bomarsund falling into French hands. He did not for a moment consider that the fourteen thousand troops were too few to hold it, if the Russians cared to contest its possession,—too many, if they merely confined themselves to intercepting the supplies, which they could have done without much difficulty. A clever young diplomatist, who knew more about those parts than the whole of the intelligence department at the Ministry for War, at last made him abandon his decision. I came in as he went out; the marshal was as surly as a bear with a sore head. "Clever fellow this," he growled, "very clever fellow." And then, in short jerky sentences, he told me the whole of the story, asking my opinion as to who was right and who was wrong. I told him frankly that I thought that the young diplomatist was right. "That's what I think," he spluttered; "but you'll admit that it is d——d annoying to be wrong."

It would be wrong to infer that the marshal, though deficient as a strategist, was the rough-and-ready soldier, indifferent to more cultured pursuits, as so many of his fellow-officers were. He was very fond of certain branches of science, and rarely missed a meeting of the scientific section of the Académie, of which he was a member. What attracted him most, however, was astronomy; next to that came entomology and botany. Still, though an enthusiast, and often risking a cold to observe an astral phenomenon, he objected to wasting thousands of pounds for a similar purpose; in fact, when it came to disbursing government money for a scientific or other vaguely defined purpose, his economic tendencies got the better of him. "I am a very interesting scientific phenomenon myself," he used to say, "or, at any rate, I was; and yet no one spent any money to come and see me."

He was alluding to a fact which he often told me himself, and afterwards narrated in his "memoirs."

"For a long while, especially from 1818 to 1830, when the weather happened to be very dry and cold, and when I returned to my grateless, humble room, after having spent the day in heated apartments, I was both the spectator and the medium of strange electrical phenomena.

"The moment I had undressed and stood in my shirt, the latter began to crackle and became absolutely luminous, emitting a lot of sparks; the tails stuck together, and remained like that for some time."

I asked him, on one occasion, whether he had ever communicated all this to scientific authorities. His answer, though not a direct one to my question, was not only very characteristic of the mental and moral attitude of the soldiers of the Empire towards the Bourbons, but, to a great extent, of the attitude of the Bourbons themselves towards everybody and everything that was not absolutely in accordance with the policy, sociology, and religious tenets of their adherents, whether laymen or priests.

"You must remember, my dear fellow," he replied, "the régime under which we lived when I was subject to those electrical manifestations; you must further remember that I had fought at Ligny and

at Waterloo, and, though not absolutely put on the retired list in 1815, I and the rest of the Emperor's soldiers were watched, and our most innocent acts construed into so many small attempts at conspiracy. You have not the slightest idea what the police were like under the Restauration, let alone the priesthood. If I couple these two, I am not speaking at random. If I had communicated the things I told you of, to no matter what savant, he would necessarily have published the result of his observations and experiments, and do you know what would have happened? I should have been tried, and perhaps condemned, for witchcraft—yes, for witchcraft,—or else I should have been taken hold of by the priests, not as a scientific phenomenon, but as a religious one, a kind of *stigmatisé*. They would have made it out to their satisfaction that I was either half a saint, or a whole devil, and in either case my life would have become a burden to me. Only those who have lived under the Bourbons can form an idea of the terrorizing to which they lent themselves. People may tell you that they were kind and charitable, and this, that, and the other. There never were greater tyrants than they were at heart; and if the Duc d'Angoulême or the Comte de Chambord had come to the throne, France would have sunk to the intellectual level of Spain. I would sooner see the most godless republic than a return of that state of things, and I need not tell you that I firmly believe that not a sparrow falls to the earth without God's will. No, I held my tongue about my electrical sensations; if I had not, you would not now be talking to Marshal Vaillant—I should have become a jabbering idiot, if I had lived long enough." It is the longest speech I have ever heard the marshal make.

The marshal's own rooms were simply crammed with cases full of beetles, butterflies, etc. The space not taken up by these was devoted to herbariums; and in the midst of the most interesting conversation—interesting to the listener especially, for the old soldier was an inexhaustible mine of anecdote—he, the listener, would be invited to look at a bit of withered grass or a wriggling caterpillar.

After the Franco-Austrian war, there was an addition to the marshal's household—I might say family, for the old man became as fond of Brusca as if she had been a human being. The story went that she had been bequeathed to him at Solferino by her former master, an Austrian general; and the marshal did not deny it. At any rate, he found Brusca sitting by the dying man, and licking the blood oozing from his wounds.

Brusca was not much to look at, and you might safely have defied a committee of the most eminent authorities on canine breeds to determine hers, but she was very intelligent, and of a most affectionate disposition. Nevertheless, she was always more or less distant with civilians: it took me many years to worm myself into her good graces, and I am almost certain that I was the only *pékin* thus favoured. The very word made her prick up her ears, show her teeth, and straighten her tail as far as she could. For the appendage did not lend itself readily to the effort; it was in texture like that of a colley or Pomeranian, and twisted like that of a pug. Curiously enough, her objection to civilians did not extend to the female portion, but the sight of a blouse drove her frantic with rage. On such occasions, she had to be chained up. As a rule, however, Brusca's manifestations, whether of pleasure or the reverse, were uttered in a minor key and unaccompanied by any change of position on her part. She mostly lay at the marshal's feet, if she was not perched on the back of his chair, for Brusca was not a large dog. She accompanied the marshal in his walks and drives, she sat by his side at table, she slept on a rug at the foot of his bed. Now and then she took a gentle stroll through the apartment, carefully examining the dried plants and beetles. But one day, or rather one evening, there was a complete change in her behaviour: it was at one of the marshal's receptions, on the occasion of Emperor Francis-Joseph's visit to Paris. Some of the officers of his Majesty's suite had been invited, and at the sight of the, to her, once familiar uniforms her delight knew no bounds. She was standing at the top of the landing when she caught sight of them, and all those present thought for a moment that the creature was going mad. As a matter of course, Brusca was not allowed to come into the reception-rooms, but on that night there was no keeping her out. Locked up in the marshal's bedroom, she made the place ring with her barks and yells, and they had to let her out. With one bound she was in the drawing-rooms, and for three hours she did not leave the side of the Austrian officers. When they took their departure, Brusca was perfectly ready, nay eager, to abandon her home and her fond master for their sake, and had to be forcibly prevented from doing so. The marshal did not know whether to cry or to laugh, but in the end he felt ready to forgive Brusca for her contemplated desertion of him in favour of her countrymen. Some one who objected to the term got the snub direct. "Je maintiens ce que j'ai dit, compatriotes; et je serais rudement fier d'avoir une compatriote comme elle."

If possible, Brusca from that moment rose in the marshal's estimation; she was a perfect paragon. "Cette chienne n'a pas seulement toutes les qualités de son genre, elle n'a même pas les vices de son sexe. Elle m'aime tellement bien qu'elle ne veut être distraite par aucun autre amour. Elle vit dans le plus rigoureux célibat. La malheureuse," he said every now and then, "elle a failli se compromettre."

In spite of the marshal's boast about Brusca's morals, he was one day compelled to admit a faux pas on her part, and for some weeks the "vet" had an anxious time for it. "Elle a mal tourné, mais que voulez-vous, je ne vais pas l'abandonner." And when the crisis was over: "Son incartade ne lui a pas porté bonheur. Espérons que la leçon lui profitera."

Brusca had her portrait painted by the "Michael-Angelo of dogs," Jadin, and when it was finished the visitors were given an opportunity of admiring it in the drawing-room, where it was on view for several consecutive Tuesdays. After that, a great many of the marshal's familiars, supposed to be capable of doing justice to Brusca's character in verse, were appealed to, to write her panegyric, but though several Academicians tried their hands, their lucubrations were not deemed worthy to be inscribed on the frame of Brusca's portrait, albeit that one or two—the first in Greek—were engrossed

on vellum, and adorned the drawing-room table. The effusion that did eventually adorn the frame was by an anonymous author—it was shrewdly suspected that it was by the marshal himself, and ran as follows:—

"Si je suis près de lui, c'est que je le mérite.
Rêvez mon sort brilliant; rêvez, ambitieux!
Du bien de mon maître en ami je profite,
J'aimerais son pain noir s'il était malheureux."

Another peculiarity of Marshal Vaillant was never to accept a letter not prepaid or insufficiently paid. The rule was so strictly enforced, both in his private and official capacity, that many a valuable report was ruthlessly refused, and had to be traced afterwards through the various post-offices of Europe.

Seven times out of ten the marshal, when travelling by himself, missed his train. This would lead one to infer that he was unpunctual; on the contrary, he was the spirit of punctuality. Unfortunately, he over-did the thing. He generally reached the station half an hour or three-quarters before the time, seated himself down in a corner, dozed off, and did not wake up until it was too late. The marshal was a native of Dyon; and at Nuits, situated between the former town and Beaune, there lived a middle-aged spinster cousin whom he often went to visit. He nearly always returned by the last train to Dyon, where he had his quarters at the Hôtel de la Cloche; and although often in the midst of a pleasant family party, insisted upon leaving long before it was necessary. As a matter of course, the station was in semi-darkness—for Nuits is not a large place—and the booking-office was not open. One night, it being very warm, he stretched himself leisurely on a grass plot, instead of on the hard seat, and there he was found at six in the morning; several trains had come and gone, but no one had dared to wake him. "Mais, monsieur le maréchal, on aurait cru vous manquer de respect en vous éveillant. Après tout, vous n'êtes pas tout le monde, il y des distinctions," said the stationmaster apologetically. "La mort et le sommeil, monsieur," was the answer, "font table rase de toute distinction." It was a French version of our "Death levels all:" the marshal was fond of paraphrasing quotations, especially from the English, of which he had a very fair knowledge, having translated some military works many years before. However, from that day forth, instructions were given to take no heed of his rank, and to awaken him like any other mortal, rather than have him miss his train.

In fact, the marshal did not like to be constantly reminded of his rank; if anything, he was rather proud of his very humble origin, and, instead of hiding his pedigree like a good many parvenus, he took delight in publishing it. I have seen a letter of his to some one who inquired on the subject, not from sheer curiosity. "My grandfather was a silkmercer in a small way on the place St. Vincent, at Dyon. His father had been a coppersmith. I am unable to trace back further than that; my quarters of nobility stop there. Let me add, at the same time, that there is no more silly proverb than the one 'Like father like son.' My father died poor, and respected by every one. I do not believe that he had a single enemy. His friends called him Christ, he was so good and kind to everybody. I am not the least like him. He was short and slim, I am rather tall and stout; he was gentle, and people say that I am abrupt and harsh. In short, he had as many virtues as I am supposed to have faults, and I am afraid the world is not at all mistaken in that respect."

I, who knew him as well as most people, am afraid that the world was very much mistaken. As a matter of course, the old soldier had many faults, but his good qualities far outweighed the latter. He was modest to a degree, and the flatteries to which men in his position are naturally exposed produced not the slightest effect upon him. When in an amiable mood, he used to cut them short with a "Oui, oui; le maréchal Vaillant est un grand homme, il n'y a pas de doute; tout le monde est d'accord sur ce chapitre là, donc, n'en parlons plus." When not in an amiable mood, he showed them the door, saying, "Monsieur, si je suis aussi grand homme que vous le dites, je suis trop grand pour m'occuper de vos petites affaires. J'ai l'honneur de vous saluer."

He was fond of his native town, one of whose streets bore or still bears his name, though, according to all authorities, it never smelt sweet by whatsoever appellation it went. But he objected to being lionized, so he never stayed with the prefect, the maire, or the general commanding the district, and simply took up his quarters at the hotel, insisting on being treated like any other visitor. The maire respected his wishes; the population did not, which was a sore point with the marshal. Nevertheless, when, in 1858, during their Exhibition, they wanted him to distribute the prizes, he consented to do so, on condition that his reception should be of the simplest. The Dyonnais promised, and to a certain extent kept their word. Next morning the prefect, accompanied by the authorities, fetched him in his carriage. The ceremony was to take place in the park itself, and at the entrance was posted General Picard, accompanied by his staff, and at the head of several battalions. The moment the marshal set foot to the ground, the general saluted, the drums rolled, and the bands played. The marshal felt wroth, and at the conclusion of the distribution sent for the general, whom, not to mince matters, he roundly bullied.

General Picard did not interrupt him. "Have you finished, monsieur le maréchal?" he asked at last.

"Of course, I have finished."

"Very well; the next time you come out as a simple bourgeois, you had better leave the grand cordon of the Legion of Honour at home. If I had not saluted you as I did, I should have had the reprimand of the minister of war, and of the chancellor of the Legion of Honour. After all, I prefer yours."

"But I am the minister for war."

"I know nothing about that. I only saw an old gentleman with the grand cordon. If you are the minister for war, perhaps you will be good enough to tell Maréchal Vaillant, when you see him, that he must not tempt old soldiers like myself to forget their duty."

"You are right, general. But what a hot fiery lot these Dyonnais are, aren't they?" Picard was a native of Dyon also.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Franco-German War — Friday, July 15, 1870, 6 p.m. — My friends "confident of France being able to chastise the insolence of the King of Prussia" — I do not share their confidence; but do not expect a crushing defeat — Napoléon III.'s presence aggravated the disasters; his absence would not have averted them — He himself had no illusions about the efficiency of the army, did not suspect the rottenness of it — His previous endeavours at reorganization — The real drift of his proposed inquiries — His plan meant also compulsory service for every one — Why the legislature opposed it — The makeshift proposed by it — Napoléon weary, body and soul — His physical condition — A great consultation and the upshot of it — Dr. Ricord and what he told me — I am determined to see and hear, though not to speak — I sally forth — The streets on the evening of Friday, the 15th of July — The illuminations — Patriotism or Chauvinism — The announcement of a bookseller — What Moltke thought of it — The opinion of a dramatist on the war — The people; no horse-play — No work done on Saturday and Sunday — Cabmen — "A man does not pay for his own funeral, monsieur" — The northern station on Sunday — The departing Germans — The Emperor's particular instructions with regard to them — Alfred de Musset's "Rhin Allemand" — Prévost-Paradol and the news of his suicide — The probable cause of it — A chat with a superior officer — The Emperor's Sunday receptions at the Tuileries — Promotions in the army, upon what basis — Good and bad officers — The officers' mess does not exist — Another general officer gives his opinion — Marshal Niel and Lebœuf — The plan of campaign suddenly altered — The reason — The Emperor leaves St. Cloud — His confidence shaken before then — Some telegrams from the commanders of divisions — Thiers is appealed to, to stem the tide of retrenchment; afterwards to take the portfolio of war — The Emperor's opinion persistently disregarded at the Tuileries — Trochu — The dancing colonels at the Tuileries.

After the lapse of thirteen years, it is difficult to put the exact hour and date to each exciting incident of a period which was absolutely phenomenal throughout. I kept no diary, only a few rough notes, because at that time I never thought of committing my recollections to paper, and have, therefore, to trust almost wholly to my memory; nevertheless I am positive as to main facts, whether witnessed by myself or communicated to me by friends and acquaintances. I remember, for instance, that, immediately after the declaration of war, I was warned by my friends not to go abroad more than I could help, to keep away as much as possible from crowds. "You are a foreigner," said one, "and that will be sufficient for any ragamuffin, who wants to do you a bad turn, to draw attention to you. By the time you have satisfactorily proved your nationality you will be beaten black and blue, if not worse."

The advice was given on Friday, the 15th of July, about six in the afternoon; that is, a few hours after the news of the scenes in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate had spread, and when the centre of Paris was getting gradually congested with the inhabitants of the faubourgs. My friends were men of culture and education, and not at all likely to be carried away by the delirium which, on that same night and for the next week, converted Paris into one vast lunatic asylum, whose inmates had managed to throw off the control of their keepers; yet there was not a single civilian among them who had a doubt about the eventual victory of France, about her ability "to chastise the arrogance of the King of Prussia," to put the matter in their own words.

"To try to be wise after the event" is a thing I particularly detest, but I can honestly affirm that I did not share their confidence, although I did not suspect for a moment that the defeat would be so crushing as it was. I remembered many incidents that had happened during the previous four years of which they seemed conveniently oblivious; I was also aware, perhaps, of certain matters of which they were either profoundly ignorant, or professed to be; but, above all, I took to heart the advice, tendered in the shape of, "You are a foreigner;" and though I feared no violence or even verbal recrimination on their part, I chose to hold my tongue.

I hold no brief for the late Emperor, but I sincerely believe that he was utterly averse to the war. I, moreover, think that if he had consented to remain in Paris or at St. Cloud, the disaster would have happened all the same. He had no illusions about the efficiency of his armies, though he may not have been cognizant of the thorough rottenness of the whole. But to have said so at any time, especially during the last four years, would have been simply to sign the death-warrant of his dynasty. He endeavoured to remedy the defects in a roundabout way as early as October, '66, by appointing a

commission to draw up a plan for the reorganization of the army. Apparently, Napoléon wanted larger contingents; in reality, he hoped that the inquiry would lay bare such evidence of corruption as would justify him in dismissing several of the men surrounding him from their high commands. But both those who only saw the apparent drift as well as those who guessed at the real one were equally determined in their opposition. It was the majority in the Legislature which first uttered the cry, immediately taken up by the adversaries of the régime, "If this bill becomes law there will be an end of favourable numbers." In fact, the bill meant compulsory service for every one, and the consent of the deputies to it would at once have forfeited their position with their electors, especially with the peasantry, to whom to apply the word "patriotism" at any time is tantamount to the vilest prostitution of it.

Of the makeshift for that law I need say little or nothing. Without a single spy in France, without a single attaché in the Rue de Lille, Bismarck was enabled by that only to determine beforehand the effects of one serious military defeat on the dynasty of the Emperor; he was enabled to calculate the exact strength of the chain of defence which would be offered subsequently. The French army was like the Scotch lad's porridge, "sour, burnt, gritty, cold, and, —— it, there was not enough of it." It is not underrating Bismarck's genius to say that a man of far inferior abilities than he would have plainly seen the course to pursue.

Was Napoléon III. steeped in such crass ignorance as not to have had an inkling of all this? Certainly not; but he was weary, body and soul, and, but for his wife and son, he would, perhaps willingly, have abdicated. He had been suffering for years from one of the most excruciating diseases, and a fortnight before the declaration of war the symptoms had become so alarming that a great consultation was held between MM. Nélaton, Ricord, Fauvel, G. Sée, and Corvisart. The result was the unanimous conclusion of those eminent medical men that an immediate operation was absolutely necessary. Curiously enough, however, the report embodying this decision was only signed by one, and not communicated to the Empress at all. It may be taken for granted that, had she known of her husband's condition, she would not have agitated in favour of the war, as she undoubtedly did.

It was only after the Emperor's death at Chislehurst that the document in question was found, but I happened to know Dr. Ricord intimately, and most of the facts, besides those stated above, were known to me on that memorable Friday, the 15th of July, 1870. As I have said already, I thought it wiser to hold my tongue.

But though determined *not to speak*—knowing that it would do no earthly good—I was equally determined *to see and to hear*; so, at about eight, I sallied forth. The heat was positively stifling, and it was still daylight, but, in their eagerness to show their joy, the Parisians would not wait for darkness to set in, and, as I went along, I saw several matrons of the better classes, aided by their maids, make preparations on the balcony for illuminating the moment the last rays of the sun should set behind the horizon. I distinctly say matrons of the better classes, because my way lay through the Chaussée d'Antin, where the tenancy of an apartment on the first, second, or third floor implied a more than average income. I was, and am, aware that neither refinement nor good sense should be measured by the money at one's command, but under similar circumstances it is impossible to apply any other valid test. In the streets there was one closely wedged-in, seething mass, and the noise was deafening; nevertheless, at the sight of one of those matrons thus engaged there was a momentary lull, followed immediately by vociferous applause and the cry of "Les mères de la patrie." From a cursory glance upward, I came to the conclusion that the progeny of these ladies, if they were blessed with any, could as yet contribute but very little to the glory of the nation; still, I reflected, at the same time, that they had probably brothers and husbands who, within a few hours, might be called to the front, "nevermore to return;" that, therefore, the outburst of patriotism could not be called an altogether cheap one. In fact, none but the thoroughly irreclaimable sceptic could fail to be struck with the genuine outburst of national resentment against a whole nation on the part of another nation, which, as I take it, means something different from unalloyed patriotism. It was a mixture of hatred and chauvinism, rather than the latter and more elevated sentiment. The "sacred soil of France"—though why more sacred than any other soil, I have never been able to make out—was not threatened in this instance by Prussia; carefully considered, it was not even a question of national honour offended for which Paris professed itself ready as one man to draw the sword, and yet the thousands in the street that night behaved as if each of them had a personal quarrel to settle, not with one or two Germans, but with every son and daughter of the Fatherland.

It was, perhaps, a quarter after eight when I found myself in the Chaussée d'Antin, and the distance to the Boulevard des Italiens was certainly not more than two hundred and fifty yards; nevertheless, it took me more than half an hour to get over it, for immediately on my emerging into the main thoroughfare I looked at a clock which pointed to nine. Two things stand out vividly in my memory: the first, the preparations of several business houses to illuminate on a grand scale, there and then; *i. e.* the putting up of the elaborate crystal devices used by them on the 15th of August, the Emperor's fête-day. It was exactly a month before that date, and a neighbour of an enthusiastic tradesman remarked upon the fact. "I know," was the answer; "I'll leave it there till the 14th of next month, and then I'll add two bigger ones to it." On the day proposed, not only were there none added, but the original one had also disappeared, for by that time the Second Empire was virtually in the throes of death. The second thing I remember was the enormous strip of calico outside a bookseller's shop, with the announcement, "Dictionnaire Français-Allemand à l'usage des Français à Berlin." In less than two months I read the following; it was an extract from the interview between Bismarck and Moltke on the one side and General de Wimpffen on the other, on the eve of the capitulation of Sedan: "You do not know the topography of the environs of Sedan," replied General von Moltke; "and, seeing that we are

on the subject, let me give you a small instance which thoroughly shows the presumption, the want of method, of your nation. At the beginning of the campaign, you provided your officers with maps of Germany, when they utterly lacked the means of studying the geography of their own country, seeing that you had no maps of your own territory." I could not help thinking of the bookseller, and wondering how many dictionaries he sold during those first few days.

I did not get very far that night, only as far as the Maison d'Or, where I was perforce obliged to stop and look on. I stood for nearly an hour and a half, for there was no possibility of getting a seat, and during that time I only heard one opinion adverse to the war. It was that of a justly celebrated dramatist, who is by no means hostile to either the Emperor or the Empire, albeit that he had declined several years ago to be presented to Napoléon when Princess Mathilde offered him to do so. He positively hates the Germans, but his hatred did not blind him to their great intellectual qualities and to their powers of organization. "It is all very fine to shout 'À Berlin!'" he said; "and it is very probable that some of these bellowers (braillards) will get there, though not in the order of procession they expect; they will be in front, and the Germans at their backs." He spoke very low, and begged me not to repeat what he had said. "If I am mistaken, I do not want to be twitted with having thrown cold water on the martial ardour of my countrymen; if I am right, I will willingly forego the honour of having prophesied the humiliation of my countrymen." That is why I suppress his name here, but I have often thought of his words since; and when people, Englishmen especially, have accused him of having contributed to the corruption of the Second Empire by his stage works, I have smiled to myself. With the exception of one, he has never written a play that did not teach a valuable moral lesson; but he is an excellent husband, father, and son, though he is perhaps not over generous with his money.

I am bound to say that, though the noise on the Boulevards was terrific, and the crowds the densest I have ever seen in Paris or anywhere, they refrained from that horse-play so objectionable in England under similar circumstances. Of course there were exceptions; such as, for instance, the demonstration at the Prussian Embassy: but, in the main, the behaviour was orderly throughout. I do not know what might have been the result of any foreigners—German or otherwise—showing themselves conspicuously, but they were either altogether absent, or else concealed their nationality as much as possible by keeping commendably silent.

Nevertheless, the Parisian shopkeeper, who is the most arrant coward on the face of the earth where a crowd is concerned, put up his shutters during the whole of Saturday and Sunday, except those who professed for cater for the inner man. I doubt whether, on the first-named day, there was a single stroke of work done by the three or four hundred thousand of Parisian artisans. I exclude cabmen, railway porters, and the like. They had their hands full, because the exodus began before the war news was four and twenty hours old. Our own countrymen seemed in the greatest hurry to put the Channel between themselves and France. If the enemy had been already at the gates of Paris their retreat could have been scarcely more sudden. The words "bouches inutiles" had as yet not been pronounced or invented officially; but I have a notion that a cabman suggested them first, in a conversation with a brother Jehu. "Voilà des bouches utiles qui s'en vont, mon vieux," he said, while waiting on the Place Vendôme to take passengers to the railway. Until then I had never heard the word used in that sense.

Apropos of cabmen, I heard a story that day for the truth of which I will, however, not vouch. There was a cab-stand near the Prussian Embassy, and most of the drivers knew every one of the attachés, the latter being frequent customers. On the Saturday morning, a cab was called from the rank to take a young attaché to the eastern railway station. He was going to join his regiment. On alighting from the cab, the attaché was about to pay his fare; the driver refused the money. "A man does not pay for his own funeral, monsieur; and you may take it that I have performed that office for you. Adieu, monsieur." With that he drove off. True or not, the mere invention of the tale would prove that, at any rate, the lower middle classes were cocksure of the utter annihilation of the Germans.

I happened to have occasion to go to the northern station on the Sunday, to see some one off by the mail. That large, cold, bare hall, which does duty as a waiting-room, was crowded, and a number of young Germans were among the passengers; respectable, stalwart fellows who, to judge by their dress, had occupied good commercial positions in the French capital. Most of them were accompanied by friends or relations. They seemed by no means elated at the prospect before them, and scarcely spoke to one another. As a matter of course, they were scattered all over the place, in groups of three and four. I noticed that there was an exceedingly strong contingent of sergents de ville, and several couples of officiers de paix—what in England we should call superintendents of police. The latter had evidently received particular instructions, for they had posted, as much as possible, a sergent de ville close to every group. At first I mistook the drift of the supervision, but it was soon explained to me when one of the officiers de paix came up to a group somewhat larger than the others. "Messieurs," he said very politely, "vous êtes Allemands, et je vous prierai de vous mettre ensemble, afin de pouvoir vous protéger, s'il y a besoin." I heard afterwards that, amidst all his weighty occupations, the Emperor himself had given orders to have the Germans especially protected, as he feared some violence on the part of the Parisians.

During the next week the excitement did not abate, but, save for some minor incidents, it was the same thing over and over again: impromptu processions along the main thoroughfares to the singing of the "Marseillaise" and the "Chant du Départ," until the crowds had got by heart Alfred de Musset's "Rhin Allemand," of which, until then, not one in a thousand had ever heard.

Meanwhile the news had spread of the suicide of Prévost-Paradol, the newly appointed French ambassador at Washington, and the republicans were trying to make capital out of it. According to

them, it was political shame and remorse at having deserted his colours, despair at the turn events were taking, that prompted the step. These falsehoods have been repeated until they became legends connected with the fall of the Second Empire. To the majority of Englishmen, Prévost-Paradol is not even a name; talented as he was, Frenchmen would have scarcely known more about him if some politicians, for purposes of their own, had not chosen to convert him into a self-immolated martyr to the Imperialist cause—or, rather, to that part of the cause which aimed at the recovery of the left banks of the Rhine. I knew Prévost-Paradol, and he was only distinguished from hundreds of thousands of Frenchmen in that his "France Nouvelle" was a magnificent attempt to spur his countrymen's ambition in that direction; but this very fact is an additional argument against the alleged cause of his self-destruction. He shot himself during the night of the 10th and 11th of July, when not the most pessimistically inclined could foresee the certainty of a war, and, least of all, the disastrous result of it to France. Those who would know the real cause of Prévost-Paradol's suicide had better read a short tale that appeared anonymously in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of February, 1860. The hero of "Madame de Marçay" is none other than the brilliant journalist himself, and the germs of suicidal mania were so plainly discernible in him, as to make those who knew the writer wonder that he had not killed himself long before he did.

I have already said that the excitement did not abate, but the more serious-minded began to look critical, and, among the latter, curiously enough, there were a good many superior officers in the army. They were too loyal to express openly their want of confidence in their leaders, but it was evident enough to the careful listener that that want of confidence did exist. I had a conversation during that week with one of the former, whose name, for obvious reasons, I must suppress; and this is, as far as I can remember, what he said, knowing that he could trust me. "There is not a single properly drawn ordnance map of France at the War Office; and if there were, there is not a single man in power there who would know how to use it. I doubt whether there is a settled plan of campaign; they'll endeavour to conduct this war as they conducted the Crimean, Italian, and Mexican wars—that is, on the principle which stood them in such good stead in Algeria, though they ought to know by this time how very risky those experiments turned out, especially in '59; and I have no need to tell you that we are going to confront a different army from that of the Austrians or the Russians, Todleben notwithstanding. The African school of warfare ought to be played out by now, but it is not. To a certain extent, the Emperor is to blame for this. You remember what his uncle said: 'There is not a single general of whose draught I am not aware. Some will go up to their waists; others up to their necks; others, again, to over their heads; but the latter number is infinitely small, I assure you.' The Emperor is not in the same position with regard to the capacity of his generals, let alone of his officers."

"But he ought to be," I objected; "he interviews a great many of them on Sunday mornings." I was alluding to the informal levée held at the Tuileries every week, to which the generals and the general officers by sea and by land were admitted.

"You are right—he ought to be," was the answer; "and if a great deal of conscientious trouble on his part could have put him in possession of such knowledge, he would have had it by this time. Of course, you have never been present at such a reception; for all civilians, with the exception of a few ministers, are rigorously excluded. I repeat, the intention is a good one, but it is not carried out properly. The very fact that at the outset it met with the most strenuous opposition from nearly all the ministers and high dignitaries of the Imperial household ought to have shown his Majesty the necessity of interviewing these officers alone, without as much as a chambellan in waiting. As it is, do you know what happens? I will tell you. The Emperor passes before these officers as they are standing around the room, stops before nearly every one to ask a question, inviting him, at the same time, to lodge a protest if necessary against any standing abuse or to suggest a measure of reform. But the chambellan is close at his heels; the minister for war, the marshal commanding the Imperial Guard, the military governor of Paris, are standing but a few steps away. The officer to whom the question is addressed feels himself tongue-tied; he knows that all these can hear every word he says, and, rather than be marked by his superiors as a tiresome meddler, he prefers to hold his tongue altogether—that is, if he be comparatively honest. Call it cowardice if you like, but most men will tell you that such cowardice exists in all administrations whether civil or military. Consequently, the Emperor, though he may know a good many officers by name and by sight, in reality knows nothing of their capacities. I may safely say that, for the last fifteen or sixteen years, there have not been a dozen important promotions, either in the army or the navy, justified by the 'record of service' of the officer promoted. Divisions—nay, whole army corps—have been confided to men who, in the hour of need, will, no doubt, prove very dashing and very plucky, but who have no more notion of handling large masses of men than an ordinary drill-sergeant. To use a more striking metaphor—they have selected the most desperate punters at baccarat to work out complicated chess problems. What the result will be with such a champion as Von Moltke, Heaven only knows. There are men at the head of our cavalry forces who can scarcely hold themselves on horseback; there are others commanding divisions and even corps-d'armée who know all about bridges, pontoons, artillery, and so forth, but who could no more execute a regularly organized retreat or advance than a child. The theory is that their dash and courage, their reckless, happy-go-lucky, but frequently successful African system, will make up for their ignorance of tactics and strategy. Naturally this is an implied rather than an expressed opinion, for many of those favourites believe themselves to be the equals in these latter sciences of Jomini and Napoléon, perhaps of Moltke also. Do not misunderstand me; there are a number of officers in the French army who have made a careful study of the science of war, and who, in that respect, would favourably compare with an equal number of the best instructed German officers, but they have by this time resigned themselves to keep in the background, because any attempt on their part to raise the standard of military knowledge has for years been systematically discountenanced by those

nearest to the throne. On the other hand, the men thus kept at arm's length have not been altogether satisfied to suffer in silence. I do not mean to say that they have given vent to their grievances openly; they have done worse, perhaps, from the point of view of maintaining the discipline of the army. They have adopted a semi-critical, semi-hostile attitude towards their superiors. The officers' mess, such as it exists in England, is virtually unknown on the Continent, and least of all in France. The unmarried officer takes his daily meals at the table d'hôte of an hotel, and he does talk 'shop' now and then in the presence of civilians. The criticisms he utters do find their way to the barrack-room, so that by now the private has become sceptical with regard to the capabilities of the generals and marshals. The soldier who begins to question the fitness of his chiefs is like the priest who begins to question the infallibility of the pope; he is a danger to the institution to which he belongs."

In reality, my informant told me little that was new, though he perhaps did not suspect that I was so well informed. I had heard most of all this, and a great deal besides, from a connection of mine by marriage, whose strictures in the same direction came with additional force, seeing that he was a frequent and welcome guest at the Tuileries. He was a general officer, but, with a frankness that bordered on the cynical, maintained that but for his capital voice and skill at leading "the cotillon" he would probably have never risen beyond the rank of captain; "for there are a thousand captains that know a great deal more than I do, a couple of thousand that know as much as I do, and very few who know less, none of whom have ever been promoted, and never will be, unless they earn their promotion at the point of the sword." According to him, the "records of service" were not as much as looked into at the periods of general promotions. "A clever answer to one of the Emperor's questions, a handsome face and pleasing manners, are sufficient to establish a reputation at the Château. The ministers for war take particular care not to rectify those impulsive judgments of the Emperor and Empress, because they rightly think that careful inquiries into the candidates' merits would hurt their own protégés, and those of their fellow-ministers. This happy-go-lucky system—for a system it has become—founded upon the most barefaced nepotism, is condoned, by those who ought to have opposed it with all their might and main at the very outset, on the theory that Frenchmen's courage is sure to make up in the end for all shortcomings, which theory in itself is a piece of impertinence, or at any rate of overweening conceit, seeing that it implies the absence of such courage in the officers of other nations. But there is something else. All these favourites are jealous of one another, and, mark my words, this jealousy will in this instance lead to disastrous results, because the Emperor will find it as difficult to comply with as to refuse their individual extravagant demands. The time is gone by for radical reforms. 'You cannot swap horses while crossing a stream,' said Abraham Lincoln; and we are crossing a dangerous stream. The Emperor has, besides, a horror of new faces around him, and to extirpate the evil radically he would have to make a clean sweep of his military household."

I must preface the following notes by a personal remark. For private reasons, which I cannot and must not mention, I have decided not to put my name to these jottings, whether they are published before or after my death. I am aware that by doing this I diminish their value; because, although I never played a political or even a social part in France, I am sufficiently well known to inspire the reader with confidence. As it is, he must take it for granted that I was probably the only foreigner whom Frenchmen had agreed not to consider an enemy in disguise.

While my relative was giving me the above résumé, I was already aware that there existed in the French War Office a scheme of mobilization and a plan of campaign elaborated by Marshal Niel, the immediate predecessor of Marshal Lebœuf. I knew, moreover, that this plan provided for the formation of three armies, under the respective commands of Marshals MacMahon, Bazaine, and Canrobert, and that the disposition of these three armies had been the basis of negotiations for a Franco-Austrian alliance which had been started six weeks previous to the declaration of war by General Lebrun in Vienna. Up till the 22nd or 23rd of July the preparations were carried out in accordance with that original project; the respective staffs that had been appointed, the various regiments and brigades distributed long ago, were already hurrying to the front, when all of a sudden the whole of this plan was modified; the three armies were to be fused into one, to be called "l'armée du Rhin," under the sole and exclusive command of the Emperor.

Whence this sudden change? The historians, with their usual contempt for small causes, have endeavoured to explain it in various ways. According to some, the change was decided upon in order to afford the Emperor the opportunity of distinguishing himself; the "armée du Rhin" was to revive the glories of the "grande armée;" there was to be a second edition of the Napoleonic epic. After the first startling successes, the Emperor was to return to the capital, and Marshal Niel's plan was, if practicable, to be taken up once more,—that is, the French troops, having established a foothold in the enemy's country, were to be divided again under so many Klebers, Soults, and Neys.

According to others, the Emperor, who until then had been living in a fool's paradise with regard to the quantity, if not with regard to the quality, of the forces at his disposal, suddenly had his eyes opened to the real state of affairs. The six hundred and fifty thousand troops supposed to be at his disposal had their existence mainly on paper: the available reality did not amount to more than a third; *i. e.* to about two hundred and fifteen thousand troops of all arms.

The facts advanced by these historians are true, but they did not determine the change referred to—at any rate, not so far as the assumption of the supreme command by the Emperor himself was concerned. Anxious as the latter may have been, in the interest of his dynasty, to reap the glory of one or two successful battles fought under his immediate supervision, he was fully aware of his unfitness for such a task, especially in his actual state of health. Louis-Napoléon believed in his star, but he was not an idiot who counted upon luck to decide the fate of battles. If he had ever fostered such illusions, the campaign of 1859 must have given a rude shock to them, for there he was, more than once, within

an ace of defeat; and no one knew this better than he did. The fusing of the three armies into one was due, first, to the difficulty, if not impossibility, of constituting three armies with considerably less than three hundred thousand troops; secondly, to the inveterate jealousy of his marshals of one another. Napoléon feared, and justly, that if those three armies went forth under three separate commands, there would be a repetition of the quarrels that had occurred during the Austro-Franco war, when Niel accused Canrobert of not having properly supported him at the right time, and so forth. It will be remembered that the Emperor himself had to intervene to heal those quarrels. Under those circumstances, the Emperor thought it better to risk it, and to take the whole responsibility upon himself.

The Emperor left St. Cloud on the 28th of July. It is very certain that, even before his departure, his confidence in the late Marshal Niel as an organizer must have been considerably shaken, and that the words of Lebœuf, "We are ready, more than ready," sounded already a hollow mockery to his ear. Here are some of the telegrams which, after the 4th of September, were found among the papers at the Tuileries. They were probably copies of the originals, though I am by no means certain that they were forwarded to St. Cloud at the time of their reception. It would have been better, perhaps, if they had been.

"Metz, 20 July, 1870, 9.50 a.m. From Chief of Commissariat Department to General Blondeau, War Office, Paris. There is at Metz neither sugar, coffee, rice, brandy, nor salt. We have but little bacon and biscuit. Despatch, at least, a million rations to Thionville."

"General Ducrot to War Office, Paris. Strasburg, 20 July, 1870, 8.30 p.m. By to-morrow there will be scarcely fifty men left to guard Neuf-Brisach; Fort-Mortier, Schlestadt, la Petite-Pierre, and Lichtenberg are equally deserted. It is the result of the orders we are carrying out. The Garde Mobile and local National Guards might easily be made available for garrison duty, but I am reluctant to adopt such measures, seeing that your excellency has granted me no power to that effect. It appears certain that the Prussians are already masters of all the passes of the Black Forest."

"From the General commanding the 2nd Army Corps to War Office, Paris. Saint-Avold, 21 July, 1870, 8.55 a.m. The dépôt sends enormous parcels of maps, which are absolutely useless for the moment. We have not a single map of the French frontier. It would be better to send greater quantities of what would be more useful, and which are absolutely wanting at this moment."

"From General Michael to War Office, Paris. Belfort, 21 July, 1870, 7.30 a.m. Have arrived at Belfort; did not find my brigade, did not find a general of division. What am I to do? Do not know where are my regiments."

"From General commanding 4th Army Corps to Major-General, Paris. Thionville, 21 July, 9.12 a.m. The 4th Corps has as yet neither canteens, ambulances, nor baggage-waggons, either for the troops or the staff. There is an utter lack of everything."

I need quote no further; there were about two hundred missives in all, all dated within the week following the official declaration of war. It would be difficult to determine how many of these the Emperor was permitted to see, but there is no doubt that he had a pretty correct idea of the state of affairs, for here is a fact which I have not seen stated anywhere, but for the truth of which I can vouch. For full two years before the outbreak of hostilities, the Legislature seemed bent upon advocating all kinds of retrenchment in the war budget. During the first six months of 1870, the thing had almost become a mania with them, and the Emperor appealed to M. Thiers, through the intermediary of Marshal Lebœuf himself, to help him stem the tide of this pseudo-economy. Thiers promised his support, and faithfully kept his word; but his aid came too late. The Emperor, however, felt grateful to him, and, only thirty-six hours before his departure for the seat of war, he offered him the portfolio of war, again through the intermediary of Marshal Lebœuf. The offer was respectfully declined, but what must have been the state of mind of Louis-Napoléon with regard to his officers, to prefer to them a civilian at such a critical moment? I may state here that it was always the height of M. Thiers' ambition to be considered a great strategist and tactician, and also a military engineer. "Jomini was a civilian," he frequently exclaimed. Those who were competent to judge, have often declared that Thiers' pretensions in that direction were, to a certain extent, justified by his talents. Curiously enough, M. de Freycinet is affected by a similar mania.

Here is a certain correlative to the above-mentioned fact. When, a few months after the Commune, things were getting ship-shape in Paris, a large bundle of printed matter was unearthed in the erstwhile Imperial (then National) Printing Works. It contained, amongst others, a circular drawn up by the Emperor himself, entitled "A Bad Piece of Economy;" it was addressed to the deputies, and dated May, 1870; it showed the presumptive strength of the army of the North-German Confederation as compared with that of France, and wound up with the following sentence: "If we compare the military condition of North-Germany with ours, we shall be able to judge how far those who would still further reduce our national forces are sufficiently enlightened as to our real interests."

It has always been a mystery to me, and to those who were aware of its existence, why this circular was not distributed at the proper time; though, by the light of subsequent events, one fails to see what good it could have done then. Were these events foreseen at the Tuileries as early as May? I think not. The majority of the Emperor's entourage were confident that war with Germany was only a matter of time; very few considered it to be so imminent. One cannot for a moment imagine that the suppression of this circular was due to accidental or premeditated neglect; for the sovereign, though ailing and low-spirited, was still too mindful of his prerogatives not to have visited such neglect of his wishes,

whether intentional or not, with severe displeasure. Nor can one for a moment admit that the Emperor was hoodwinked into the belief that the circular had been distributed. His so-called advisers probably prevailed upon him to forego the distribution of the document, lest it should open the eyes of the nation to the inferiority of France's armaments. The only man who had dared to point out that inferiority, three years previously, was General Trochu, and his book, "l'Armée Française," had the effect of ostracizing him from the Tuileries. The smart and swaggering colonels who surrounded the Empress did not scruple to spread the most ridiculous slanders with regard to its author; but the Emperor, though aware that Trochu was systematically opposed to his dynasty, also knew that he was an able, perhaps the ablest soldier in the country. The subsequent failure of Trochu does not invalidate that judgment. "I know what Trochu could and would do if he were unhampered; but I need not concern myself with that, seeing that he will be hampered," said Von Moltke at the beginning of the siege. Colonel Stoffel, the French military attaché at Berlin, was severely reprimanded by Marshal Niel and by Lebœuf afterwards for his constant endeavours to acquaint the Emperor with the magnificent state of efficiency of the Prussian army and its auxiliaries. Ostensibly, it was because he had been guilty of a breach of diplomatic and military etiquette; in reality, because the minister for war and his "festive" coadjutors objected to being constantly harassed in their pleasures by the sovereign's suspicions of their mental nakedness. "Nous l'avons eu, votre Rhin allemand.... Où le père a passé, passera bien l'enfant," was their credo; and they continued to dance, and to flirt, and to intrigue for places, which, in their hands, became fat sinecures. They would have laughed to scorn the dictum of the first Napoléon, that "there are no bad regiments, only bad colonels;" in their opinion, there were no bad colonels, except those perhaps who did not constantly jingle their spurs on the carpeted floors of the Empress's boudoir, and the parqueted arena of the Empress's ball-room. The Emperor was too much of a dreamer and a philosopher for them; he could not emancipate himself from his German education. The best thing to do was to let him write and print whatever he liked, and then prevail upon him at the last moment not to publish, lest it might offend national vanity. Contemptuous as they were of the German spirit of plodding, they had, nevertheless, taken a leaf from an eminent German's book. "Let them say and write what they like, as long as they let me do what I like," exclaimed Frederick the Great, on one occasion. They slightly reversed the sentence. "Let the Emperor say and write what he likes, as long as he lets us do what we like; and one thing we will take care to do, namely, not to let him publish his writings." They had forgotten, if ever they knew them—for their ignorance was as startling as their conceit—the magnificent lines of the founder of the dynasty which they had systematically undermined for years by their dissipation, frivolity, and corruption: "The general is the head, the all in all of the army. It was not the Roman army that conquered Gaul, but Cæsar; it was not the Carthaginian army that made the republican army tremble at the very gates of Rome, but Hannibal; it was not the Macedonian army that penetrated to the Indus, but Alexander; it was not the French army which carried the war as far as the Weser and the Inn, but Turenne; it was not the Prussian army which defended, during seven years, Prussia against the three greatest powers in Europe, but Frederick the Great."

And she who aspired to play the rôle of a Maria-Theresa, when she was not even a Marie-Antoinette, and far more harmful than even a Marie-Louise, applauded the vapourings of those misguided men. "Le courage fait tout," had been the motto for nearly a score of years at the Tuileries. It did a good deal in the comedies à la Marivaux, in the Boccacian charades that had been enacted there during that time; she had yet to learn that it would avail little or nothing in the Homeric struggle which was impending.

CHAPTER XX.

The war — Reaction before the Emperor's departure — The moral effects of the publication of the draft treaty — "Bismarck has done the Emperor" — The Parisians did not like the Empress — The latter always anxious to assume the regency — A retrospect — Crimean war — The Empress and Queen Victoria — Solferino — The regency of '65 — Bismarck's millinery bills — Lord Lyons — Bismarck and the Duc de Gramont — Lord Lyons does not foresee war — The republicans and the war — The Empress — Two ministerial councils and their consequences — Mr. Prescott-Hewett sent for — Joseph Ferrari, the Italian philosopher — The Empress — The ferment in Paris — "Too much prologue to 'The Taming of the German Shrew'" — The first engagement — The "Marseillaise" — An infant performer — The "Marseillaise" at the Comédie-Française — The "Marseillaise" by command of the Emperor — A patriotic ballet — The courtesy of the French at Fontenoy — The Café de la Paix — General Beaufort d'Hautpoul and Moltke — Newspaper correspondents — Edmond About tells a story about one of his colleagues — News supplied by the Government — What it amounted to — The information it gave to the enemy — Bazaine, "the glorious" one — Palikao — The fall of the Empire does not date from Sedan, but from Woerth and Speicheren — Those who dealt it the heaviest blow — The Empress, the Empress, and no one but the Empress.

Even before the Emperor started for the seat of war it was very evident, to those who kept their eyes open, that a reaction had set in among the better classes. They were no longer confident about France's ability to chastise the arrogance of the King of Prussia. The publication of the famous "draft

treaty" had convinced them "que Bismarck avait roulé l'empereur,"—*anglicé*, "that the Emperor had been bone;" and, notwithstanding their repeated assertions of being able to dispense with the moral support of Europe, they felt not altogether resigned about the animosity which the revelation of that document had provoked. Honestly speaking, I do not think that they regretted the duplicity of Louis-Napoléon in having tried to steal a march upon the co-signatories of the treaty guaranteeing the protection of Belgium; but it wounded their pride that he should have been found out to no purpose. The word "imbécile" began to circulate freely; and when it became known that he had conferred the regency upon the Empress, the expression of contempt and disapproval became stronger still. In spite of everything that has been said to the contrary, the Parisians did not like the Empress. I have already noted elsewhere that those frankly hostile to her did not scruple to apply the word "l'Espagnole" in a depreciating sense; those whose animosity did not go so far merely considered her "une femme à la mode," and by no means fitted to take the reins of government, especially under circumstances so grave as the present ones. On the other hand, the Empress always showed herself exceedingly anxious to exercise the functions of regent. The flatterers and courtiers around her had imbued her with the idea that she was a kind of Elizabeth and a Catherine in one, and the clerical element in her entourage was not the least blamable in that respect.

During the Crimean war, Lord Clarendon had already been compelled to combat the project, though he could not do so openly. Napoléon III. had several times expressed his intention of taking the command of the army. His ministers, and especially MM. Troplong and Baroche, begged of him not to do so. Even Queen Victoria, to whom the idea was broached while on her visit to Paris, threw cold water upon it as far as was possible. But the Empress encouraged it to her utmost. "I fail to see," she said to our sovereign, "that he would be exposed to greater dangers there than elsewhere." It was the prospect of the regency, not of the glory that might possibly accrue to her consort, that appealed to the Empress; for in reality she had not the least sympathy with the object of that war, any more than with that of 1859. Russia was ostensibly fighting for the custody of the Holy Sepulchre; and the defeat of Austria, she had been told by the priests, would entail the ruin of the temporal power of the pope. And Empress Eugénie never attained to anything more than parrot knowledge in the way of politics.

However, in 1859 she had her wish, and, before the opening of the campaign, she declared to the Corps Législatif that "she had perfect faith in the moderation of the Emperor when the right moment for peace should have arrived." Her ladies-in-waiting and the male butterflies around her openly discounted the political effects of every engagement on the field of battle. The Emperor, according to them, would make peace with Austria with very few sacrifices on the latter's part, for it was a Conservative and Catholic power, which could not be humiliated to the bitter end, while Italy was, after all, but a hotbed of conspiracy, revolutionary, anti-Catholic, and so forth.

And I know, for a positive fact, that the Emperor was, as it were, compelled to suspend operations after Solferino, because the Minister for War had ceased to send troops and ammunitions "by order of the regent." The Minister for Foreign Affairs endeavoured by all means in his power to alarm his sovereign.

Nevertheless, in 1865, when he went to Algeria to seek some relief from his acute physical sufferings, Napoléon III. was badgered into confiding the regency once more to his wife. There is no other word, because there was no necessity for such a measure, seeing that he did not leave French territory. We have an inveterate habit of laughing at the "henpecked husband," and no essayist has been bold enough as yet to devote a chapter to him from a purely historical point of view. The materials are not only at hand in France, but in England, Germany, and Russia also; above all, in the latter country. He, the essayist, might safely leave Catherine de Medici out of the question. He need not go back as far. He might begin with Marie de Medici and her daughter, Henrietta-Maria. Sometimes the "henpecking" turns out to be for the world's benefit, as when Sophie-Dorothea worries her spouse to let her first boy wear a heavy christening dress and crown, which eventually kill the infant, who makes room for Frederick the Great. But one could have very well spared the servant-wench who henpecked Peter the Great, and Scarron's widow who henpecked Louis XIV., and Marie-Antoinette and the rest.

The regency of '65, though perhaps not disastrous in itself, was fraught with the most disastrous consequences for the future. It gave the Empress the political importance which she had been coveting for years; henceforth she made it a habit to be present at the councils of ministers, who in their turn informed her personally of events which ought to have remained strictly between them and the chief of the State. This went on until M. Émile Ollivier came into power, January 2, 1870. The Italian and Austrian ambassadors, however, continued to flatter her vanity by constantly appealing to her; the part they played on the 4th of September shows plainly enough how they profited in the interest of their governments by these seemingly diplomatic indiscretions on their own part.

As for Bismarck, as some one who was very much behind the political scenes in Berlin once said, "His policy consisted in paying milliners' and dressmakers' bills in Paris for ladies to whose personal adornment and appearance he was profoundly indifferent." I am bound to say that Lord Lyons courteously but steadfastly refused to be drawn out "diplomatically" by the Empress. While paying due homage to the woman and to the sovereign, he tacitly declined to consider her a pawn in the political game, and, though always extremely guarded in his language, could scarcely refrain from showing his contempt for those who did. I do not know whether Lord Lyons will leave behind any "memoirs;" if he do, we shall probably get not only nothing but the truth, but the whole truth, with regard to the share of the Empress in determining the war; and we shall find that that war was not decided upon between the Imperial couple between the 14th and 15th of July, '70, but between the 5th and 6th of July. Meanwhile, without presuming to anticipate such revelations on the part of our ambassador, I may

note here my own recollections on the subject.

On Tuesday, the 5th of July, about 2.30 p.m., I was walking along the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, when, just in front of the Embassy, I was brought to a standstill by Lord Lyons' carriage turning into the courtyard from the street. His lordship was inside. We were on very good terms, I may say on very friendly terms, and he beckoned me to come in. I was at the short flight of steps leading to the hall almost as soon as the carriage, and we went inside together. I do not suppose I was in his private room for more than ten minutes, but I brought away the impression that, although the Duc de Gramont and M. Émile Ollivier might think it necessary to adopt a bellicose tone in face of the Hohenzollern candidature, there was little or no fear of war, because the Emperor was *decidedly* inclined to peace. I remember this the more distinctly, seeing that Lord Lyons told me that he had just returned from an interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs. I am not certain of the exact words used by his lordship, but positive as to the drift of one of his remarks; namely, that the Duc de Gramont was the last person who ought to conduct the negotiations. "There is too much personal animosity between him and Bismarck, owing mainly to the latter having laughed his pretensions to scorn as a diplomatist while the duke was at Vienna." I am certain the words were to that effect. Then he added, "I can understand though I fail to approve De Gramont's personal irritation, but cannot account for Ollivier's, and he seems as pugnacious as the other. Nevertheless, I repeat, the whole of this will blow over: William is too wise a man to go to war on such a pretext, and the Emperor is too ill not to want peace. I wish the Empress would leave him alone. I am going to Ollivier's to-night, and I'll know more about it by to-morrow morning."

It is very evident from this that the historians were subsequently wrongly informed as to M. Émile Ollivier's attitude at that moment, which they have described as exactly the reverse from what Lord Lyons found it. I knew little or nothing of M. Ollivier, still he did not give me the impression of being likely to adopt a hectoring tone just in order to please the gallery, the gallery being in this instance the clientèle of the opposition, whom the Emperor feared more than any one else. From all I have been able to gather since, Louis-Napoléon seemed racked with anxiety, but, as one of my informants, who was scarcely away from his side at the time, said afterwards, he was not pondering over the consequences of war which he fancied he was able to prevent, he was pondering the consequences of peace. Translated into plain language, it meant that the republican minority, with its recent accession of representatives in the chambers and its still more unscrupulous adherents outside, were striving with might and main, not to goad the Emperor into a war, but to make him keep a peace which, if they had had the chance, they would have denounced as humiliating to France.

Unfortunately for France, they found an unexpected ally in the Empress. The latter urged on the war with Prussia, in order to secure to her son the imperial crown which was shaking on the head of her husband; the former were playing the game known colloquially as "Heads, I win; tails, you lose." Peace preserved by means of diplomatic negotiations would give them the opportunity of holding up the Empire to scorn as being too weak to safeguard the national honour; war would give them the opportunity of airing their platitudes about the iniquity of standing armies and the sacrifice of human life, etc. I go further still, and unhesitatingly affirm that, if any party was aware of the corruption in the army, it was the republican one. The plébiscite of May, with its thousands of votes adverse to the Imperial régime—among which votes there were those of a great many officers—had not only given them a chance of counting their numbers, but of obtaining information, not available to their adversaries in power. This is tantamount to an indictment of having deliberately contributed to the temporary ruin of their country for political purposes, and such I intend it to be. I am not speaking without good grounds.

On the day I met Lord Lyons, two ministerial councils were held at Saint-Cloud, both presided over by the Emperor. Between the first and the second, the peaceful sentiments of the chief of the State underwent no change. So little did the Emperor foresee or desire war, that on the evening of that same day, while the second council of ministers was being held, he sent one of his aides-de-camp to my house for the exact address of Mr. Prescott-Hewett, the eminent English surgeon. I was not at home, and on my return, an hour later, sent the address by telegraph to Saint-Cloud. I have since learnt that, on the same night, a telegram was despatched to London, inquiring of Mr. Hewett when it would be convenient for him to hold a consultation in Paris. An appointment was made, but Mr. Hewett eventually went in August, to the seat of war, to see his illustrious patient. I believe, but am not certain, that he saw him at Châlons.

On the 6th of July, there was a third council of ministers at Saint-Cloud, at ten o'clock in the morning, in order to draw up the answer to M. Cochery's interpellation on the Hohenzollern candidature. The latter was supposed to have been inspired by M. Thiers, but I will only state what I know positively with regard to the Emperor. At a little after two that afternoon, I happened to be at the Café de la Paix, when my old friend, Joseph Ferrari, came up to me.[77] He was a great friend of Adolphe and Élysée, the brothers of Émile Ollivier. He looked positively crestfallen, and, knowing him to be a sincere advocate of peace, I had no need to ask him for the nature of the news he brought. I could see at a glance that it was bad. He, however, left me no time to put a question.

"It's all over," he said at once, "and, unless a miracle happens, we'll have war in less than a fortnight." He immediately went on. "Wait for another hour, and then you'll see the effect of De Gramont's answer to Cochery's interpellation in the Chamber. Not only the Prussians, but the smallest nation in Europe would not stand it."

"But," I remarked, "about this time yesterday I was positively assured, and on the best authority, that the Emperor was absolutely opposed to any but a pacific remonstrance."

"Your informant was perfectly correct," was the answer; "and as late as ten o'clock last night, at the termination of the second council of ministers, his sentiments underwent no change. Immediately after that, the Empress had a conversation with the Emperor, which I know for certain lasted till one o'clock in the morning. The result of this conversation is the answer, the text of which you will see directly, and which is tantamount to a challenge to Prussia. Mark my words, the Empress will not cease from troubling until she has driven France into a war with the only great Protestant power on the Continent. That power defeated, she will endeavour to destroy the rising unity of Italy. She little knows that Victor-Emanuel will not wait until then, and that, at the first success of the French on the Rhine, he will cross the Alps at a sign of Prussia; that at the first success of Prussia, the Italian troops will start on their march to Rome. Nay, I repeat, it is the Empress who will prove the ruin of France."

That playful cry of the Empress, which she was so fond of uttering in the beginning of her married life, "As for myself, I am a Legitimist," without understanding, or endeavouring to understand its import, had gradually grafted itself on her mind, although it had ceased to be on her lips. Impatient of contradiction, self-willed and tyrannical, both by nature and training, her sudden and marvellous elevation to one of the proudest positions in Europe could not fail to strengthen those defects of character. Superstitious, like most Spaniards, she was firmly convinced that the gipsy who foretold her future greatness was a Divine messenger, and from that to the conviction that she occupied the throne by a right as Divine as that claimed by the Bourbons there was but one short step. A corollary to Divine right meant, to her, personal and irresponsible government. That was her idea of legitimism. Though by no means endowed with high intellectual gifts, she perceived well enough, in the beginning, that the Second Empire was not a very stable edifice, either with regard to its foundations or superstructure, and, until England propped it up by an alliance, and a State visit from our sovereign, she kept commendably coy. But from that moment she aspired to be something more than the arbiter of fashion. As I have already said, she failed in prevailing upon the Emperor to go to the Crimea. In '59 she was more successful, in '65 she was more successful still. In the former year, she laid the foundation of what was called the Empress's party; in the latter, the scaffolding was removed from the structure, henceforth the work was done inside. She, no more than her surroundings, had the remotest idea that France was gradually undergoing a political change, that she was recovering her constitutional rights. Her party was like the hare in the fable that used the wrong end of the opera-glass, and lived in a fool's paradise with regard to the distance that divided them from the sportsman, until he was fairly upon them, in the shape of the liberal ministry of the 2nd of January, 1870.

M. Émile Ollivier, to his credit be it said, refused to be guided by his predecessors. He studiously avoided informing the Empress of the affairs of State, let alone discussing them with her. Apart from the small fry of the Imperial party, he made two powerful enemies—the Empress herself, and Rouher, who saw in this refusal to follow precedent an implied censure upon himself. Rouher, I repeat once more, was honest to the backbone, but fond of personal power. The Empire to him meant nothing but the Emperor, the Empress, and the heir to the throne; just as Germany meant nothing to Bismarck but the Hohenzollern dynasty. He was one of the first to proclaim, loudly and openly, that the plébiscite of the 8th of May meant an overwhelming manifestation, not in favour of the liberal Empire, but in favour of the Emperor; and when the latter, to do him justice, declined to look at it in that light, he deserted him for the side of his wife. It is an open secret that the first use the Empress meant to make of her power as regent, after the first signal victory of French arms, was to sweep away the cabinet of the 2nd of January. The Imperial decree conferring the regency upon her, "during the absence of the Emperor at the head of his army," and dated the 22nd of July, invested her with very limited power.

Meanwhile, pending the departure of the Emperor, Paris was in a ferment, but, to the careful observer, it was no longer the unalloyed enthusiasm of the first few days. There were just as many people in the streets; the shouts of "À Berlin!" though, perhaps, not so sustained, were just as loud every now and then; the troops leaving for the front received tremendous ovations, and more substantial proofs of the people's goodwill; the man who dared to pronounce the word "peace" ran a great risk of being rent to pieces by the crowds—a thing which almost happened one night in front of the Café de Madrid, on the Boulevard Montmartre: still, the enthusiasm was not the same. "There seems to be a great deal of prologue to 'The Taming of that German Shrew,'" said a French friend, who was pretty familiar with Shakespeare; and he was not far wrong, for the Christopher Sly abounded. The bivouacs of the troops about to take their departure reminded one somewhat more forcibly of operatic scenes and equestrian dramas of the circus type than of the preparations for the stern necessities of war—with this difference, that the contents of the goblet were real, and the viands not made of cardboard. "They are like badly made cannons, these soldiers," said some one else: "they are crammed up to the muzzle, and they do not go off." In short, the more sensible of the Paris population began to conclude that a little less intoning of patriotic strophes and a good deal more of juxtaposition with the German troops was becoming advisable. The reports of the few preliminary skirmishes that had taken place were no doubt favourable to the French; at the same time, there was no denying the fact that they had taken place on French and not on German territory, which was not quite in accordance with the spirit of the oft-repeated cry of "À Berlin!" In accordance with the programme of which that cry was the initial quotation, the French ought, by this time, to have been already half on their way to the Prussian capital. That is what sensible, nay, clever people expressed openly. Nevertheless, the cry continued, nor was there any escape from the "Marseillaise," either by day or night. Every now and then a more than usually dense group might be seen at a street corner. The centre of the group was composed of a woman, with a baby in her arms; the little one could scarcely speak, but its tiny voice reproduced more or less accurately the air of the "Marseillaise:" a deep silence prevailed during the performance in order to give the infant a fair chance; deafening applause greeted the termination of the solo, and a shower of coppers fell into the real or pseudo mother's lap. On the 18th of July, the day of the official declaration of war in Paris, the Comédie-

Française performed "Le Lion Amoureux" of Ponsard.[78] At the end of the second act, the public clamoured for the "Marseillaise." There was not a single member of the company capable of complying with the request, "so the stage manager for the week" had to come forward and ask for a two-days' adjournment, during which some one might study it. Of course, *the honour* of singing the revolutionary hymn was to devolve upon a woman, according to the precedent established in '48, when Rachel had intoned it. From what I learnt a few days afterwards, the candidates for the *distinguished task* were not many, in spite of the tacit consent of the Government. The ladies of the company, most of whom, like their fellow-actors, had been always very cordially treated by the Emperor on the occasion of their professional visits to Saint-Cloud, Compiègne, and Fontainebleau, instinctively guessed the pain the concession must have caused the chief of the State, and under some pretext declined. Mdlle. Agar accepted, and sang the "Marseillaise," in all forty-four times, from the 20th of July to the 17th of September, the day of the final investment of the capital by the German armies.

It must not be supposed, though, that the Government had waited until the day of the official declaration of war to sanction the performance of the "Marseillaise" in places of public resort. I remember crossing the Gardens of the Tuileries in the afternoon of Sunday, the 17th of July. One of the military bands was performing a selection of music. The custom of doing so during the summer months has prevailed for many years, both in the capital and in the principal garrison towns of the provinces. All at once they struck up the "Marseillaise." I looked with surprise at my companion, a member of the Emperor's household. He caught the drift of my look.

"It is by the Emperor's express command," he said. "It is the national war-song. In fact, it is that much more than a revolutionary hymn."

"But war has not been declared," I objected.

"It will be to-morrow," was the answer.

The public, which in this instance was mainly composed of the better classes, apparently refused to consider the "Marseillaise" a national war-song, and applause at its termination was but very lukewarm.

I have already spoken of the scene I witnessed in connection with the departure of the Germans on that same Sunday early in the morning, and have also noted the demonstration in front of the German Embassy on the previous Friday night. I will not be equally positive with regard to the exact dates of the succeeding exhibitions of bad taste on the part of the Parisians, but I remember a very striking one which happened between the official declaration of war and the end of July. It was brought under my notice, not by a foreigner, but by a Frenchman, who was absolutely disgusted with it. We were sitting one evening outside the Café de la Paix, which, being the resort of some noted Imperialists, I had begun to visit more frequently than I had done hitherto. There was a terrible din on the Boulevards: the evening papers had just published a very circumstantial account of that insignificant skirmish which cost Lieutenant Winslow his life, and in which the French had taken a couple of prisoners. "They" (the prisoners), suggested an able editor, "ought to be brought to Paris and publicly exhibited as an example." "And, what is more," said my friend who had read the paragraph to me, "he means what he says. These are the descendants of a nation who prides herself on having said at Fontenoy, 'Messieurs, les Anglais tirez les premiers,' which, by-the-by, they did not say.[79] If you care to come with me, I'll show you what would be the probable fate of such prisoners if the writer of that paragraph had his will."

So said; so done. In about a quarter of an hour we were seated at the Café de l'Horloge, in the Champs Élysées, and my friend was holding out five francs fifty centimes in payment for two small glasses of so-called "Fine Champagne," *plus* the waiter's tip. The admission was gratis; and the difference between those who went in and those who remained outside was that the latter could hear the whole of the performance without seeing it, and without disbursing a farthing; while the former could see the whole of the performance without hearing a note, for the din there was also infernal. Shortly after our arrival, the band struck up the inevitable "Marseillaise," but the audience neither listened nor applauded.

This was, after all, but the overture to the entertainment to which my friend had invited me, and which consisted of a spectacular pantomime representing an engagement between a regiment or a battalion of Zouaves and Germans. As a matter of course, the latter had the worst of it; and, at the termination, a couple of them were brought in and compelled to sue for mercy on their knees. I am bound to say that the thing hung fire altogether, and that, but for the remarkable selection of handsome legs of the Zouaves, not even the hare-brained young fellows with which the audience was largely besprinkled would have paid any attention.

In the whole of Paris there was no surer centre of information of the state of affairs at the front than the Café de la Paix. It was the principal resort of the Bonapartists. There were Pietri, the prefect of police, Sampierro, Abatucci, and a score or two of others; all cultivating excellent relations with the Château. There was also the General Beaufort d'Hautpoul, to whom Bismarck subsequently, through the pen of Dr. Moritz Busch, did the greatest injury a man can do to a soldier, in accusing him of drunkenness when he came to settle some of the military conditions of the armistice at Versailles. He was, as far as I remember, one of the two superior French officers who estimated at its true value the strategic genius of Von Moltke. The other was Colonel Stoffel. But General d'Hautpoul was even better enabled to judge; he had seen Moltke at work in Syria more than thirty years before. He was in

reality the Solomon Eagle of the campaign, before a single shot had been fired. "I know our army, and I know Helmuth von Moltke," he said, shaking his head despondingly. "If every one of our officers were his equal in strategy, the chance would then only be equal. Moltke has the gift of the great billiard-player; he knows beforehand the exact results of a shock between two bodies at a certain angle. We are a doomed nation."

As a matter of course, his friends were very wroth at what they called "his unpatriotic language," and when the news of the engagement at Saarbruck arrived they crowed over him; but he stuck to his text. "It is simply a feint on Moltke's part, and proves nothing at all. In two or three days we'll get the news of a battle that will decide, not only the fate of the whole campaign, but the fate of the Empire also."

Two days afterwards, I met him near the Rue Saint-Florentin; he looked absolutely crestfallen. "We have suffered a terrible defeat near Wissembourg, but do not breathe a word of it to any one. The Government is waiting for a victory on some other point, and then it will publish the two accounts together."

The Government was reckoning without the newspapers, French and foreign. The latter might be confiscated, and in fact were, such as the *Times* and *l'Indépendance Belge*; but the French, notwithstanding the temporary law of M. Émile Ollivier, were more difficult to deal with. I am inclined to think that if they had foreseen the terrible fate that was to befall the French armies they would have been more amenable, but in the beginning they anticipated nothing but startling victories, and, as such, looked upon the campaign in the light of a series of brilliant spectacular performances, glowing accounts of which were essentially calculated to increase their circulation. When MM. Cardon and Chabrillat, respectively of the *Gaulois* and *Figaro*, were released by the Prussians, they told many amusing stories to that effect, unconsciously confirming the opinion I have already expressed; but the following, which I had from the lips of Edmond About himself, is better than any I can remember.

A correspondent of one of the best Paris newspapers, on his arrival at the head-quarters of "the army of the Rhine," applied to the aide-major-general for permission to follow the operations. He had a good many credentials of more or less weight; nevertheless the aide-major-general, in view of the formal orders of the Emperor and Marshal Lebœuf, felt bound to refuse the request. The journalist, on the other hand, declined to take "no" for an answer. "I have come with the decided intention to do justice, and more than justice, perhaps, to your talent and courage, and it would be a pity indeed if I were not given the opportunity," he said.

"I am very sorry," was the reply; "but I cannot depart from the rules for any one."

"But our paper has a very large circulation."

"All the more reason to refuse you the authorization to follow the staff."

The journalist would not look at matters in that light. He felt that he was conferring a favour, just as he would have felt in offering the advantage of a cleverly written puff of a première to a theatrical manager. Seeing that his arguments were of no avail, he delivered his parting shot.

"This, then, general, is your final decision. I am afraid you'll have cause to regret this, for we, on our side, are determined not to give this war the benefit of publicity in our columns."

M. Émile Ollivier's original decision was the right one, but, instead of embodying it in a temporary and exceptional order, he ought to have made it a permanent law in times of peace as well as war. On Saturday, the 16th of July, Count Culemburg, the Prussian Minister of the Interior, addressed a circular to the German papers, recommending them to abstain from giving any news, however insignificant, with regard to the movements of the troops. As far as I remember, the German editors neither protested, nor endeavoured to shirk the order; they raised no outcry against "the muzzling of the press." Five days later, the French minister was attacked by nearly every paper in France for attempting to do a similar thing, and, rather than weather that storm in a teacup, he consented to a compromise, and condescended to ask where he might have commanded. In addition to this, he undertook that the Government itself should be the purveyor of war-news to the papers. Every editor of standing in Paris knew that this meant garbled, if not altogether mythical, accounts of events, and that even these would be held back until they could be held back no longer. In a few days their worst apprehensions in that respect were confirmed. While Paris was still ignorant of the terrible disaster at Wissembourg, the whole of Europe rang with the tidings. Then came the false report of a brilliant victory from the Government agency. It made the Parisians frantic with joy, but the frenzy changed into one of anger when the truth became known through the maudlin and lachrymose despatches from the Imperial head-quarters, albeit that they by no means revealed the whole extent of the defeats suffered at Woerth and Spicheren.

Nevertheless, the *agency* continued the even—or rather uneven—tenor of its way up to the last. The Republicans subsequently adopted the tactics of the Imperial Government, the Communists adhered to the system of those they had temporarily ousted. In the present note, I will deal only with events up to the 4th of September. Patent as it must have been to the merest civilian, that the commanders were simply committing blunder after blunder, the movements of Bazaine were represented by the *agency* as the result of a masterly and profound calculation. Even such a pessimist as General Beaufort d'Hautpoul was taken in by those representations. He considered the "masterly inactivity" of Bazaine as an inspiration of genius. "He is keeping two hundred thousand German troops round Metz," he said

several times. "These two hundred thousand men are rendered absolutely useless while we are recruiting our armies and reorganizing our forces." He seemed altogether oblivious of the fact that these two hundred thousand Germans were virtually the gaolers of France's best army.

I am unable to say whether General d'Hautpoul was in direct or indirect communication with the *agency*, or whether some ingenious scribe belonging to it had overheard his expressions of admiration and wilfully adopted them; certain it is that the *agency* was the first to inspire the reporters of those papers who took their cue from it with the flattering epithet of "glorious Bazaine."

It was the same with regard to Palikao. His sententious commonplaces were reported as so many oracular revelations dragged reluctantly from him. Had they been more familiar with Shakespeare than they were, or are, the scribes would have made Palikao exclaim with Macbeth, "The greatest is behind." And all the while the troops were marching and countermarching at haphazard, without a preconceived plan, jeering at their leaders, and openly insulting the "phantom" Emperor, as they did at Châlons, for he was already no more than that. The fall of the Empire does not date from Sedan, but from Woerth and Spicheren; and those most pertinently aware of it were not the men who dealt it the final blow less than a month later, but the immediate entourage of the Empress at the Tuileries.

For from that moment (the 6th or 7th of August) the entourage of the Empress began to think of saving the Empire by sacrificing, if needs be, the Emperor. "There is only one thing that can avert the ruin of the dynasty," said a lady-in-waiting on the Empress, to a near relative of mine; "and that is the death of the Emperor at the head of his troops. That death would be considered an heroic one, and would benefit the Prince Imperial."

I do not pretend to determine how far the Empress shared that opinion, but here are some facts not generally known, even to this day, and for the truth of which I can unhesitatingly vouch.

The Empress did not know of the consultation that had taken place on the 1st of July, and to which I have already referred. But she did know that the Emperor was suffering from a very serious complaint, and that the disease had been aggravated since his departure through his constantly being on horseback. M. Franceschini Pietri, the private secretary of the Emperor, had informed her to that effect on the 7th of August, when Forbach and Woerth had been fought. He also told her that the Emperor was not unwilling to return to Paris, and to leave the command-in-chief to Bazaine, but that his conscience and his pride forbade him to do so, unless some pressure were brought to bear upon him. I repeat, I can vouch for this, because I had it from the lips of M. Pietri, who was prefect of police until the 4th of September.

Meanwhile, others, besides M. Franceschini Pietri, had noticed the evident moral and mental depression of the Emperor, increased, no doubt, by his acute physical sufferings, which were patent to almost every one with whom he came in immediate contact; for an eye-witness wrote to me on the 4th of August: "The Emperor is in a very bad state; after Saarbruck, Lebrun and Lebœuf had virtually to lift him off his horse. The young prince, who, as you have probably heard already, was by his side all the time, looked very distressed, for his father had scarcely spoken to him during the engagement. But after they got into the carriage, which was waiting about a dozen yards away, the Emperor put his arm round his neck and kissed him on the cheeks, while two large tears rolled down his now. I noticed that the Emperor had scarcely strength to walk that dozen yards."

Lebœuf, who, like a great many more, has suffered to a certain extent for the faults of Marshal Niel, perceived well enough that something had to be done to cheer the Emperor in his misfortunes. It was he who proposed that the latter should return to Paris, accompanied by him, while the corps d'armée of Frossard, which had effected its retreat in good order, and several other divisions that had not been under fire as yet, should endeavour to retrieve matters by attacking the armies of Von Steinmetz and Frederick-Charles, which at that identical moment were only in "course of formation." But Louis-Napoléon, while admitting the wisdom of the plan, sadly shook his head, and declared that he could not relinquish the chief command in view of the double defeat the army had suffered under his leadership.

What had happened, then, during the twenty-four hours immediately following the telegram of M. Franceschini Pietri? Simply this: not only had the Empress refused to exercise the pressure which would have afforded her husband an excuse for his return, but she had thrown cold water on the idea of that return by a despatch virtually discountenancing that return. The cabinet had not been consulted in this instance.

Nay, more; the cabinet on the 7th of August despatched, in secret, M. Maurice Richard, Minister of Arts, which at that time was distinct from the Ministry of Public Instruction, to inquire into the state of health of the Emperor and the degree of confidence with which he inspired the troops. That was on the 7th of August. He went by special train to Metz. Two hours after he was gone, Adolphe Ollivier told me and Ferrari at the Café de la Paix. A few hours after his return next day, he told us the result of those inquiries. M. Richard had brought back the worst possible news.

At a council of ministers, held early on the 9th, M. Émile Ollivier, in view of the communication made to him by his colleague, proposed the immediate return of the Emperor, fully expecting M. Richard to support him. The Empress energetically opposed the plan, and when M. Ollivier turned, as it were, to M. Richard, the latter kept ominously silent. Not to mince matters, he had been tampered with. M. Ollivier found himself absolutely powerless.

A day or so before that—I will not be positive as to the date—M. Ollivier telegraphed officially to the head-quarters at Metz, to request the return of the Prince Imperial, in accordance with the generally expressed wish of the Paris papers. M. Pietri told me that same day that the minister's telegram had been followed by one in the Empress's private cipher, expressing her wish that the Prince Imperial should remain in the army. She did not explain why. She merely recommended the Emperor to make the promise required, and then to pay no further heed to it.

The regent had no power to summon parliament, nevertheless she did so, mainly in order to overthrow the Ollivier ministry. I am perfectly certain that the Emperor never forgave her for it. If those who were at Chislehurst are alive when these notes appear, they will probably bear me out.

What, in fact, could a parliament summoned under such circumstances be but a council of war, every one of whose decisions was canvassed in public and made the enemy still wiser than he was before? Of course, the Empress felt certain that she would be able to dismiss it as easily as it had been summoned; she evidently did not remember the fable of the horse which had invited the man to get on his back in order to fight the stag. There is not the slightest doubt that, as I have already remarked, the Empress's main purpose was the overthrow of the Ollivier administration; if proof were wanted, the evidence of the men who overthrew the Empire would be sufficient to establish the fact, and not one, but half a dozen, have openly stated that the defeat of the Ollivier ministry was accomplished with the tacit approval of the court party: *read*, "the party of the Empress," to which I have referred before.

The list of the Empress's blunders, involuntary or the reverse, is too long to be transcribed in detail here; I return to my impressions of men and things after my meeting with General Beaufort d'Hautpoul in the Rue de Rivoli.

I do not suppose that in the whole of Paris there were a dozen sensible men who still cherished any illusions with regard to the possibility of retrieving the disasters by a dash into the enemy's country. The cry of "À Berlin!" had been finally abandoned even by the most chauvinistic. But the hope still remained that the Prussians would be thrust back from the "sacred soil of France" by some brilliant coup de main, although I am positive that the Empire would have been doomed just the same if that hope had been realized. Among those who had faith in the coup de main were M. Paul de Cassagnac and, curiously enough, General Beaufort d'Hautpoul. He had suddenly conceived great hopes with regard to Bazaine. M. de Cassagnac seriously contemplated enlisting in the Zouaves. Strange to relate, M. Paul de Cassagnac, in spite of his well-known attachment to the Imperialist cause, was looked upon, by the most determined opponents of that cause among the masses, as a man to be trusted and consulted in a non-official way. I remember being on the Boulevard one evening after the affair at Beaumont, when the rage of the population was even stronger than after the defeats at Woerth and Forbach. All of a sudden we perceived a dense group swaying towards us—we were between the Rues Laffite and Le Peletier—and in the centre towered the tall figure of M. de Cassagnac. For a moment we were afraid that some mischief was being contemplated, the more that we had noticed several leaders of the revolutionary party—or, to speak by the card, of the Blanqui party—hovering near the Café Riche. But the demonstration was not a hostile one; on the contrary, it had a friendly tendency, and showed a tacit acknowledgment that, whosoever else might hide the truth from them, M. de Cassagnac would not do so. "What about rifles, M. Paul?" was the cry; "are there sufficient for us all?" It must be remembered that the *levée en masse* had been decreed. M. de Cassagnac could not tell the truth, and would not tell a lie. He frankly said, "I don't know." We noticed also that at his approach the Blanquists slunk away. The Empire had been tottering on its base until then; after Beaumont it was virtually doomed.

CHAPTER XXI.

The 4th of September — A comic, not a tragic revolution — A burlesque Harold and a burlesque Boadicea — The news of Sedan only known publicly on the 3rd of September — Grief and consternation, but no rage — The latter feeling imported by the bands of Delescluze, Blanqui, and Félix Pyat — Blanqui, Pyat, & Co. *versus* Favre, Gambetta, & Co. — The former want their share of the spoil, and only get it some years afterwards — Ramail goes to the Palais-Bourbon — His report — Paris spends the night outdoors — Thiers a second-rate Talleyrand — His journey to the different courts of Europe — His interview with Lord Granville — The 4th of September — The Imperial eagles disappear — The joyousness of the crowd — The Place de la Concorde — The gardens of the Tuileries — The crowds in the Rue de Rivoli scarcely pay attention to the Tuileries — The soldiers fraternizing with the people, and proclaiming the republic from the barracks' windows — A serious procession — Sampierro Gavini gives his opinion — The "heroic struggles" of an Empress, and the crownless coronation of "le Roi Pétaud" — Ramail at the Tuileries — How M. Sardou saved the palace from being burned and sacked — The republic proclaimed — Illuminations as after a victory.

Only those who were at a distance from Paris on the 4th of September, 1870, can be deluded into the belief that the scenes enacted there on that day partook of a dramatic character. Carefully and scrupulously dovetailed, they constitute one vast burlesque of a revolution. It is not because the

overthrow of the Second Empire was accomplished without bloodshed that I say this. Bloodshed would have only made the burlesque more gruesome, but it could have never converted it into a tragedy, the recollection of which would have made men think and shudder even after the lapse of many years. As it is, the recollection of the 4th of September can only make the independent witness smile. On the one hand, a burlesque Harold driven off to Wilhelmshöhe in a landau, surrounded by a troop of Uhlans; and a burlesque Boadicea slinking off in a hackney cab, *minus* the necessary handkerchiefs for the cold in her head,—"fleeing when no one pursueth," instead of poisoning herself: on the other, "ceux qui prennent la parole pour autrui," *i. e.* the lawyers, prenant le pouvoir pour eux-mêmes. Really, the only chronicler capable of dealing with the situation in the right spirit is our old and valued friend, Mr. Punch. Personally, from the Saturday afternoon until the early hours on Monday, I saw scarcely one incident worthy of being treated seriously; nor did the accounts supplied to me by others tend to modify my impressions.

Though the defeat at Sedan was virtually complete on Thursday the 1st at nine p.m., not the faintest rumour of it reached Paris before Friday evening at an advanced hour, and the real truth was not known generally until the Saturday at the hour just named. There was grief and consternation on many faces, but no expression of fury or anger. That sentiment, at any rate in its outward manifestations, had to be supplied from the heights of Belleville and Montmartre, Montrouge and Montparnasse, when, later on, a good many of the inhabitants of those delightful regions came down like an avalanche on the heart of the city. They were the lambs of Blanqui, Delescluze, Félix Pyat, and Millière. They were dispersed on reaching the Boulevard Montmartre, and we saw nothing of them from where we were seated, at the Café de la Paix. By the time they rallied in the side streets and had marched to the Palais-Bourbon, they found their competitors, Favre, Gambetta, & Co., trying to oust the ministers of the Empire. But for that unfortunate delay we might have had the Commune on the 4th of September instead of on the 18th of March following. Blanqui, Pyat, & Co. never forgave Favre, Gambetta, & Co. for having forestalled them, and, above all, for not having shared the proceeds of the spoil. This is so true that, even after many years of lording it, the successors of, and co-founders with, the firm of Favre, Gambetta, & Co. have been obliged, not only to grant an amnesty to those whom they cheated at the beginning, but to admit them to some of the benefits of the undertaking; Méline, Tirard, Ranc, Alphonse Humbert, Camille Barrère, and a hundred others more or less implicated in the Commune, are all occupying fat posts at the hour I write.

A friend of ours, whose impartiality was beyond suspicion, and who had more strength and inclination to battle with crowds than any of us, offered to go and see how the land lay at the Palais-Bourbon. He returned in about an hour, and told us that Gambetta, perched on a chair, had been addressing the crowd from behind the railings, exhorting them to patience and moderation. "Clever trick that," said our informant; "it's the confidence-trick of housebreakers when two separate gangs have designs upon the same 'crib;' while the first arrivals 'crack' it, they send one endowed with the 'gift of the gab' to pacify the others."

One thing is certain—Gambetta and his crew did not want to pursue the war, they wanted a Constituent Assembly which would have left them to enjoy in peace the fruits of their usurpation; for theirs was as much usurpation as was the Coup d'État. Their subsequent "Not an inch of our territory, not a stone of our fortresses," was an afterthought, when they found that Bismarck would not grant them as good a peace as he would have granted Napoléon at Donchery the morning after Sedan.

At about ten on Saturday night everybody knew that there would be a night sitting, and I doubt whether one-fourth of the adult male population of Paris went to bed at all, even if they retired to their own homes.

Our friend returned to the Palais-Bourbon, but failed to get a trustworthy account of what had happened during the twenty-five minutes the deputies had been assembled. All he knew was that nominally the Empire was still standing, though virtually it had ceased to exist; a bill for its deposition having been laid on the table. On his way back to the Boulevards he saw the carriage of Thiers surrounded, and an attempt to take out the horses. He called Thiers "le recéleur des vols commis au préjudice des monarchies."[80]

Let me look for a moment at that second-rate Talleyrand, who has been grandiloquently termed the "liberator of the soil" because he happened to do what any intelligent bank manager could have done as well; let me endeavour to establish his share in the 4th of September. I am speaking on the authority of men who were behind the political scenes for many years, and whose contempt for nearly all the actors was equally great. Thiers refused his aid and counsel to the Empress, who solicited it through the intermediary of Prince Metternich and M. Prosper Mérimée, but he also refused to accept the power offered to him by Gambetta, Favre, Jules Simon, etc., in the afternoon of the 4th of September. Nevertheless, he was here, there, and everywhere; offering advice, but careful not to take any responsibility. Afterwards he took a journey to the various courts of Europe. I only know the particulars of one interview—that with Lord Granville—but I can vouch for their truth. After having held forth for two hours without giving his lordship a chance of edging in a word sideways, he stopped; and five minutes later, while Lord Granville was enumerating the reasons why the cabinet of St. James's could not interfere, he (Thiers) was fast asleep. When the conditions of peace were being discussed, Thiers was in favour of giving up Belfort rather than pay another milliard of francs. "A city you may recover, a milliard of francs you never get back," he said. Nevertheless, historians will tell one that Thiers made superhuman efforts to save Belfort. I did not like M. Thiers, and, being conscious of my dislike, I have throughout these notes endeavoured to say as little as possible of him.

The sun rose radiantly over Paris on the 4th of September, and I was up betimes, though I had not

gone to bed until 3 a.m. There was a dense crowd all along the Rue Royale and the Place de la Concorde, and several hours before the Chamber had begun to discuss the deposition of the Bonapartes (which was never formally voted), volunteer-workmen were destroying or hauling down the Imperial eagles. The mob cheered them vociferously, and when one of these workmen hurt himself severely, they carried him away in triumph. Nevertheless, there was a good deal of hooting as several well-known members of the Chamber elbowed their way through the serried masses. Though they were well known, I argued myself unknown in not knowing them. I was under the impression that they were Imperialists; they turned out to be Republicans. The marks of disapproval proceeded from compact groups of what were apparently workmen. As I knew that no workmen devoted to the Empire would have dared to gather in that way, even if their numbers had been sufficient, and as I felt reluctant to inquire, I came to the natural conclusion that the hooters were the supporters of Blanqui, Pyat, & Co. The Commune was foreshadowed on the Place de la Concorde on that day.

My experience of the 24th of February, 1848, told me that the Chamber would be invaded before long. In 1848 there was no more danger for a foreigner to mix with the rabble than for a Frenchman. I felt not quite so sure about my safety on the 4th of September. My adventure in the Avenue de Clichy, which I will relate anon, had not happened then, and I was not as careful as I became afterwards, still I remembered in time the advice of the prudent Frenchman—"When in doubt, abstain;" and I prepared to retrace my steps to the Boulevards, where, I knew, there would be no mistake about my identity. At the same time, I am bound to say that no such accident as I dreaded, occurred during that day, as far as I am aware. There may or may not have been at that hour half a hundred spies of Bismarck in the city, but no one was molested. The Parisians were so evidently overjoyed at getting rid of the Empire, that for four and twenty hours, at any rate, they forgot all about the hated Germans and their march upon the capital. They were shaking hands with, and congratulating one another, as if some great piece of good fortune had befallen them. Years before that, I had seen my wife behave in a similarly joyous manner after having dismissed at a moment's notice a cook who had shamefully robbed us: the wife knew very well that, on the morrow, the tradesmen, the amount of whose bills the dishonest servant had pocketed for months, would be sending in their claims upon us. "Perhaps they will take into consideration that we dismissed her," she said, "and not hold us responsible." The Latin race, and especially the French, are the females of the human race.

I noticed that the gates of the Tuileries gardens on the Place de la Concorde were still open, and that the gardens themselves were black with people. It must have been about half-past ten or eleven. I did not go back by the Rue Royale, but by the Rue de Rivoli. The people were absolutely streaming down the street. There was not a single threatening gesture on their part; they merely looked at the flag still floating over the Tuileries, and passed on. When I got back to the Boulevards, I sat down outside the Café de la Paix determined not to stir if possible. I knew that whatever happened the news of it would soon be brought thither. I was not mistaken.

The first news we had was that the National Guards had replaced the regulars inside and around the Palais-Bourbon, which was either a sign that the latter could be no longer depended upon, or that the Republicans in the Chamber had carried that measure in their own interest. I am bound to admit that I would always sooner take the word of a French officer than that of a deputy, of no matter what shade; and I heard afterwards that the troops at the Napoléon barracks and elsewhere had begun to fraternize with the people as early as eight in the morning, by shouting, from the windows of their rooms, "Vive la République!" The Chamber was invaded, nevertheless; it is as well to state that this invasion gave Jules Favre & Co. a chance of repairing in hot haste to the Hôtel de Ville, where the Government of the National Defence was proclaimed.

To return to my vantage-post at the Café de la Paix. The crowds on the Place de la Concorde, apparently stationed there since early morning, did not seem to me to have been brought thither at the instance of a leader or in obedience to a watchword. I except, of course, the groups of which I have already spoken, and which jeered at the republican deputies. The streams of people I met on my return in the Rue de Rivoli seemed impelled by their own curiosity to the Chamber of Deputies. Not so the procession which hove in sight almost the moment I had sat down at the Café. It wheeled to the left when reaching the Rue de la Paix. It was composed of National Guards with and without their muskets, each company preceded by its own officers,—the armed ones infinitely more numerous than the unarmed, but all marching in good order and in utter silence; in fact, so silently as to bode mischief. Behind and before there strode large contingents of ordinary citizens, and I noticed two things: that few of them wore blouses, and that a good many wore kepis, apparently quite new. The wearers, though equally undemonstrative, gave one the impression of being the leaders. Most of those around me shook their heads ominously as they passed; their silence did not impose upon them. I am free to confess that I did not share their opinion. To me, the whole looked like stern determined manifestors; not like turbulent revolutionaries. I had seen nothing like them in '48. Nevertheless, it was I who was mistaken, for, according to M. Sampierro Gavini, who, unlike his brother Denis, belonged to the opposition during the Empire, it was they who invaded the Chamber. I may add that M. Sampierro Gavini, though in the opposition, had little or no sympathy with those who overthrew the Empire or established the Commune. He had an almost idealistic faith in constitutional means, and a somewhat exaggerated reverence for the name of Bonaparte. He was a Corsican.

For several hours nothing occurred worthy of record. The accounts brought to us by eye-witnesses of events going on simultaneously at the Tuileries and the Palais-Bourbon showed plainly that there was no intention on the mob's part to exalt the Empress into a Marie-Antoinette. Our friend who had given us the news of the Chamber on the previous night, and who was a relative of the celebrated Dr. Yvan, an habitué of the Café de la Paix, had made up his mind in the morning that "it would be more

interesting to watch the" last heroic struggles of an Empress against iron fortune than the "crownless coronation of a half-score of 'rois Pétauds.'"[81] As such, he had taken up his station in the gardens of the Tuileries, close to the gate dividing the private from the public gardens. It was he who gave us the particulars of the scenes preceding and succeeding the Empress's flight, the exact moment of which no one seemed to know. The account of these scenes was so exceedingly graphic, that I have no difficulty whatsoever in remembering them. Moreover, I put down at the time several of his own expressions. I do not know what has become of him. He went to New-Zealand on account of some unhappy love-affair, and was never heard of any more. Though scarcely thirty then, he was a promising young doctor. His name was Ramail, but I do not know in what relation he stood to Dr. Yvan; who, however, always called him cousin.

Young Ramail had been in the Tuileries gardens since noon. The crowd was already very large at that hour, but it seemed altogether engrossed in the doings of an individual who was knocking down a gilded eagle on the top of the gate. "Mind," said Ramail, "that was at twelve o'clock, or somewhere thereabouts; and I do not think that the sitting at the Chamber began until at least an hour later. If the Republicans say, in days to come, that the Empire was virtually condemned before they voted its overthrow, they will, at any rate, have the semblance of truth on their side, because there were at least two thousand persons looking on without trying to prevent the destruction of the eagles by word or deed; and two thousand persons, if they happen to agree with them, are to the Republicans the whole of France; while two millions, if they happen to differ from them, are only a corrupt and unintelligent majority.

"But I was wondering," he went on, "at the utter ingratitude of the lower and lower-middle classes. I feel certain that among those who stood staring there, half owned their prosperous condition to the eighteen years of Imperialism; yet I heard not a single expression of regret at the brutal sweeping away of it.

"I may have stood there for about an hour, a score of steps away from the gate before the swing bridge, when, all at once, I felt myself carried forward with the crowd; and before I had time to look round, I found myself inside that other gate. There were about five hundred persons who had entered with me, but in what manner the gate gave way or was opened I have not the vaguest idea. We went no further; we stopped as suddenly as we had advanced. I turned round with difficulty, and looked over the heads of those behind me; sure enough, the gates were wide open and the crowd at the rear was much denser than it had been ten minutes before. Still they stood perfectly still, without bringing any pressure to bear upon us. Then I turned round again, and saw the cause of their reluctance to move. The Imperial Guard was being massed in front of the principal door leading from the private gardens into the palace. 'My dear Ramail,' I said to myself, 'you stand a very good chance of having a bullet through your head before you are ten minutes older; because, at the slightest move of the crowd among which you now stand, the guard will fire.' I own that I was scarcely prepared to face death for such a trivial cause as this; and I was quietly edging my way out of the crowd, which was beginning to utter low ominous growls, when a voice, ringing clear upon the air, shouted, 'Citoyens!' I stopped, turned round once more, and stood on tiptoe.

"The speaker was a tall, handsome fellow, young to all appearance, and with a voice like a bell. He looked a gentleman, but I have never seen him before to my knowledge. His companion I knew at once; it was Victorien Sardou. There is no mistaking that face. I have heard some people say that it is not a bit like that of the great Napoléon, while others maintain that, placing the living man and the portrait of the dead one side by side, one could not tell the difference. I'll undertake to say this, that if M. Sardou had donned a uniform, such as the lieutenant of artillery wore at Arcola, for instance, he might have taken the Empress by the hand and led her out safely among the people, who would have believed in some miraculous resurrection.

"To come back to my story. 'Citoyens,' repeated M. Sardou's companion, 'I do not wonder at your surprise that the garden should not be open to you and its ingress forbidden by soldiers. The Tuileries belong to the people, now that the Empire is gone; for gone it is by this time, in spite of the Imperial Guard massed before yonder door. Consequently, my friend and I propose to go and ask for the withdrawal of these soldiers. But, in order to do this, you must give us your promise not to budge; for the slightest attempt on your part to do so before our return may lead to bloodshed, and I am convinced that you are as anxious as we are to avoid such a calamity.'

"If that young fellow is not an actor, he ought to be. Every word he said could be heard distinctly and produced its effect. The crowd cheered him and promised unanimously to wait. Then we saw him and M. Sardou take out their handkerchiefs and tie them to the end of their sticks. Perhaps it was well they did, for as I saw them boldly walk up the central avenue, I was not at all convinced that their lives were not in danger. My sight is excellent, and I noticed a decidedly hostile movement on the part of the troops ranged in front of the principal door, and an officer of Mobiles was evidently of my opinion, for, though he followed them at a distance, he kept prudently behind the trees, sheltering himself as much as possible. I do not pretend to be wiser than most of my fellow-men, but I doubt whether many among those who watched M. Sardou and his companion suspected the true drift of their self-imposed mission. They merely wished to save the Tuileries from being pillaged and burnt down. I do not wish to libel the Imperial Guard or their officers, but I should feel much surprised if that noble idea ever entered their heads. What was the magnificent pile to them, now that one of their idols had left it, probably for ever, and the other was about to do the same? At any rate, the suspicious movement was there. I have forgotten to tell you that the inner gate was closed and I saw M. Sardou parley through its bars with one of the guardians. Then a superior officer, accompanied by a civilian, came out; but by this time, the crowd, which had kept back, was beginning to move also, I among them. All of a sudden,

the general, who turned out to be General Mellinet, gets on a chair, while his companion, who turns out to be M. de Lesseps, stands by him. The Imperial Guard disappears, seeing which, the crowd, no longer apprehensive of being shot down, advances rapidly to within a few steps of the gate. Then there is a cheer, for the Imperial flag is hauled down from the roof. 'Gentlemen,' says the general, 'the Tuileries are empty, the Empress is gone. But it is my duty to guard the palace, and I count upon you to help me.' He says a great deal more, but the crowd are pressing forward all the same. I feel that the crucial moment has arrived, and that the palace will be invaded, in spite of the general's speechifying, when lo, the Gardes Mobiles issue from the front door, and range themselves in two rows. The gates are opened, the crowd rushes in, but the Mobiles are there to prevent them making any excursions, either upstairs or into the apartments, and in a few minutes we find ourselves in the Place du Carrousel. The palace has been virtually saved by M. Sardou."

Half an hour later, we receive the news that the Government of the National Defence has been proclaimed at the Hôtel de Ville, and that night Paris is illuminated as after a victory.

CHAPTER XXII.

The siege — The Parisians convinced that the Germans will not invest Paris — Paris becomes a vast drill-ground, nevertheless — The Parisians leave off singing, but listen to itinerant performers, though the latter no longer sing the "Marseillaise" — The theatres closed — The Comédie-Française and the Opéra — Influx of the Gardes Mobiles — The Parisian no longer chaffs the provincial, but does the honours of the city to him — The stolid, gaunt Breton and the astute and cynical Normand — The gardens of the Tuileries an artillery park — The mitrailleuse still commands confidence — The papers try to be comic — Food may fail, drink will not — My visit to the wine dépôt at Bercy — An official's information — Cattle in the public squares and on the outer Boulevards — Fear with regard to them — Every man carries a rifle — The woods in the suburbs are set on fire — The statue of Strasburg on the Place de la Concorde — M. Prudhomme to his sons — The men who do not spout — The French shopkeeper and bourgeois — A story of his greed — He reveals the whereabouts of the cable laid on the bed of the Seine — Obscure heroes — Would-be Ravaillacs and Balthazar Gerards — Inventors of schemes for the instant annihilation of all the Germans — A musical mitrailleuse — An exhibition and lecture at the Alcazar — The last train — Trains converted into dwellings for the suburban poor — Interior of a railway station — The spy mania — Where the Parisians ought to have looked for spies — I am arrested as a spy — A chat with the officer in charge — A terrible-looking knife.

In spite of the frequent reports from the provinces that the Germans were marching on Paris, there were thousands of people in the capital who seriously maintained that they, the Germans, would not dare to invest, let alone, shell it. But it must not be inferred, as many English writers have done, that this confidence was due to a mistaken view of the Germans' pluck, or their reluctance to beard the "lion" in his den. Not at all. The Parisians simply credited their foes with the superstitious love and reverence for "the centre of light and civilization" which they themselves felt. They did not take their cue from Victor Hugo's "highfalutin'" remonstrance to King William; on the contrary, it was the poet who translated their sentiments. It was not a case of "one fool making many;" but of many mute inglorious visionaries inspiring a still greater one, who had the gift of eloquence, which eloquence, in this instance, bordered very closely on sublimated drivel.

Nevertheless, the whole of Paris became suddenly transformed into one vast drill-ground, and the clang of arms resounded through the city day and night. For the time being, the crowds left off singing, albeit that they listened now and then devoutly and reverently to itinerant performers, male and female, who had paraphrased the patriotic airs of certain operas for the occasion. The "Pars beau mousquetaire," etc., of Halévy, became "Pars beau volontaire;" the "Guerre aux tyrans," of the same composer, "Guerre aux all'mands,"[82] and so forth.

All the theatres had closed their doors by this time, the Comédie-Française being last, I believe; though, almost immediately afterward, it threw open its portals once more for at least two performances a week, and often a third time, in aid of the victims of the siege. Meanwhile, several rooms were being got ready for the reception of the wounded; the new opera-house, still unfinished, was made into a commissariat and partly into a barracks, for the provincial Gardes Mobiles were flocking by thousands to the capital, and the camps could not hold them all. For once in a way the Parisian forgot to chaff the provincial who came to pay him a visit; and considering that, even under such circumstances, all drill and no play would make Jacques a dull boy, he not only received him very cordially, but showed him some of the lions of the capital, at which the long-haired gaunt and stolid Breton stared without moving a muscle, only muttering an unintelligible gibberish, which might be an invocation to his ancient pagan gods, or a tribute of admiration; while the more astute and cynical, though scarcely more impressionable Normand, ten thousand of which had come from the banks of the Marne, showed the thought underlying all his daily actions, in one sentence: "C'est *ben* beau, mais ça a coûté beaucoup d'argent; fallait mieux le garder en poche." Even at this supreme moment, he remembered, with a kind of bitterness, that he had been made to pay for part of all this glorious architecture.

The Cirques Napoléon and de l'Impératrice—the Republic had not had time to change their names—had become a kind of left-luggage office for these human cargoes, taken thither at their arrival, which happened generally during the night. In the morning they were transferred to their permanent encampments, and their military education was proceeded with at once. I am afraid I am not competent to judge of the merits of the method adopted, but I was by no means powerfully impressed with the knowledge displayed by the instructors.

The gardens of the Tuileries had been closed to the public, who had to be satisfied with admiring the ordnance and long rows of horses parked there from a distance. Did the latter lend enchantment to the view? Apparently, for they were never tired of gazing with ecstasy on the mitrailleuses. The gunners in charge treated the foremost of the gazers now and then to a lecture on artillery practice, through the railings of the gates. In whatsoever else they had lost faith, those murderous engines of war evidently still commanded their confidence.

The frightful din that marked the first weeks of the war had ceased, but Paris did by no means look crestfallen. The gas burned brightly still, the cafés were full of people, the restaurants had all their tables occupied; for we were not "invested" yet, and the idea of scarcity, let alone of famine, though a much-discussed contingency, was not a staring, stubborn fact. "It will never become one," said and thought many, "and all that talk about doling out rations already is so much nonsense." The papers waxed positively comic on the subject. They also waxed comic over the telegrams of the King of Prussia to his Consort; but they left off harping on that string, for very shame' sake.

One thing was certain from the beginning of the siege—whatever else might fail, there was enough wine and to spare to cheer the hearts of men who professed to do and dare more than men. Though the best part of my life had been spent in Paris, I had, curiously enough, never seen the wine and spirit dépôts at Bercy; in fact, I was profoundly ignorant of that, as well as of other matters connected with the food-supply of Paris. So I wrote to a member of the firm which had supplied me for many years with wine and spirits, and he took me thither.

I should think that the "entrepôt-général," as it is called, occupied, at that time, not less than sixty acres of ground, which meant more than treble that area as far as storage was concerned; for there was not only the cellarage, but the buildings above ground, rising, in many instances, to three and four stories. The entrepôt consisted, and consists still, I believe, of three distinct parts: one for wines; another for what the French call "alcohols," and we "spirits;" a third, much smaller, for potable, or, rather, edible oils. The latter wing contains the cellarage of the general administration of the hospitals. The spirit-cellars were absolutely empty at the time of my visit; their contents had been removed to a bomb and shell proof cellarage hard by.

Though I had come to see, I felt very little wiser after leaving the cellars than before; for, truth to tell, I was absolutely bewildered. I had no more idea of the quantity of wine stored there than a child. My guide laughed.

"We'll soon make the matter clear to you," he said, shaking hands with a gentleman who turned out to be one of the principal employés. "This gentleman will tell you almost to a hectolitre the quantity of ordinary wine in store. You know pretty well the number of inhabitants of the capital, and though it has considerably increased during the last few days, and is not unlikely to decrease during the siege, if siege there be, the influx does not amount to a hundred thousand. Now, monsieur, will you tell this gentleman what you have in stock?"

"We have got at the present moment 1,600,000 hectolitres of ordinary wine in our cellars. Ten days ago we had nearly one hundred thousand more, but the wine-shops and others have laid in large provisions since then. The more expensive wines I need not mention, because the quantity is very considerably less, and, moreover, they are not likely to be wanted; though, if they were wanted, they would keep us going for many, many weeks. At a rough guess, the number of 'souls' within the fortifications is about 1,700,000, with the recent increase 1,800,000; consequently, with what the 'liquoristes' have recently bought, one hundred litres for every man, woman, and child. I do not reckon the contents of private cellars, nor those of the wine-merchants, apart from their recent purchases. Nor is ordinary wine much dearer than it was in years of great plenty; it is, in fact, less by twenty-five francs or thirty francs than in the middle of the fifties. I am comparing prices for quarter pipes, containing from two hundred and ten to two hundred and thirty litres. There is no fear of regrating here, nor the likelihood of our having to drink water for some time."

On our homeward journey, we noticed bullocks, pigs, and sheep littered down in some of the public squares and on the outer boulevards. The stunted grass in the former had already entirely disappeared, and it was evident that, with the utmost care, the cattle would deteriorate under the existing circumstances; for fodder would probably be the first commodity to fail; as it was, it had already risen to more than twice its former price. Moreover, the competent judges feared that, in the event of a rainy autumn, the cattle penned in such small spaces would be more subject to epidemic diseases, which would absolutely render them unfit for human food. In view of such a contingency, the learned members of the Académie des Sciences were beginning to put their heads together, but the results of their deliberations were not known as yet.

We returned on foot as we had come; private carriages had entirely disappeared, and though the omnibuses and cabs were plying as usual, their progress was seriously impeded by long lines of vans, heavily laden with neat deal boxes, evidently containing tinned provisions. Very few female passengers in the public conveyances, and scarcely a man without a rifle. They were the future

defenders of the capital, who had been to Vincennes, where the distribution of arms was going on from early morn till late at night. In fact, the sight of a working-man not provided with a rifle, a mattock, a spade, or a pickaxe was becoming a rarity, for a great many had been engaged to aid the engineers in digging trenches, spiking the ground, etc.

I did not, and do not, feel competent to judge of the utility of all these means of defense; one of them, however, seemed to be conceived in the wrong spirit: I allude to the firing of the woods around Paris. With the results of Forbach and Woerth to guide them, the generals entrusted with the defence of Paris could not leave the woods to stand; but was there any necessity to destroy them in the way they did? In spite of the activity displayed, there were still thousands of idle hands anxious to be employed. Why were not the trees cut down and transported to Paris, for fuel for the coming winter? At that moment there were lots of horses available, and such a measure would have given us the double advantage of saving coals for the manufacture of gas, and of protecting from the rigours of the coming winter hundreds whose sufferings would have been mitigated by light and heat. Personally, I did not suffer much. From what I have seen during the siege, I have come to the conclusion that shortcomings in the way of food are far less hard to bear, nay, are almost cheerfully borne, in a warm room and with a lamp brightly burning. I leave out of the question the quantities of mineral oil wasted in the attempt to set fire to the woods, because in many instances the attempt failed utterly.

Meanwhile, patriotism was kept at the boiling point, by glowing reports of the heroic defence of General Uhrich at Strasburg. The statue, representing the capital of Alsace on the Place de la Concorde, became the goal of a reverent pilgrimage on the part of the Parisians, though the effect of it was spoiled too frequently by M. Prudhomme holding forth sententiously, to his sons apparently, to the crowd in reality. These discourses reminded one too much of Heine's sneer, that "all Frenchmen are actors, and the worse are generally on the stage." In this instance, however, the amateurs ran the professional very hard. The crowds were not hypercritical, though, and they applauded the speaker, who departed, accompanied by his offspring, with the proud consciousness that he was a born orator, and that he had done his duty to his country by spouting platitudes. It is not difficult to give the general sequel to that amateur performance. Next morning there is a line in some obscure paper, and M. Prudhomme, beside himself with joy, leaves his card on the journalist who wrote it; the journalist leaves his in return, and for the next six months the latter has his knife and fork laid at M. Prudhomme's table. The acquaintance generally terminates on M. Prudhomme's discovery that Madame Prudhomme carried her friendship too far by looking after the domestic concerns of the scribe, at the scribe's bachelor quarters.

The men who did not spout were the Duruys, the Meissoniers, and a hundred others I could mention. The eminent historian and grand-master of the University, though sixty, donned the simple uniform of a National Guard, and performed his garrison duties like the humblest artisan, only distinguished from the latter by his star of grand-officer of the Légion d'Honneur; the great painter did the same. The French shopkeeping bourgeois is, as a rule, a silly, pompous creature; very frequently, he is mean and contemptible besides.

Here is a story for the truth of which I can vouch, and which shows him in his true light. In the skirmish in which Lieutenant Winslow was killed, some damage had been done to the inn at Schirlenhoff, where the Baden officers were at breakfast when they were surprised by General de Bernis and his men. The general had his foot already in the stirrup, and was about to remove his prisoners, when Boniface made his appearance, coolly asking to whom he was to present the bill for the breakage. The general burst out laughing: "The losing party pays the damage as a rule," he said, "but France is sufficiently rich to reverse the rule. Here is double the amount of your bill."

A second story, equally authentic. A cable had been secretly laid on the bed of the Seine between Paris and Havre, shortly before the siege. Two small shopkeepers of St. Germain revealed the fact for a consideration to the Germans, who had but very vague suspicions of it, and who certainly did not know the land-bearings; one of the scoundrels was caught after the siege, the other escaped. The one who was tried pleaded poverty, and received a ridiculously small sentence. It transpired afterwards that he was exceedingly well paid for his treachery, and that he cheated his fellow-informer out of his share.

The contrast is more pleasant to dwell upon. There were hundreds of obscure heroes, by which I do not mean those prepared to shed their blood on the battle-field, but men with a sublime indifference to life, courting the fate of a Ravaillac and a Balthazar Gerard. History would have called them regicides, and perhaps ranked them with paid assassins had they accomplished their purpose, would have held them up to the scorn of posterity as bloodthirsty fanatics,—and history, for once in a way, would have been wrong. In their reprehensible folly, they were more estimable than the Jules Favres, the Gambettas who played at being the saviours of the country, and who were only the saviours of their needy, fellow political adventurers.

Apart from the former, there were the inventors of impossible schemes for the instantaneous annihilation of the three hundred thousand Germans around Paris,—inventors who supply the comic note in the otherwise terrible drama,—inventors, who day by day besiege the Ministry for War, and to whom, after all, the minister's collaborateurs are compelled to listen "on the chance of there being something in their schemes."

"I am asking myself, every now and then, whether I am a staff-officer or one of the doctors at Charenton," said Prince Bibesca, one evening.

"Since yesterday morning," he went on, "I have been interviewed by a dozen inventors, every one of whom wanted to see General Trochu or General Schmitz, and would scarcely be persuaded that I would do as well. The first one simply took the breath out of me. I had no energy left to resist the others, or to bow them out politely; if they had chosen to keep on talking for four and twenty hours, I should have been compelled to listen. He was a little man, about the height of M. Thiers. His opening speech was in proportion to his height; it consisted of one line. 'Monsieur, I annihilate the Germans with one blow,' he said. I was thrown off my guard in spite of myself, for etiquette demands that I should keep serious in spite of myself; and I replied, 'Let me fill my pipe before you do it.'

"Meanwhile, my visitor spread out a large roll of paper on the table. 'I am not an inventor,' he said; 'I merely adapt the lessons of ancient history to the present circumstances. I merely modify the trick of the horse of Troy. Here is Paris with its ninety-six bastions, its forts, etc. I draw three lines: along the first I send twenty-five thousand men pretending to attack the northern positions of the enemy; along the second line I send a similar number, apparently bent on a similar attempt to the south; my fifty thousand troops are perfectly visible to the Germans, for they commence their march an hour or so before dusk. Meanwhile darkness sets in, and that is the moment I choose to despatch a hundred and fifty thousand troops, screened and entirely concealed by a movable wall of sheet iron, blackened by smoke. My inventive powers have gone no further than this. My hundred and fifty thousand men behind their wall penetrate unhindered as far as the Prussian lines, where a hundred thousand fall on their backs, taking aim over the wall, while fifty thousand keep moving it forward slowly. Twelve shots for every man make twelve hundred thousand shots—more than sufficient to cause a panic among the Germans, who do not know whence the firing proceeds, because my wall is as dark as night itself. Supposing, however, that those who have been left in the camp defend themselves, their projectiles will glance off against the sheet iron of the wall, which, if necessary, can be thrown down finally by our own men, who will finish their business with the bayonet and the sword.'

"My second visitor had something not less formidable to propose; namely, a sledge-hammer, fifteen miles in circumference, and weighing ten millions of tons. It was to be lifted up to a certain altitude by means of balloons. A favourable wind had to be waited for, which would send the balloons in the direction of Versailles, where the ropes confining the hammer would be cut. In its fall it would crush and bury the head-quarters and the bulk of the German army.

"The third showed me the plan of a musical mitrailleuse, which would deal death and destruction while playing Wagner, Schubert, and Mendelssohn, the former by preference. 'The Germans,' he remarked, 'are too fond of music to be able to resist the temptation of listening. They are sure to draw near in thousands when my mitrailleuses are set playing. We have got them at our mercy.' I asked him to send me a small one as a sample: he promised to do so."

Another evening I was induced to go to the Alcazar. I had been there once before, to hear Thérèsa. This time it was to see an "Exhibition of Engines of War," and to listen to a practical lecture thereon. The audience was as jolly as if the Germans were a thousand miles away—jollier, perhaps, than when they listened to "Rien n'est sacré pour un sapeur;" because they were virtually taking part in the performance. The lecturer began by an exhibition of bullet-proof pads, by means of which the soldier might fearlessly advance towards the enemy; "because they render that part of the body on which they are worn invulnerable." A wag among the spectators made a remark about "retreating soldiers," which I cannot transcribe; but the exhibitor, an Italian or Spanish major, to judge by his accent, was in no way disconcerted. He placed his pad against an upright board in the shape of a target and began firing at it with a revolver at a distance of four or five paces. The material, though singed, was not pierced, but the spectators seemed by no means convinced. "You wear the pad, and let me have a shot at you," exclaimed one; at which offer the major made a long face. "Have you ever tried the experiment on a living animal?" asks another. "Perfectly," replied the major; "I tried it on my clerk," which admission was hailed with shouts of laughter. There were cries for the clerk, who did not appear. A corporal of the National Guards proposed to try an experiment on the major and the pad with the bayonet fastened to a chassepot; thereupon major and pad suddenly disappeared behind the wings.

The next inventor exhibits a fire-extinguisher; the audience require more than a verbal explanation; some of them propose to set the Alcazar on fire. A small panic, checked in time; and the various demonstrations are proceeded with amidst shouts, and laughter, and jokes. They yield no practical results, but they kill time. They are voted the next best thing to the theatre.

By this time we were shut off from the outer world. On the 17th of September, at night, the last train of the Orléans Railway Company had left Paris. The others had ceased working a day or so before, and placed their rolling stock in safety. Not the whole of it, though. A great many of the third-class carriages have had their seats taken out, the luggage and goods vans have been washed, the cattle trucks boarded in, and all these transformed into temporary dwellings for the suburban poor who have been obliged to seek shelter within the walls of the capital. The interiors of the principal railway stations present scenes that would rejoice the hearts of genre-painters on a large scale. The washing and cooking of all these squatters is done on the various platforms, the carriages have become parlor and bedroom in one, and there has even been some ingenuity displayed in their decoration. The womankind rarely stir from their improvised homes; the men are on the fortifications or roaming the streets of Paris. Part of the household gods has been stowed inside the trucks, the rest is piled up in front. The domestic pets, such as cats and dogs, have, as yet, not been killed for food, and the former have a particularly good time of it, for mice and rats abound, especially in the goods-sheds. Here and there a goat gravely stalking along, happily unconscious of its impending doom; and chanticleer surrounded by a small harem trying to make the best of things.

Of course, the sudden and enormous influx of human beings could not be housed altogether in that way, but care has been taken that none of them shall be shelterless. All the tenantless apartments, from the most palatial in the Faubourg St. Honoré and Champs-Élysées to the humblest in the popular quarters, have been utilized, and the pot-au-feu simmers in marble fireplaces, while Gallic Hodge sees his face reflected in gigantic mirrors the like of which he never saw before. The dwellings that have been merely vacated by their tenants who have flitted to Homburg and Baden-Baden, to Nice and elsewhere, are as yet not called into requisition by the authorities.

From the moment we were cut off from the outer world, the spy mania, which had been raging fiercely enough before, became positively contagious. There is not the slightest doubt that there were spies in Paris, but I feel perfectly certain that they were not prowling about the streets, and that to have caught them one would have had to look among the personnel of the ministries. For a foreigner, unless he spoke French without the slightest accent, to have accepted such a mission, would have been akin to madness; and there were and are still few foreigners, however well they may know French, who do not betray their origin now and then by imperfect pronunciation. Besides, there was nothing to spy in the streets; nevertheless, the spy mania, as I have already said, had reached an acute crisis. The majority of the National Guard seemed to have no other occupation than to look for spies. A poor Spanish priest was arrested because he had been three times in the same afternoon to the cobbler for the only serviceable pair of shoes he possessed. Woe to the man or woman who was ill-advised enough to take out his pocket-book in the streets. If you happened to be of studious habits, or merely inclined to sit up late, the lights peeping through the carelessly drawn curtains exposed you to a sudden visit from half a dozen ill-mannered, swaggering National Guards, your concierge was called out of his bed, while you were taken to the nearest commissary of police to explain; or, what was worse still, to the nearest military post, where the lieutenant in command made it a point to be altogether soldier-like—according to his ideas, *i. e.* brutal, rude, disgustingly familiar. You might get an apology from the police-official for having been disturbed and dragged through the streets for no earthly reason; the quasi-military man would have considered it beneath his dignity to offer one.

Of course, every now and then, one happened to meet with a gentleman who was only too anxious to atone for the imbecile "goings-on" of his men, and I was fortunate enough to do so one night. It was on the 20th of September, when the feelings of the Parisians had already been embittered by their first and not very creditable defeat under their own walls. I do not suppose there were more than a score of Englishmen in Paris, besides the Irishmen engaged in salting beef at the slaughter-house of La Villette, when, but for that gentleman, I should have been in a sore strait. Among the English, there was a groom who, at the time of the general exodus, was so dangerously ill that the doctor absolutely forbade his removal, even to a hospital. The case had been brought under my notice, and as the poor fellow was very respectable and had been hard-working, as he had a wife and a young family besides, we not only did all we could for him, but I went to see him personally two or three times to cheer him up a bit. He was on the mend, but slowly, very slowly. He lived in one of the side streets of the Avenue de Clichy, and had lived there a good while, and the concierge of the house had her mind perfectly at rest with regard to his nationality, albeit that the fact of being an Englishman was not always a sufficient guarantee against the suspicion of being a spy on the part of the lower classes. Moreover, they would not always take the fact for granted; they were unable to distinguish an English from a German or any other accent, and, with them, to be a foreigner was necessarily to be a German, and a German could not be anything but a spy. However, in this instance, I felt no anxiety for my protégé.

Unfortunately, a few days before the closing of Paris, the concierge herself fell ill, and another one took her place. The successor was a man, and not by any means a pleasant man. There was a scowl on his face, as, in answer to his summons, I told him whither I was going; and he cast a suspicious look at a box I was carrying under my arm, which happened to contain nothing more formidable than a surgical appliance. I took no notice, however, and mounted the stairs.

My visit may have lasted between twenty minutes and half an hour. When I came out, a considerable crowd had assembled on the footway and in the road, and a dozen National Guards were ranged in a semicircle in front of the door.

The first cry that greeted me was "Le voilà," and then a corporal advanced. "Your name, citizen," he said, in a hectoring tone, "and what brings you to this house?" I kept very cool, and told him that I would neither give him my name nor an explanation of my visit, but that if he would take me to his lieutenant or captain, I should be pleased to give both to the latter. But he would not be satisfied. "Where is the box you had in your hand? what did it contain? and what have you done with it?" he insisted. I knew that it would be useless to try and enlighten him, so I stuck to my text. Meanwhile the crowd had become very excited, so I simply repeated my request to be taken to the post.

The crowd would have willingly judged me there and then; that is, strung me up to the nearest lamp-post. If they had, not a single one among them would have been prosecuted for murder, and by the end of the siege the British Government would have considered it too late to move in the matter; besides, a great many of my countrymen would have opined that "it served me right" for remaining in Paris, when I might have made myself so comfortable in London or elsewhere. So I felt very thankful when the corporal, though very ungraciously, ordered his men to close around me and "to march." I have, since then, been twice to the Avenue de Clichy on pleasure bent; that is, to breakfast at the celebrated establishment of "le père Lathuille," and the sight of the lamp-posts there sent a cold shudder down my back.

The journey to the military post did not take long. It had been established in a former ball-room or

music-hall, for at the far end of the room there was a stage, representing, as far as I can remember, an antique palace. The floor of it was littered with straw, on which a score or so of civic warriors were lazily stretched out; while others were sitting at the small wooden tables, that had, not long ago, borne the festive "saladier de petit bleu." Some of the ladles with which that decoction had been stirred were still hanging from the walls; for in those neighbourhoods the love of portable property on the part of the patrons is quite Wemmickian, and the proprietors made and make it a rule to throw as little temptation as possible in the way of the former. The place looked quite sombre, though the gas was alight. There was an intolerable smell of damp straw and stale tobacco smoke.

Part of the crowd succeeded in making their way inside, notwithstanding the efforts of the National Guards. My appearance caused a certain stir among the occupants of the room; but in a few moments the captain, summoned from an apartment at the back, came upon the scene, and my preliminary trial was proceeded with at once.

The indictment of the corporal who had arrested me was brief and to the point. "This man is a foreigner who pays constant visits to another foreigner, supposed to be sick. This evening he arrived with a box under his arm which he left with his friend. The concierge has reason to suppose that there is something wrong, for he does not believe in the man's illness. He is supposed to be poor, and still he and his family are living on the fat of the land. My prisoner refused to give me his name and address, or an explanation of his visit."

"What have you to say, monsieur?" asked the captain, a man of about thirty-five, evidently belonging to the better classes. I found out afterwards that his name was Garnier or Garmier, and that he was a cashier in one of the large commercial establishments in the Rue St. Martin. He was killed in the last sortie of the Parisians.

It was the first time I had been addressed that evening as "monsieur." I simply took a card from my pocket-book and gave it to him. "If that is not sufficient, some of your men can accompany me home and ascertain for themselves that I have not given a false name or address," I said.

He looked at it for a moment. "It is quite unnecessary. I know your name very well, though I have not the honour of knowing you personally. I have seen your portrait at my relatives' establishment"—he named a celebrated picture-dealer in the Rue de la Paix,—"and I ought to have recognized you at once, for it is a very striking likeness, but it is so dark here." Then he turned to his men and to the crowd: "I will answer for this gentleman. I wish we had a thousand or so of foreign spies like him in Paris. France has no better friend than he."

I was almost as much afraid of the captain's praise as I had been of the corporal's blame, because the crowd wanted to give me an ovation; seeing which, M. Garmier invited me to stay with him a little while, until the latter should have dispersed. It was while sitting in his own room that he told me the following story.

"My principal duty, monsieur, seems to consist, not in killing Germans, but in preventing perfectly honest Frenchmen and foreigners from being killed or maimed. Not later than the night before last, three men were brought in. They were all very powerful fellows; there was no doubt about their being Frenchmen. They did not take their arrest as a matter of course at all, but to every question I put they simply sent me to the devil. It was not the behaviour of the presumed spy, who, as a rule, is very soft spoken and conciliating until he sees that the game is up, when he becomes insulting. Still, I reflected that the violence of the three men might be a clever bit of acting also, the more that I could see for myself that they were abominably, though not speechlessly, drunk. Their offence was that they had been seen loitering in a field very close to the fortifications, with their noses almost to the ground. Do what I would, an explanation I could not get, and at last the most powerful of the trio made a movement as if to draw a knife. With great difficulty a dozen of my men succeeded in getting his coat off; and there, between his waistcoat and his shirt, was a murderously looking blade, a formidable weapon indeed.

"'He is a Prussian spy, sure enough!' exclaimed the roomful of guards.

"I examined the knife carefully, tried to find the name of the maker, and all at once put it to my nose. Then I took up a candle and looked more carefully still at the prisoners. 'They are simply drunk,' I said, 'and the best thing you can do is to take them home.'

"'But the knife?' insisted the sergeant.

"'The knife is all right,' I answered.

"'I should think it is all right,' said the owner, 'seeing that I am cutting provisions all day with it for those confounded Parisians.'

"But the guards were not satisfied with the explanation. They began to surround me. 'That was surely a sign you made to the fellow when you lifted the blade to your face, captain,' said the sergeant.

"'Not at all, friend; I was simply smelling it. And it smelt abominably of onions.' That will give you an idea, monsieur, of the life they lead me also. Still, I would ask you, as a particular favour, monsieur, not to mention your mishap to any one. As you are aware, I am not to blame; but we are in bad odour enough as it is at the Ministry of War, and we do not wish to increase our somewhat justified reputation for irresponsible rowdyism and lack of discipline."

I gave him my promise to that effect, and have not mentioned the matter until this day.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The siege — The food-supply of Paris — How and what the Parisians eat and drink — Bread, meat, and wine — Alcoholism — The waste among the London poor — The French take a lesson from the alien — The Irish at La Villette — A whisper of the horses being doomed — M. Gagne — The various attempts to introduce horseflesh — The journals deliver their opinions — The supply of horseflesh as it stood in '70 — The Académie des Sciences — Gelatine — Kitchen gardens on the balcony — M. Lockroy's experiment — M. Pierre Joigneux and the Englishman — if cabbages, why not mushrooms? — There is still a kitchen garden left — Cream cheese from the moon, to be fetched by Gambetta — His departure in a balloon — Nadar and Napoléon III. — Carrier-pigeons — An aerial telegraph — Offers to cross the Prussian lines — The theatres — A performance at the Cirque National — "Le Roi s'amuse," at the Théâtre de Montmartre — A déjeûner at Durand's — Weber and Beethoven — Long winter nights without fuel or gas — The price of provisions — The Parisian's good-humour — His wit — The greed of the shopkeeper — Culinary literature — More's "Utopia" — An ex-lieutenant of the Foreign Legion — He gives us a breakfast — He delivers a lecture on food — Joseph, his servant — Milk — The slender resources of the poor — I interview an employé of the State Pawnshop — Statistics — Hidden provisions — Bread — Prices of provisions — New Year's Day, and New Year's dinners — The bombardment — No more bread — The end of the siege.

I am not a soldier, nor in the least like one; hence, I have, almost naturally, neglected to note any of the strategic and military problems involved in the campaign and the siege. But, ignorant as I am in these matters, and notwithstanding the repeated failures of General Trochu's troops to break through the lines of investment, I feel certain, on the other hand, that the Germans would have never taken Paris by storming it. Years before, Von Moltke had expressed his opinion to that effect in his correspondence, not exactly with regard to the French capital, but with regard to any fortified centre of more than a hundred thousand inhabitants. Such an agglomeration, even if severely left alone, and only shut off from the rest of the world, falls by itself. I am giving the spirit and not the substance of his words.

Consequently, there is no need to say, that, to the mere social observer, the problems raised by the food-supply were perhaps the most interesting. Even under normal conditions, the average Parisian in his method of feeding is worth studying; he is supposed to be one of the most abstemious creatures on the civilized globe. And yet, I do not think that he consumes less alcohol than the average Englishman or German. The Frenchman's alcohol is more diluted; that is all. A drunken woman is a very rare sight, either in Paris or in the provinces; nevertheless, there is, probably, not one in a thousand women among the lower classes who drinks less than her half a bottle of wine per day; while ladies of high degree generally partake of one if not two glasses of chartreuse with their coffee, after each of the two principal meals. *Un grog Américain* is as often ordered for the lady as for the gentleman, during the evening visits to the café. I am speaking of gentlewomen by birth and education, and of the spouses of the well-to-do men, not of the members of the demi-monde and of those below them.

So far, the question of drink, which, after my visit to the wine-dépôts at Bercy, assumed an altogether different aspect to my mind. I began to wonder whether the plethora of wine would not do as much harm as the expected scarcity of food. My fears were not groundless.

Frenchmen, especially Parisians, not only eat a great quantity of bread, but they are very particular as to its quality. I have a note showing that, during the years 1868-69, the consumption per head for every man, woman, and child amounted to a little more than an English pound per day, and that very little of this was of "second quality," though the latter was as good as that sold at many a London baker's as first. I tasted it myself, because the municipality had made a great point of introducing it to the lower classes at twopence per quartern less than the first quality. Nevertheless, the French workman would have none of it.[83]

Even in the humblest restaurants, the bread supplied to customers is of a superior quality; the ordinary household bread (pain de ménage) is only to be had by specially asking for it; the roll with the café-au-lait in the morning is an institution except with the very poor.

As for meat, I have an idea, in spite of all the doubts thrown upon the question by English writers, that the Parisian workman in 1870 consumed as much as his London fellow. The fact of the former having two square meals a day instead of one, is not sufficiently taken into account by the casual observer. There are few English artisans whose supper, except on Sundays, consists of anything more substantial than bread and cheese. The Frenchman eats meat at twelve a.m. and at six p.m. The nourishment contained in the scraps, the bones, etc., is generally lost to the Englishman: not a particle of it is wasted in France. Be that as it may, the statistics for 1858 show a consumption of close upon eight ounces (English) of fresh meat per day for every head of the population. Be it remembered that these statistics are absolutely correct, because a town-due of over a halfpenny per English pound

is paid on the meat leaving the public slaughter-houses, and killed meat is taxed similarly at the city gates. Private slaughter-houses there are virtually none.

Allowing for all this, it will be seen that Paris was not much better off than other capitals would have been if threatened with a siege, except, perhaps, for the ingenuity of even the humblest French housewife in making much out of little by means of vegetables, fruit, and cunningly prepared sauces, for which, nevertheless, butter, milk, lard, etc., were wanted, which commodities were as likely to fail as all other things. Nor must one forget to mention the ingenuity displayed in the public slaughter-houses themselves, in utilizing every possible scrap of the slaughtered animals for human food. I had occasion, not very long ago (1883), to go frequently, and for several weeks running, to one of the poorest quarters in London. I often made the journey on foot, for I am ashamed to say that, until then, the East End was far more unknown to me than many an obscure town in France, Italy, Germany, and Spain. The clever remark of a French sociologist that "the battle of life is fought below the belt," holds especially good with regard to the lower classes. Well, I may unhesitatingly say that in no country are the poor left in greater ignorance with regard to cheap and nourishing food than in England, if I am to judge by London. The French, the German, the Italian, the Spanish poor, have a dozen inexpensive and succulent dishes of which the English poor know absolutely nothing; and still those very dishes figure on the tables of the well-to-do, and of fashionable restaurants, as entrées under more or less fantastic names. Is the English working man so utterly devoid of thrift and of common sense, is his contempt for the foreigner so great as to make him refuse to take a lesson from the latter? I think not. I fancy it will depend much on the manner in which the lesson is conveyed. A little less board-school work and Sunday-school teaching, fewer Bible classes, and a good many practical cooking-classes would probably meet the case.

The French, though aware of their incontestable superiority in the way of preparing food, did not disdain to take a lesson from the alien. They clearly foresaw the fate in store for the cattle penned in the squares and public gardens, if compelled to remain there under existing conditions, and with the inclement season close at hand; consequently, the authorities enlisted the services of Mr. Wilson, an Irish gentleman who had been residing in Paris for a number of years, and whose experience in the salted-provision trade seemed to them very likely to yield most satisfactory results. Up till then, only thirty head of cattle had been submitted to his process, from that moment the number is considerably increased, and it becomes apparent that, in a short while, there will be few live oxen, sheep, or pigs left in Paris, though, as yet we are only in the beginning of October. Under Mr. Wilson's able management, half a hundred Irishmen are at work for many, many hours a day at the slaughter-house in La Villete, whither flock the Parisians, at any rate the privileged ones, to watch the preliminaries to the régime of salt-junk which is staring them in the face. The fodder thus economized will go to the horses, although there is a whisper in the air that one eminent savant has recommended their immediate slaughter and salting also. Of course, such as are wanted for military purposes will be exempted from this holocaust on the altar of patriotism. M. Gagne, who has already provided the Parisians with amusement for years, in his capacity as a perpetual candidate for parliamentary honours, does not stop at hippophagy; he seriously proposes anthropophagy. "A human being over sixty is neither useful nor ornamental," he exclaimed at a public meeting; "and to prove that I mean what I say, I am willing to give myself as food to my sublime and suffering townsmen." Poor fellow! as mad as a March hare, but a man of education and with an infinite fund of sympathy for humanity. He was but moderately provided for at the best of times; his income was derived from some property in the provinces, and, as a matter of course, the investment of Paris stopped his supplies of funds from that quarter. He was of no earthly use in the besieged city, but he refused to go. He had a small but very valuable collection of family plate, which went bit by bit to the Mint, not to feed himself but to feed others, for he was never weary of well-doing. He reminded one irresistibly of Balzac's hero, "le Père Goriot," parting with his treasures to supply his ungrateful daughters, for the Parisians were ungrateful to him. Mad as he was, no man in possession of all his mental faculties could have been more sublime.

Whatever the question of human flesh as food may have been to the Parisians, that of horseflesh was by no means new to them. Since '66, various attempts had been made to introduce it on a large scale, but, for once in a way, they were logical in their objections to it. "It is all very well," wrote a paper, devoted to the improvement of the humbler classes,—"it is all very well for a few savants to sit round a well-appointed table to feast upon the succulent parts of a young, tender, and perfectly healthy horse, especially if the steaks are 'aux truffes,' and the kidneys stewed in 'Madeira;' but that young, tender, and perfectly healthy horse would cost more than an equally tender, young, and perfectly healthy bullock or cow. So, where is the advantage? In order to obtain that advantage, horses only fit for the knacker's yard, not fit for human food, would have to be killed, and the hard-working artisan with his non-vitiated taste, who does not even care for venison or game when it happens to be 'high,' would certainly not care for a superannuated charger to be set before him. You might just as well ask an unsophisticated cannibal to feast upon an invalid. The best part of 'the warrior on the shelf' is his wooden leg or his wooden arm; the best part of the superannuated charger is his skin or his hoof, with or without the shoe; and no human being, whether cannibal or not, can be expected to make a timber-yard, a tanner's yard, or an old-iron and rag store of his stomach, even to please faddists."

As a consequence, only two millions of pounds of horseflesh were "produced" during the first three years succeeding the publication of that article (1866-69); but it is more than doubtful whether a sixteenth part of it was consumed as human food—with a knowledge on the part of the consumers. And during those three years, as if to prove the writer's words, the public were being constantly fortified in their dislike with official reports of the seizure of diseased horses on their way to the four specially appointed slaughter-houses. I remember, that in one week, twenty-four animals were thus

confiscated by the sanitary inspectors, "the flesh of which," added the *Moniteur*, "would have probably found its way to the tables of the better class Parisians, in the shape of Arles, Lorraine, or German sausages. These commodities," it went on, "are never offered by the manufacturer to the experienced proprietors of the ham and beef shops (charcutiers), but to fruiterers, grocers, vendors of so-called dainties, and dealers in preserved provisions." The article had the effect of arousing the suspicion of the better classes as well as of the poorer.

The number of "horse-butchers" had decreased by four during the four years that had elapsed since their first establishment with the Government's sanction, and the remaining eighteen were not very prosperous when the siege brought the question to the fore once more. The public could not afford to be positively hostile to the scheme, but the assertion of the rare advocates of the system, that they were enthusiastic, is altogether beside the truth. They had to make the best of a bad game, that was all. It is a very curious, but positive fact, nevertheless, that I have heard Parisians speak favourably afterwards of dog's and cat's flesh, even of rats baked in a pie; I have heard them say that, for once in a way, even under ordinary circumstances, they would not mind partaking of those dishes: I have never heard them express the same good will toward horseflesh. Of course, I am alluding to those who affected no partisanship, either one way or the other. One thing is very certain, though: at the end of the siege the sight of a cat or dog was a rarity in Paris, while by the official reports there were thirty thousand horses left.

Meanwhile, the Académie de Sciences is attracting notice by the reports of its sittings, in which the question of food is the only subject discussed. Professor Dorderone reads a paper on the utilization of beef and mutton fat; and he communicates a new process with regard to kidney fat, which, up till then, had withstood the attempts of the most celebrated chefs for culinary purposes. He professes to have discovered the means of doing away with the unpleasant taste and smell which have hitherto militated against its use, he undertakes to give it the flavour and aroma of the best butter from Brittany and Normandy. M. Richard, the maire of La Villette, attempts similar experiments with animal offal, which M. Dumas, the great savant, declares highly satisfactory. M. Riche, one of the superior officials of the Mint, transforms bullock's blood into black puddings, which are voted superior to those hitherto made with pig's blood. The nourishing properties of gelatine are demonstrated in an equally scientific manner, and the Académie des Sciences gradually becomes the rendezvous of the fair ones of Paris, who come to take lessons in the culinary art.

"Mais, monsieur," says one, "maintenant que nous avons du beurre, veuillez nous dire d'où viendront nos épinards?"[84]

"Don't let that trouble you, madame," is the answer; "if you will honour us with your presence next week, one of our learned friends from the Jardin des Plantes will tell you how to grow salads, and perhaps asparagus, on your balcony and in front of your windows, in less than a fortnight."

The learned professor is not trying to mystify his charming interlocutor; he honestly believes in what he says: and, a week later, when "the friend from the Jardin des Plantes" has spoken, there is a wonderful run on all the seed-shops near the Châtelet, every one tries to borrow flower-pots from his neighbours, and barrow-loads of mould are being trundled in long lines into Paris. Wherever one goes, the eye meets careful housewives bending over wooden boxes on the balconies; M. Philippe Lockroy, the eminent actor and dramatist, the father of M. Edouard Lockroy, the future minister of the Third Republic, asks seriously why we should not revive the hanging gardens of Semiramis, and sets the example by converting his fifth floor balcony into a market garden, to the discomfiture of his son, who finds his erstwhile bedroom converted into a storehouse for tools and less agreeable matter. I may mention that M. Lockroy did not abandon his project after a mere fleeting attempt, nor when the necessity for it had disappeared, but that at the hour I write (1883) he has taken a prize for pears grown on that same balcony.

The mania spreads, and every one becomes, for the time being, a market-gardener in chambers. Even M. Pierre Joigneux, the well-known horticulturist, and equally clever writer, is bitten with it. That the thing was perfectly feasible, was proved subsequently by M. Lockroy, but the latter did not imitate the nigger who dug up the potatoes an hour after he had planted them, to see if they were growing. That thoroughly inexperienced persons should have indulged in such wild fancies is perhaps not to be wondered at; but M. Joigneux was not one of these, yet he provided an Englishman, who had come to propose the experiment to him, with all the necessary funds. "I was perfectly certain that I should never see him again," he said afterwards; but, with all due deference, we may take this as a shamefaced denial of his credulity. "Contrary to my expectations," M. Joigneux went on, when he told us the tale a few nights afterwards at the Café de la Paix—he lived in the Rue du 4 Septembre,—"my Englishman did come back, accompanied by a porter who carried the requisite material. I did not interfere with him in the least, but merely watched him. I knew that in England they did produce 'greenstuff' in that way; though I was also aware of the difference between a few blades and a serious crop."

Others, more ingenious still, began to argue that if it was possible to produce vegetables in a fortnight by means of light and a few handfuls of mould, it could not be difficult to produce mushrooms with a much thicker layer of mould and in the darkness of a cellar.

Fortunately there is, as yet, a very decent kitchen-garden to fall back upon. It lies between the fortifications and the forts; it has been somewhat pillaged at first, but the authorities have organized several companies of labourers from among those whom they have not been able to provide with arms, and those who do not dig or delve keep watch against depredation. They have a very simple

uniform—a black kepi with crimson piping, and a crimson belt round their waists. They are exposed to a certain danger, for every now and then a stray German bullet lays one of them low, but, upon the whole, their lot is not a hard one.

"We have still nearly everything we want," writes a facetious journalist; "and now that good and obliging fellow, Gambetta, is going to fetch us some cream cheese from the moon for our dessert."

In fact, during the last few days, we have been informed of the Minister of the Interior's impending departure for Tours by balloon on the 7th of October, and by twelve o'clock on that day the little Place St. Pierre, right on the heights of Montmartre, is simply black with people. "The great statesman," the "hero who is to rouse the provinces to unheard-of efforts for the deliverance of the sacred soil of France from the polluting presence of the Teutonic barbarian," has not arrived yet when I edge my way through the crowd, accompanied by an officer on General Vinoy's staff, who is a near relative of mine. With the recollection of my adventure in the Avenue de Clichy fresh upon me, I would not have ventured to come by myself. There is a military post on the Place St. Pierre, and I am wondering whether it will turn out to pay honours to "the great statesman;" and whether Nadar, the famous Nadar, whom I can see towering above the crowd, and giving instructions, will treat Gambetta with the same scant courtesy he once treated Louis-Napoléon, when the latter went to see the ascent of his balloon, "Le Géant," from the Champ-de-Mars. Nadar's behaviour on that occasion reminds one of Elizabeth's with the wife of Bishop Parker. "'Madam,'" said the queen, "I may not call you, and 'mistress' I am loth to call you." Nadar was too fervent a republican to call Louis-Napoléon "Majesty;" he was too well-bred to insult his guest by addressing him as "Monsieur:" so, when he saw the sovereign advancing, he backed towards his car, and, before he could come up with him, gave orders to "let go."

I do not know whether Gambetta came in a carriage. It did not make its appearance on the Place St. Pierre; he probably left it, like meaner mortals, at the foot of the very steep hill. The cheering was immense, and he took it as if to the manner born. He was accompanied by M. Spuller, who was to take the journey with him, and who, even at that time, bore a curious likeness to Mr. Spurgeon. M. Spuller did not appear to claim any of the cheers for himself, for he kept perfectly stolid. Gambetta, on the other hand, bowed repeatedly, at which Nadar grinned. Nadar was always honest, if outspoken. He did not seem particularly pleased with the business in hand, and was evidently determined to get it over as soon as possible. Gambetta was still standing up, bowing and waving his hands, when Nadar gave the order to "let go" the ropes, and the dictator fell back into the lap of his companion. The balloon rose rather quickly, and about nine that same night we had the news that the balloon had safely landed in the Department of the Oise, about twelve miles from Clermont.

From that moment, the ascent of a balloon with its car containing one or two, sometimes three, wicker cages of carrier-pigeons, becomes a favourite spectacle with the Parisians, who would willingly see the departure of a dozen per day. For each departure means not only the conveyance of a budget of news from the besieged city to the provinces, it means the return of the winged messengers with perhaps hopeful tidings that the provinces are marching to the rescue. I am bound to say, at the same time, that the terrible anxiety for such rescue did not arise solely from a wish to escape further physical sufferings and privations. Three-fourths of the Parisians would have been willing to put up with worse for the sake of one terrible defeat inflicted upon the Germans by their levies or by those in the provinces.

But though the gas companies did wonders, fifty-two balloons having been inflated by them during the siege, they could do no more. Nevertheless, the experiments continue: the brothers Goddard have established their head-quarters at the Orléans Railway; MM. Dartois and Yon at the Northern; Admiral Labrousse, who has already invented an ingenious gun-carriage, is now busy upon a navigable balloon; the Government grants a subsidy of forty thousand francs to M. Dupuy de Lôme to assist him in his research; and at the Grande Hôtel there is a permanent exhibition of appliances for navigating the air under the direction of MM. Horeau and Saint-Felix. The public flock to them, and for a moment there is the hope that if we ourselves cannot come and go as free as birds, there will be at least a means of permanent communication with the outer world that way. M. Granier has proposed to make an aerial telegraph without the support of poles. The wire is to be enclosed in a gutta-percha tube filled with hydrogen gas, which will enable it to keep its altitude a thousand or fifteen hundred meters above the earth. The cable is to be paid out by balloons. M. Gaston Tissandier, a well-known authority in such matters, looks favourably upon the experiment; but, alas, it comes to nothing, and we have to fall back upon less ingenious, more commonplace means.

In other words, we are offering tempting fees to plucky individuals who will attempt to cross the Prussian lines. Several do make the attempt, and for a week or so the newspapers and the walls swarm with advertisements of a private firm who will forward and receive despatches at the rate of ten francs per letter. A good many messengers depart; a good many return almost at once, finding the task impossible; those that do not return have presumably been shot by the Prussians, for not a single one reached his destination.

Then we begin to turn our thoughts to the sheep-dog as a carrier of messengers, or rather to the smuggler's dog, thousands of which are known to exist on the Belgian and Swiss frontiers. The postal authorities go even so far as to promise two hundred francs for every batch of despatches if delivered within twenty-four hours of the animal's departure from his starting-place, and fifty francs less for every twenty-four hours' delay; but the animals fall a prey to the Prussian sentries, not one of them succeeds in reaching the French outposts. The carrier-pigeon is all we have left.

Still, we are not discouraged; and in less than a month after the investment, the Parisians begin to clamour for their favourite amusement—the theatre. There are, of course, many divergencies of opinion with regard to the fitness of the measure, and we get some capital articles on the subject, studded with witty sentences and relieved by historical anecdotes, showing that, whatever they may not know, French journalists have an inexhaustible fund of parallels when it becomes a question of the playhouse. "In '92 the Lillois went peacefully to the theatre while the shells were pouring into the devoted city. Why should we be less courageous and less cheerful than they?" writes one. "Nero was fiddling while Rome was burning," writes another, "but Paris is not on fire yet; and, if it were, the Nero who might be blamed for the catastrophe is at Wilhelmshöhe, where, we may be sure, he will not eat a mouthful less for our pangs of hunger. If he does not fiddle, it is because, like his famous uncle, he has no ear for music."

"Whatever may happen," writes M. Francisque Sarcey in the *Gaulois*, "art should be considered superior to all things; the theatre is not a more unseemly pleasure under the circumstances than the perusal of a good book; and it is just in the darkest and saddest hours of his life that a man needs a diversion which will, for a little while, at least, prevent him from brooding upon his sufferings."

To which "Thomas Grimm," of *Le Petit Journal*, who is on the opposite side, replies: "If I may be allowed to intervene in so grave a question, I have no hesitation in saying that the time for singing and amusing ourselves has not arrived. It seems to me very doubtful whether the spectators would not be constantly thinking of scenes enacted in other spots than behind the footlights. And in such moments, when they might concentrate the whole of their attention on the pleasant fiction enacted before them, the sound of the cannon thundering in the distance would more than once recall them to the reality."

The ice was virtually broken, and on Sunday, the 23rd of October, the Cirque National opened its doors for a concert. During the last five years, as my readers will perceive by the almost involuntary break in these notes, I had not been so assiduous a frequenter of the theatre and the concert hall as I used to be, and though I was during the siege overburdened with business, on the nature of which I need not dwell here, I felt that I wanted some amusement. The evenings were becoming chilly, one of my cherished companions was doing his duty with General Vinoy, and, though I had practically unlimited means at my command for my necessities, and am by no means sparing of money at any time, I grudged the price of fuel. As yet, wood only cost six francs the hundredweight, but it was such wood! If the ancient proverb-coiner had been seated in front of the hearth in which it was trying to burn, he might have hesitated to write that "there is no smoke without a fire." The friendly chats by the fireside, which I had enjoyed for many years, had almost entirely ceased. Nearly all my familiars were "on duty," and the few hours they could snatch were either spent in bed, to rest from the fatigue and discomforts of the night, or else at the cafés and restaurants, where the news, mostly of an anecdotal kind, was circulating freely. In fact, the cafés and restaurants, as long as there was fuel and light, were more amusing during the siege than I had known them to be at any time. Perhaps the most amusing feature of these nightly gatherings was the presentation of the bill after dinner. The prices charged at the Café de Paris in its palmiest days were child's play compared to the actual ones. I have preserved the note of a breakfast for two at Durand's.

	frs.
Hors d'Œuvres (Radishes and Sausage)	10
Entrée (Navarin aux Pommes)	18
Filet de Bœuf aux Champignons	24
Omelette Sucrée (3 œufs)	12
Café	1
1 Bouteille de Mâcon	6
Total frs.	71

The bread and butter were included in the hors-d'œuvres, and I may remark that the entrée and the filet de bœuf were only for one. Durand's was the cheapest of the five restaurants which still retained their ordinary clientèle. Bignon, Voisin, the Cafés de la Paix and Anglais were much dearer. The latter gave its patrons white bread as late as the 16th of December.

I made up my mind, then, to go to that concert at the Cirque National, and to as many of the entertainments as might be offered. I have rarely seen such a crowd outside a theatre; and I doubt whether the fact of the performance being for a charitable purpose had much to do with it, because, if so, those who were denied admission might have handed their money at the box-office, but they did not, they only gave the reverse of their blessing. If charity it was, it did not want to end at home that afternoon.

The entertainment began with a charity sermon by the Abbé Duquesnay, a hard-working priest in one of the thickly populated quarters of Paris. I would willingly give another ten francs to hear a similar sermon. I am positive that the Abbé had taken Laurence Sterne for his model. I have never heard anything so brilliant in my life. Not the slightest attempt at thrusting religion down one's throat. A good many quotations on the advantages of well-doing, notably that of Shakespeare, admirably translated, probably by the speaker himself. Then the following to wind up with: "I do not know of a single curmudgeon who has ever been converted into what I should call 'a genuine almsgiver,' by myself, or by my fellow-priests. When he did give, he looked upon the gift as a loan to the Lord in virtue of that gospel precept which you all know. Now, my good friends, allow me to give you my view of that sentence: God is just, and no doubt He will repay the loan with interest, but after He has

settled the account, He will indict the lender before the Highest tribunal for usury. Consequently, if you have an idea of placing your money in that way with God as a security, you had better keep it in your purses."

After this, the orchestra, nine-tenths of whose members are in uniform, performs the overture to "La Muette de Portici" (Masaniello); Pasdeloup conducting. Pasdeloup is a naturalized German, whose real name is Wolfgang, but, in this instance, the public do not seem to mind it; nor is there any protest against the names of two other Germans on the programme, Weber's and Beethoven's. On the contrary, the latter's composition is frantically encored. I believe it is the symphony in *C Minor*, for it has been wedded to Victor Hugo's words, and it is Madame Ugalde who sings the stirring hymn "Patria."

There is a story connected with this hymn, which is not generally known. I give it as it was told to me a day or so afterwards by Auber, who had it from the lips of Joseph Dartigues, who, at the time of its occurrence, was the musical critic of the *Journal des Débats*.

Hugo was very young then, and one night he went to the Théâtre de Madame, which has since become the Gymnase. The piece was one of Scribe's—"La Chatte metamorphosée en Femme;" and Jenny Vertpré, whom our grandfathers applauded at the St. James Theatre in the thirties, was to play the principal part. Still, our poet was not particularly struck with the plot, dialogue, or lyrics; but, all at once, he sat upright in his seat, at the strains of a "Hindoo invocation." When the music ceased, Hugo left the house, humming the notes to himself. He was very fond of music, though he could never reconcile himself to have his dramas appropriated by the librettists, and gave his consent but very reluctantly. Next morning, he met Dartigues on the Boulevard des Italiens, then the Boulevard de Gand. He told him what he had heard, and recommended the critic to go and judge for himself. "It is so utterly different from the idiotic stuff one generally hears." Dartigues acted upon the recommendation. A few days later, they met once more. "Did you go and hear that music, at the Théâtre de Madame?" asked Hugo.

"Yes," was the reply. "I am not surprised at your liking it; it is Beethoven's."

Curious to relate, Hugo had not as much as heard the name of the great German composer. The acquaintance with classical music was very limited in the France of those days. But Hugo never forgot the symphony, and, later on, in his exile, he wrote the words I had just heard.

The impulse has been given, and from that moment the walls of Paris display as many bills of theatrical and musical entertainments as if the Germans were not at the gates. I go to nearly all, and, to my great regret, hear a great many actors and actresses who have received favours and honours at the hand of Louis-Napoléon vie with one another in casting obloquy upon him and his reign. One of the few honourable exceptions is M. Got, who, being invited to recite Hugo's "Châtiments," emphatically refuses "to kick a man when he is down."

At the Théâtre-Français, there is a special box—the erstwhile Imperial box—for the convalescents, who are being tended in the theatre itself.

But though I went to hear Melchisedec and Taillade, Caron and Berthelier, there is one performance that stands out vividly from the rest in my memory. It was a representation of Hugo's "Le Roi s'amuse" ("The Fool's Revenge"), at the theatre at Montmartre. Under ordinary circumstances, I should probably not have gone so far afield to see any piece, not even that which was reputed to be *the masterpiece* of Victor Hugo, but, in this instance, the temptation was too great. The play had only been performed in Paris once—on the 22nd of November, 1832; next day it was suspended by order of the Government. Alexandre Dumas the elder, Théophile Gautier, Nestor Roqueplan, all of whom were present on that memorable night, had spoken to me of its beauties. I had often promised myself to read it, and had never done so. If I had, I should probably not have gone to Montmartre that night, lest my illusions should be disturbed. The performance was intended as a tribute to the genius of the poet, but also as an act of defiance on the part of the young Republic to the preceding régimes; though why it was not revived during the Second Republic I have never been able to make out clearly.

My companion and I toiled up the steep Rue des Martyrs, and it was evident to us, when we got to the Place du Théâtre, that something unusual was going on, for the little square was absolutely black with people. We managed, however, to elbow our way through, and to get two stalls. The house was dimly lighted by gas, the deficiency made up, as far I could see, by lamps in the auditorium, by candles on the stage. There was not an empty seat anywhere. The overture, consisting of snatches from "Rigoletto," was received with deafening applause, and then the curtain rose upon the magnificent hall in the Louvre of François I., with the king surrounded by his courtiers and his favourites. By his side hobbled Triboulet, his evil genius, as Hugo has represented him.

My disappointment was great. I had come to admire, not expecting magnificent scenery, gorgeous costumes, or transcendent acting, but a spirit of reverence for the immortal creation of a great poet. At that time I was not sufficiently familiar with provincial art in England to be able to picture a performance of Shakespeare except under conditions such as prevail in the best of London theatres. I had read accounts, however, of strolling companies and their doings, but I doubt whether the humblest would have been guilty of such utter iconoclasm in the spirit as well as in the letter as I witnessed that night. It was not comic, it was absolutely painful. It was not the glazed calico doing duty for brocade, that made me wince; it was not the anti-macassar replacing lace that made me gasp for breath: it was the miserable failure of those behind the footlights, as well as of those in front, to

grasp the meaning of the simplest line. They had been told that this play was an indictment, not against a libertine king, but against generations and generations of rulers to whom debauch was as the air they breathed. And, in order to make the lesson more striking, Saint-Vallier was represented as an old dotard, Triboulet as a pander, the king as an amorous Bill Sykes, and Triboulet's daughter as an hysterical young woman who virtually gloried in her dishonour. I had seen "Orphée aux Enfers," "La Belle Hélène," and "La Grande Duchesse;" I had heard Schneider at her best and at her worst; I had heard women of birth and breeding titter, and gentlemen roar, at allusions which would make a London coalheaver blush;—I had never seen anything so downright degrading as this performance. And when, at last, the *dramatis personæ* gathered round a bust of Hippocrates—the best substitute for one of Victor Hugo they could find,—and one of them recited "Les Châtiments," I left, hoping that I should never see such an exhibition again. It was one of the first deliberately planned lessons in "king-hatred" I had heard. The disciples looked to me very promising, and the Commune, when it came, was not such a surprise to me, after all. Before then, I had come to the conclusion that the *barbarians* outside the gates of Paris were less to be feared than those inside—the former, at any rate, believed in a chief; the motto of the others was, "Ni Dieu, ni maître."

Meanwhile, the long winter nights have come. The stock of gas is pretty well exhausted, or tantamount to it; wood, similar to that I have described already, has risen to seven francs fifty centimes the hundredweight. Beef and mutton have entirely disappeared from the butchers' stalls. Rats are beginning to be sold at one franc apiece, and eggs cost thirty francs a dozen. Butter has risen to fifty francs the half-kilogramme (about seventeen ozs., English). Carrots and potatoes fetch, the first, forty francs, the second, twenty francs, the peck (English). I am being told that milk is still to be had, but I have neither tasted nor seen any for ten days. Personally, I do not feel the want of it; but in my visits to some of the poor in my neighbourhood I am confronted by the fact of little ones, between two and three years of age, being fed on bread soaked in wine, and suffering from various ailments in consequence.

I am pursuing some inquiries at the various mairies, and find that the death-rate for October has reached nearly three thousand above the corresponding month of the previous year. I am furthermore told that not a third of this increase is due to the direct results of the siege—that is, to death on the battle-field, or resulting from wounds received there; typhus and low fever, anæmia, etc., are beginning to ravage the inhabitants. Worse than all, the authorities have made a mistake with regard to the influx of strangers. The seventy-five thousand aliens and Parisians who have left at the beginning of the siege have been replaced by three times that number, so that Paris has virtually one hundred and fifty thousand more mouths to feed than it counted upon. "All the women, children, and old men," says one of my informants, "ought to have been removed to some provincial centre; it would have cost no more, and would have left those who remained free for a more energetic defence. And you will scarcely believe it, monsieur, but here is the register to prove it; there have been nearly four hundred marriages celebrated during the past month. It looks to me like tying the Gordian knot with a vengeance."

One thing I cannot help remarking amidst all this suffering; the Parisian never ceases to be witty. Among my pensioners there was the wife of a hard-working, frugal upholsterer, whose trade was absolutely at a standstill. He was doing his duty on the fortifications; she was keeping the home together on the meagre pittance allowed to her husband by the Government, and the rations doled out to her every morning. The youngest of her three children was barely four weeks old. One morning, to my great surprise, I found two infants in her lap. "C'est comme ça, monsieur," she said, with a wan smile. "André found it on a doorstep in the Rue Mogador, and he brought it home, saying, 'It won't make much difference; Nature laid the table for two infants.'"

The Parisian is a born lounger. Balzac had said, "Flâner est une science, c'est la gastronomie de l'œil." Seeing that it is the only gastronomy they can enjoy under the circumstances, the Parisians take to it with a vengeance during those months of October and November, and their favourite halting-places are the rare provision-shops that have still a fowl, or a goose, or a pigeon in their windows. The sight of a turkey causes an obstruction, and the would-be purchaser of a rabbit is mobbed like the winner of a great prize in the lottery. Nine times out of ten the negotiations do not go beyond the preliminary stage of inquiring the price, because vendors are obstinate, though polite.

"How much for the rabbit?" says the supposed Nabob, for the very fact of inquiring implies wealth.

"Forty-five francs, monsieur."

"You are joking. Forty-five francs! It's simply ridiculous," protests the other one.

"I am not joking, monsieur; and I cannot take a farthing less."

The would-be diner goes away; but he has scarcely gone a few steps, when the dealer calls him back. "Listen, monsieur," he cries.

Hope revives in the other's breast. His fancy conjures up a savoury rabbit-stew, and he leaps rather than walks the distance that separates him from the stall.

"Ventre affamé a des oreilles pour sûr," says a bystander.[85]

"Well, how much are you going to take off?"

"I am not going to take off a penny, but I thought I might tell you that this rabbit plays the drum."

Some of the jokes, though, were not equally innocent, and revealed a callousness on the part of the perpetrators which it is not pleasant to have to record. True, they did not affect the very poor, whose poverty was, as it were, a guarantee against them; but it is a moot point whether the well-to-do should be shamelessly robbed by the well-to-do tradesmen for no other reason than to increase the latter's hoard. Greed, that abominable feature in the character of the French middle-classes, showed itself again and again under circumstances which ought to have suspended its manifestations for the time being.

I have already noted that one member of the Académie des Sciences had insisted upon the benefits to be derived from the extraction of gelatine from bones. A great number of equally learned men simply scouted the idea as preposterous, notably Dr. Gannal, the well-known authority on embalming. His opposition went so far as to prompt him to submit his family and himself to the "ordeal," as he called it. At the end of a week, all of them were reduced to mere skeletons; and then, but then only, Dr. Gannal sent for his learned colleagues to attest the effects. The drowning man will proverbially cling to a straw; consequently, some Parisians took to gelatine, undeterred by the clever lampoons, one of which I quote:

"L'inventeur de la gélatine,
À la chair préférant les os,
Veut désormais que chacun dîne
Avec un jeu of dominos."

They, however, did so with their eyes open, and as a last resource; not so those who were imposed upon, and induced to part with their money for cleverly imitated calves' heads, which, as a matter of course, merely left a gluish substance at the bottom of the saucepan, to the indignation of anxious housewives and irate cooks, one of whom took her revenge one day by clapping the saucepan and its contents on the head of the fraudulent dealer, and, while the latter was in an utterly defenceless state, triumphantly stalking away with two very respectable fowls. The shopkeeper had the impudence to seek redress in a court of law. The judge would not so much as listen to him.

Another curious feature of the siege was the sudden passion developed by cooks for what I must be permitted to call culinary literature. As a rule, the French cordon-bleu, and even her less accomplished sisters, do not go for their recipes to cookery-books; theirs is knowledge gained from actual experience: but at that period such works as, "Le Livre de Cuisine de Mademoiselle Marguerite," "La Cuisinière Pratique," etc., were to be found on every kitchen table. The cooks had simply taken to them in despair, not believing a single word of their contents, but on the chance of finding a hint that might lend itself to the provisions placed at their disposal. I refrain from giving their criticisms on the authors: the forcibleness of their language could only be done justice to by such masters of realism as M. Zola. I have spoken before now of the uniform good temper of the Parisians under the most trying circumstances; I beg to append a rider, excluding cooks, but especially female ones. "C'est comme si on essayait d'enseigner le patinage à la femme aux jambes de bois du boulevard," said the ministering angel to one of my bachelor friends. One day, to my great surprise, on calling on him I found him reading. He was not much given to poring over books, though his education had been a very good one.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"I am reading More's 'Utopia,'" he said, putting down the volume.

"What do you mean?" I remarked, pointing to the cover, displaying a young woman bending over stew-pans.

"This is More's 'Utopia,' to me at present. It speaks of things which will never be realized; suprême de volaille, tournedos à la poivrade, and so forth. The book wants another chapter," he went on, "a chapter treating of the food of besieged cities. The Dutch might have written it centuries ago: at Leyden they were on the point of eating their left arms, while defending themselves with their right; they could have told us how to stew the former. If one could add a chapter to that effect, the book might go through a hundred new editions, and the writer might make a fortune. It would not do him much good, for he would be expected to live up to his precepts, and not touch a morsel of that beautiful kangaroo or elephant I saw yesterday on the Boulevard Haussmann."

At that moment a mutual acquaintance came in. He had been a lieutenant in the Foreign Legion, and lost his right foot before Constantine. Noticing our host's doleful looks, he inquired the cause, and we got another spoken essay on the difficulties of the situation as connected with the food supply. I may add that, wherever a few men were gathered together, this became invariably the absorbing topic of conversation.

The ex-lieutenant laughed outright. "You are altogether labouring under a mistake; there is plenty of food of a kind left, though I admit with you that the Parisian does not know how to prepare it."

"Will you teach them?" was the query.

"I will not, because they would simply sneer at me. Feeding is simply a matter of prejudice; and, to prove it to you, I will give you a breakfast to-morrow morning which you will appreciate. But I am not going to tell you of what it consists, nor will I do so until two days after the entertainment."

We accepted the invitation, though I must confess that I was not eager about it. Nevertheless, next

day, about one, we were seated at the hospitable board of our ex-lieutenant, who, three weeks before, had dismissed his female servant and was waited upon by an old trooper, with one arm. Though perfectly respectful, Joseph received us with a broad grin, which, as the repast progressed, was contracted into a proud smile. He had evidently co-operated with his master in the concoction of the dishes, all of which, I am bound to say, were very savoury. In fact, I was like that new tenant of the house haunted by a laughing ghost. But for the knowledge that there was something uncanny about it, I would have been intensely gratified and amused. Our host told us, with great glee, that Joseph had been up since a quarter-past four that morning; and that before five he was at the Halles. As we could distinctly taste the onions in the stew that served as an entrée, and as the potatoes round the next dish were visible to the naked eye, we concluded that the old trooper had got up so early to buy vegetables, and were correspondingly grateful. There was no mystery whatsoever about the fish, and about the entremets. The first was dry cod—but with a sauce such as I had never tasted before or have since. The latter was a delicious dish of sweet macaroni, fit to set before a prince. I repeat, but for my knowledge that there was something uncanny about that meal, I would have asked permission to come every day. Yet I felt almost equally convinced that, with regard to one dish, we had been doubly mystified—that they were larks, which our host had managed to procure somehow, though I missed the bones.

True to his word, our Amphitryon revealed the real ingredients of the menu forty-eight hours after. The entrée had been composed of very small mice—field-mice, I think we call them in England; the second dish was rat. Not a single ounce of butter or lard had been used in the sauces or for the macaroni. The dried cod was still plentiful enough to be had at any grocer's or salted provision shop. Instead of butter, Joseph used horse-marrow. The horse-butchers sold the bones ridiculously cheap, not having the slightest idea what to do with them. The mice, Joseph caught round about the fortifications, whither he went almost every day. The rats he caught in the cellarage of the Halles. He had a cousin there in a large way of business, and access to the underground part of the market was never refused to him.

"From what you have tasted at my rooms," concluded the ex-lieutenant, "you will easily see that our vaunted superiority as cooks is so much humbug. The dish of cod I gave you, and which you liked so much, may be seen on the table of the poorest household in Holland and Flanders at least once, sometimes twice, a week, especially in North-Brabant, where the good Catholics scarcely ever eat anything else on Fridays. The sauce, which they call a mustard-sauce, would naturally be better if made with butter, but you could not taste the difference if the cook takes care to sprinkle a little saffron in her fat or marrow. Saffron is a great thing in cooking, and still our best chefs know little or nothing about it. But for the saffron, you would have detected a slight odour of musk in the entrée you took to be larks. You may almost disguise anything with saffron, except dog's-flesh. Listen to what I tell you, and in a month or so, perhaps before, you'll admit the truth of my words. The moment horseflesh fails, the Parisians will fall back upon dogs, turning up their noses at cats and rats, though both are a thousand times superior to the latter. In saying this, I am virtually libelling the cat and the rat; for 'the friend of man,' be he cooked in ever so grand a way, is always a detestable dish. His flesh is oily and flabby; stew him, fry him, do what you will, there is always a flavour of castor oil about him. The only way to minimize that flavour, to make him palatable, is to salt, or rather to pepper him; that is, to cut him up in slices, and leave them for a fortnight, bestrewing them very liberally with peppercorns. Then, before 'accommodating' them finally, put them into boiling water for a while, and throw the water away.

"No such compromises are necessary with 'the fauna of the tiles,' who, with his larger-sized victim, the rat, has been the most misprized and misjudged of all animals, from the culinary point of view. Stewed puss is by far more delicious than stewed rabbit. The flesh of the former tastes less pungent than that of the latter, and is more tender. As for the prejudice against cat, well, the Germans have the same prejudice against rabbit, and while I was in the Foreign Legion there was a Wurtemberger, a lieutenant, who would not touch bunny, but who would devour grimalkin. Those who have not tasted couscoussou of cat, prepared according to the Arabian recipe—though the Arabs won't touch it—have never tasted anything."[86]

Our friend said much more, notably with regard to rat and horseflesh; and then he wound up: "But what is the good? Those who might benefit by my advice are not here, and, if they were, they would probably scorn it; I mean the very poor. The only item of animal food which cannot be adequately replaced by something else yielding as much or nearly as much nourishment is milk. But, unless an adult be in delicate health or suffering from ailments to the alleviation and cure of which milk is absolutely necessary, he may very well go without it for six months. Not so children. I am only showing you that the poor, with their slender resources—and Heaven knows they are slender enough—might do better than they are doing, for cats and rats must still be very plentiful, only they won't touch them."

The reference to the very poor and their slender resources recurred more than once that evening, but I knew that the authorities were trying to do all they could in the way of relieving general and individual distress, and that they were admirably seconded by private charity, which not only placed comparatively large sums at their disposal, but bestirred itself by means of specially appointed committees and visitors. The rations of meat (horsemeat) and bread distributed were not sufficient. The first had already fallen to forty-five grammes per day per head, the second to three hundred and fifty grammes;[87] they were to fall much lower. Tickets were also distributed for set meals, with and without meat. There was, furthermore, a distribution of fuel, albeit that there was really no more fuel to distribute. All the wooden seats in the public thoroughfares, the scaffoldings before the half-

finished buildings had disappeared. At one of my friend's apartments there was none but the outer door left, all the others had been replaced by curtains. They had been chopped up to keep his family warm. The fear of the terrible landlord may have prevented the poor from imitating this proceeding. At any rate, I noticed no absent doors in my visits to any of them. A further supply of meat or bread, even if they had the money, was out of the question for them; because, though some shops remained open and their owners were compelled to sell according to the tariff set forth by the municipality, they had nothing to sell. I remember being in the Rue Lafayette one morning, near one of those shops, when I saw the whole of the crowd, that had been waiting there for hours probably, turn away disappointed. The assistant had just told them that "this morning we have nothing to sell but preserved truffles."

At the same time, I am bound to note the fact that, at the slightest rumours of peace, the usually empty windows became filled with artistically arranged pyramids of "canned" provisions, at prices considerably below those charged twenty-four hours before, and even below those mentioned in the municipal tariff. Frequent attempts were made by the police to discover the hiding-places for this stock, but they failed in every instance. Those hiding-places were far away from the shops, and the shopkeepers themselves were too wary to be caught napping. A stranger might have safely gone in and offered a hundred francs for half a dozen tins of their wares. They would have looked a perfect blank, and told him they had none to sell: and no wonder; their detection would have meant certain death; no earthly power could have saved them from the legitimate fury of the populace. And even those who bought the hidden food at abnormal prices were compelled to preserve silence, at the risk of seeing their supplies cut off. One thing is certain, and I can unhesitatingly vouch for it. My name had become known in connection with several committees for the relief of the poor. On the 25th of January, at 11 a.m., when the negotiations between Bismarck and M. Jules Favre could have been but in the preliminary stage, I received a note, brought by hand, from a grocer in the Faubourg Montmartre, asking me to call personally, as he had something to communicate which might be to the advantage of my protégés. An hour later, I was at his establishment, and he offered to sell me five hundred tins of various provisions and two hundred and fifty boxes of sardines at two francs each. It was something like double the ordinary price. A little more than three weeks before that date, I had sent a letter to the same man, asking him for a similar quantity of goods, which I intended to distribute as New Year's gifts. The reply was, that he had none, but that he might *possibly* procure them at the rate of five francs a tin and box. I found out afterwards, that the excellent grocer had a son at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. I need not point out the logical deduction.

I am equally certain that there were large quantities of horseflesh, salted or fresh, hidden somewhere; for, as I have already noted, it was officially, or at any rate semi-officially stated, that, on the day of the conclusion of the armistice, there were thirty thousand live horses in Paris, and the greater part of these would have been slaughtered by order of the Government, if the measure had been thought expedient, for there is scarcely any need to say that the pretext of their being wanted for military purposes would not hold water. A sixth part of them, or less, would have been amply sufficient for that. In reality, M. Favre and his colleagues were, by this time, fully convinced that all further resistance was useless, but they had not the courage to say so frankly, and they wished to convert the advocates of "resistance to death" to their side by aggravating the scarcity of the food supply, as if it were not bad enough already. The horses confiscated by the Government for food were paid for by them at the rate of between one and two francs per pound, yet there was no possibility of buying a single pound of horseflesh, beyond what was distributed at the municipal canteens, for less than seven or eight francs. Whence this difference?

Butter could be bought for thirty to thirty-five francs per pound, but such butter! Anything worth eating commanded sixty francs. There was a kind of grease that fetched two francs per pound, but even the poorest shrank from it, and preferred to eat dry bread, which was composed as follows:—

(For a Loaf of 300 Grammes.)

75	grammes of	wheat.
15	"	rye, barley, or peas.
60	"	rice.
90	"	oats.
30	"	chopped straw mixed with starch.
30	"	bran.

As for the rest, here are some of the prices—at which, however, things were not always to be had:—

	frs.
A dog or a cat	20
A rat, crow, or sparrow	3 or 4
1 lb. of bear's flesh	12
1 lb. of venison	14
1 lb. of wolf's flesh, or porcupine's	8
A rabbit	40
A fowl	40
A pigeon	25
A goose	80
A turkey	100
1 lb. of ham (very rare)	10

1 lb. of bacon (not so rare)	6
Eggs (each)	5
Haricot beans (per litre)	8
Cabbages (each)	16
Leeks (each)	1
Bushel of carrots (2-3/4 gallons)	75
Bushel of potatoes	35
Bushel of onions	80

Still, until the very last, there occurred, as far as I know, no case of actual starvation, and I was pretty well posted up in that respect. The very young and very old suffered most: for the milk that was sold at two francs per litre was simply disgraceful, three-fourths of it was water; and beef-tea, or that worthy of the name, was not to be had at any price. Both commodities were distributed to the poor at the municipal canteens, on the certificate of a doctor; but the latter, though by no means hard-hearted, and thoroughly sympathetic with the ills he was scarcely able to alleviate, had to draw the line somewhere. Of bedding, bed-linen, and warm underclothing there was little or no lack; but the cold, for several days, at frequent intervals was severe to a degree.

Our ex-lieutenant's reference to the poor and their slender resources recurred frequently to my mind for several days after the scene described above, and set me wondering how far the poor had parted, finally or temporarily, with their household goods and small valuables in order to obtain some of the quasi-luxuries I have just enumerated. In order to get at the truth of the matter, I determined to pay a visit to the central pawnbroking office in the Rue des Blancs Manteaux. I provided myself with a letter of introduction to the director, who placed an official at my disposal. This was towards the latter end of December.

I transcribe my informant's statement in brief and from memory, but I am positive as to main facts. Up till the end of August the transactions at the central office, which virtually include those of the whole of the capital, presented nothing abnormal, but the moment the investment became an almost foregone conclusion, there was a positive run on the Mont-de-Piété. The applicants for loans, however, were by no means of the poorest or even of the lower-middle class, but the well-to-do people, whose chief aim was to place their valuables in safety, and who looked upon the 9-1/2 per cent. interest they had to pay on the advances received as a premium for warehousing and insurance. They knew that nothing could be more secure than the fire and burglar proof receptacles of the Mont-de-Piété, and that, come what might, the State would be responsible for the value of the articles deposited.

This run ceased when the investment was an accomplished fact, but, as a matter of course, the financial resources had been put to a severe test, and, at the time my informant spoke to me, they had dwindled from nearly eight millions of francs, at which they were computed in the beginning of August, to about three-quarters of a million. The order of the mayor of Paris, intended to prevent this, had come too late. The decree of 1863, limiting the maximum of a loan to ten thousand francs at the chief office, and to five hundred francs at any of the auxiliary ones, had been suspended in favour of a decision that, during the investment, no loan should exceed fifty francs.[88] From the 19th of September to the end of October, the cessation from *all* labour, and, consequently, the non-receipt of wages throughout the capital, had to be faced in the acceptance of thousands of pledges, consisting of household goods, apparel, etc.; but, curiously enough, workmen's tools and implements formed but a small proportion of these. At present, the whole of the business was at a standstill; there was no redemption of pledges, and few were offered.[89]

Meanwhile, Christmas and the New Year were at hand, and not a single sortie had led to any practical modification of the situation. The cold was intense. Coal and coke could be obtained for neither money nor love. The street lamps had not been lighted for nearly a month; up till the end of October, one had been lighted here and there; then there had been an attempt to supply the absence of gas by paraffin in the public thoroughfares, but the stock of mineral oil was also getting lower. Most of the shops were closed, but, at the advent of the festive season, a few took down their shutters and made a feeble display of bonbons in sugar and chocolate, and even of marrons glacés. I doubt whether these articles found many purchasers. The toy-shops never took the trouble of exhibiting at all. They were wise in their abstention, for even the most ignorant Parisian was aware that nine-tenths of the wares in these establishments hailed from Germany, and he would assuredly have smashed the windows if they had been offered for sale. Nay, the booths that make their appearance on the Boulevards at that time of the year displayed few toys, except of a military kind. It was very touching, in after years, to hear the lads and lassies refer to the 1st of January, 1871, as *the New Year's Day without the New Year's gifts*.

Nevertheless, it must not be thought that Paris was given over to melancholy on these two days. Crowds perambulated the streets and sat in the cafés. In spite of all that has been said by ultra-patriotic writers, I am inclined to think that the Parisians no longer cherished any illusions about the possibility of retrieving their disasters, though many may have thought that the besiegers would abstain, at the last moment, from shelling the city. The Government—whether with the intention of cheering the besieged or for the purpose of exhausting their stock of provisions as quickly as possible, in order to capitulate with better grace—had made the city a magnificent New Year's gift of

104,000	kilogrammes	of	preserved beef,
52,000	"	"	dried haricot beans,

52,000	"	" olive oil,
52,000	"	" coffee (not roasted),
52,000	"	" chocolate;

which gift elicited the reply of a group of artists and littérateurs that, though thankful for their more epicurean brethren and sisters, they, the littérateurs and artists, had fared very well on Christmas Day and would meet again on New Year's Day to discuss the following menu:—

"Consommé de Cheval au millet.
Brochettes de Foie de Chien à la Maître d'Hôtel.
Émincé de Râble de Chat, Sauce Mayonnaise.
Épaules et Filets de Chien braisés à la Sauce Tomate.
Civet de Chat aux Champignons.
Cotelettes de Chien aux Champignons.
Gigots de Chien flanqués de Ratons.
Sauce Poivrade.
Bégonias au Jus.
Plum-pudding au Rhum et à la Moelle de Cheval."

Simultaneously with the publication of the menu, a dealer in the St. Germain Market put up a new signboard:—

"RÉSISTANCE À OUTRANCE.

"GRANDE BOUCHERIE CANINE ET FÉLINE.

"L'héroïque Paris brave les Prussiens;
Il ne sera jamais vaincu par la famine!
Quand il aura mangé la race chevaline
Il mangera ses rats, et ses chats, et ses chiens."

The proprietor of a cookshop in the Rue de Rome had confined himself to prose, but prose which, to those who could read it aright, was much cleverer than the poetry of his transpontine fellow-tradesman.

"VIN À DIX-HUIT SOUS
ET EAU-DESSUS,
ROSSE BEEF.
RAT GOÛT DE MOUTON."[90]

Personally, I have eaten the flesh of elephants, wolves, cassowaries, porcupines, bears, kangaroos, rats, cats, and horses. I did not touch dog's-flesh knowingly after I had been warned by our ex-lieutenant. The proprietor of the English butcher-shop, M. Debos, who was not an Englishman at all, supplied most of these strange dishes; for he bought nearly all the animals from the Zoological Gardens at tremendous prices. These were only the animals from the Jardin d'Acclimatation in the Bois, which had been sent as guests to the Jardin des Plantes. The elephants belonged to the latter establishment, and were sold to M. Debos for twenty-seven thousand francs. In January I was elected a member of the Jockey Club, but I had dined there once before by special invitation. I give the menu as far as I remember:—

"Soupe au Poireau.
Aloyau de Bœuf.
Poule au Riz.
Flageolets aux Jus.
Biscuits de Reims glacés.
Charlotte aux Pommes."

In spite of the hope that Paris would escape being shelled, minute instructions how to act, in the event of such a calamity, had been posted on the walls. In fact, if speechifying and the promulgation of decrees could have saved the city, Trochu first, and the rest afterwards, would have so saved it. But I have solemnly promised myself at the outset of these notes not to be betrayed into any criticism of the military operations, and I will endeavour to keep my promise to myself.

The first and foremost result of those directions on the part of the Government was a display of water-butts, filled to the brim, in the passage, and of sand-heaps in the yard of every building. As the months went by, and there was no sign of a bombardment, the contents of the casks became so much solid ice, and the sand-heaps disappeared beneath the accumulated snow, to be converted into slush and mire at the first thaw, which gave us, at the same time, a kind of miniature deluge, because, as a matter of course, the barrels had sprung leaks which were not attended to at the time.

And when, early on the 5th of January, the first projectiles crashed down upon some houses in the south of Paris, the people were simply astonished, but still deluded themselves into the belief that it was a mistake, that the "trajectory" had been miscalculated, and the shells had carried farther than was intended. To a certain extent they had good grounds for their supposition. They had heard the big cannon boom and roar at frequent intervals ever since the morning of the 27th of December, and been given to understand that it was merely a big artillery duel for the possession of the plateau d'Avron, between the positions of Noisy-le-Grand and Gournay on the enemy's side, and the forts of Nogent,

Rosny, and Noisy on that of the French. They were, furthermore, under the impression that the shelling of the city would be preceded by a final summons to surrender: they had got that notion mostly from their military dramas and popular histories. But there were men, better informed than the majority of the masses, who made sure that, if not the Parisians themselves, the foreign consuls and the aliens under their charge would receive a sufficiently timely notice, in order to leave the city if they felt so minded.

The 5th of January was a bitterly cold day; it had been freezing hard during the whole of the night, and, as I wended my way across the Seine, about noon, the mist, which had been hanging over the river, was slowly rising in banked and jagged masses, with only a rift here and there for the pitilessly glacial sun to peer through and mock at our shivering condition. When I got to the Boulevard Montparnasse, I met several stretchers, bearing sentries who had been absolutely frozen to within an ace of death.

I know nothing of the military import of a bombardment, but have been told that even the greatest strategists only count upon the moral effect it produces upon the besieged inhabitants. I can only say this: if Marshal von Moltke took the "moral effect" of his projectiles into his calculations to accelerate the surrender of Paris, he might have gone on shelling Paris for a twelvemonth without being one whit nearer his aim; that is, if I am to judge by the scene I witnessed on that January morning, before familiarity with the destruction-dealing shells could have produced the proverbial contempt. At the risk of offending all the sensation-mongers, foreign and native, with pen or with pencil, I can honestly say that a broken-down omnibus and a couple of prostrate horses would have excited as much curiosity as did the sight of the battered tenements at Vaugirard, Montrouge, and Vanves. On the Chaussée du Maine, the roadway had been ploughed up for a distance of about half a dozen yards by a shell; in another spot, a shell had gone clean through the roof and killed a woman by the side of her husband; in a third, a shell had carried away part of the wall of a one-storied cottage, and the whole of the opposite wall: in short, there was more than sufficient evidence that life was no longer safe within the fortifications, and yet there was no wailing, no wringing of hands, no heart-rending frenzied look of despair, either pent up or endeavouring to find vent in shrieks and yells, nay, not even on the part of the women. There was merely a kind of undemonstrative contempt—very unlike the usual French way of manifesting it—blended with a considerable dash of *badauderie*,—for which word I cannot find an English equivalent, because the Parisian loafer or idler is unlike any of his European congeners. To grasp the difference between the former and the latter, one must have had the good fortune to see the same incident in the streets of Paris, London, Madrid, Florence, and Rome, Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg, not to mention Brussels, the Hague, Amsterdam, Munich, and Dresden. The "Monsieur Prudhomme" of Charles Monnier shows but one facet of the Paris badaud's character. The nearest approach to him is the middle-class English tourist on the Continent, who endeavours to explain to his wife and companions things he does not know himself, and blesses his stars aloud for having made him an Englishman.

But even the Paris badaud, who is not unlike his Roman predecessor in his craving for circuses, must have bread; and when the cry arises, a fortnight later, that "there is no more bread," the siege is virtually at an end.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Some men of the Commune — Cluseret — His opinion of Rossel — His opinion of Bergeret — What Cluseret was fighting for — Thiers and Abraham Lincoln — Raoul Rigault on horseback — Théophile Ferré — Ferré and Gil-Pérès, the actor — The comic men of the Commune — Gambon — Jourde, one of the most valuable of the lot — His financial abilities — His endeavours to save — Jourde at Godillot's — Colonel Maxime Lisbonne — The Editor's recollections of him — General Dombrowski and General la Cécilia — A soirée at the Tuileries — A gala-performance at the Opéra Comique — The death-knell of the Commune.

I have before now spoken of a young medical student in whose company I spent several evenings at a café on the Boulevard St. Michel, during the Empire. He, like myself, remained in Paris during the siege, and refused to stir at the advent of the Commune. As a matter of course, whenever we met, while the latter lasted, we rarely spoke of anything else. He sympathized, to a certain extent, with the principle, though not with the would-be expounders of it. I knew few, if any, of the leaders even by sight, though I had heard of some, such as, for instance, Jules Vallès, in connection with their literary work. My admiration was strictly confined to those performances, and I often said so to my friend. "You are mistaken in your estimate of them," he invariably replied. "There are men of undoubted talent among them, for instance, Cluseret; but most of them are like square pegs in round holes. Come with me to-night, and you will be able to judge for yourself; for he is sure to be at the Brasserie Saint-Séverin."

I had never been to the Brasserie Saint-Séverin, though I had paid two or three visits several years before to the café de la Renaissance opposite the Fontaine Saint-Michel, at which establishment the Commune may be said to have been hatched. It was there that, in 1866, Raoul Rigault, Longuet, the brothers Levraud, Dacosta, Genton, Protot, and a dozen more were arrested by the Commissary of Police, M. Clément.

That night, about eight o'clock, we crossed the Pont Saint-Michel, and, in a minute or so, found ourselves amidst some of the shining lights of the Commune.

Save on review days I had never seen so many brilliant uniforms gathered together. As far as I can recollect, there was only one civilian in the group pointed out to me. He looked a mere skeleton, was misshapen, and one of the ugliest men I have ever met. I asked his name, and was told it was Tridon. The name was perfectly familiar to me as belonging to one of the most remarkable polemists during the late régime. A little while afterwards, Cluseret came in.

My friend introduced me, and we sat talking for more than two hours; and I have rarely been more interested than I was that night. Cluseret spoke English very well, for he had been in America several years, and our conversation was carried on in that language. I have already remarked that I had no intention, at that time, to jot down my recollections, still I was so impressed with what I had heard that I made some rough memoranda when I got home. They are among the papers I have preserved.

Cluseret fostered no illusions as to the final upshot of the Commune. "If every man were as devoted to the cause as Kossuth and Garibaldi were to theirs, we should not be able to establish a permanent Commune; but this is by no means the case. Most of the leaders, even those who are not self-seekers, are too visionary in their aims; they will not abate one jot of their ideal. The others think of nothing but their own aggrandisement, and though many are no doubt capable to a degree, they are absolutely useless for the posts they have chosen for themselves. There are certainly exceptions; such as, for instance, Rossel. His technical knowledge is very considerable. If I had to describe him in two words, I should call him Lothario-Cromwell. For, notwithstanding his military aptitudes and his Puritan stiffness in many things, he has too many petticoats about him. In addition to this, he is overbearing and absolutely eaten up with ambition; he is a republican who despises the proletariat; he would fain imitate the axiom of Napoléon I., 'The tools to those who can use them;' but he forgets that it will not do for a socialistic régime such as we would establish, because it is exactly those that cannot use the tools who wish to be treated as if they could. If they had intelligence enough to use the tools, they would have lifted themselves out of their humble, unsatisfactory positions without any aid. Rossel is no doubt a better strategist than I am, and I do not in the least mind his letting me know it, but if Dombrowski or Bergeret was 'Delegate for War,' Rossel would have been in prison or shot a fortnight ago."

"For," continued Cluseret, "Bergeret especially thinks himself a heaven-born general. He shows well on horseback, because, I believe, he began life as a stable-lad: so did Michel Ney; but then, Michel Ney served his apprenticeship at fighting, while Bergeret became a compositor, a chef-de-claque, a proof-reader, and, finally, a traveller for a publishing firm. All these are, no doubt, very honourable occupations, but they are scarcely calculated to make a good general. Still, you should see him: he wears his sash as your officers wear theirs when on duty; he would like the people to mistake it for the grand-cordon of the Légion d'Honneur; and his staff is more numerous than that of the late Emperor. You should go and dine at the head-quarters of the military governor of Paris; I am sure you would be very welcome. Marast at the Palais-Bourbon in '48 was nothing to it. If the Commune lasts another three months there will be servants in livery, gold lace, and powder, like in your country. At present, Bergeret has to put up with attendants in faultless black.

"Personally," he went on, "I am not fighting for Communism, but for Communalism, which, I need not tell you, is quite a different thing. I fail to see why Paris and Lyons should be judged incapable of managing their own municipal affairs without the interference of the State, while other great provincial centres are considered capable of doing so. The English Government does not interfere with the municipal affairs of London on the plea that it is the capital, with those of Manchester on the plea that it has inaugurated a policy of its own, any more than it interferes with those of Liverpool, Leeds, or Bristol. Your lord-lieutenants of counties are virtually decorative officials, something different from our prefects and our sub-prefects, and your Home Secretary has not a hundredth part of the power of our Minister of the Interior. We wish to go a step further than you, without, however, shirking the financial obligations imposed by a federation. What you would call imperial taxes, we are willing to pay in kind as well as money. This is one of the things we do want; what we do not want is the resuscitation of the Empire. I am not speaking at random when I tell you that there are rumours about traitors in our camp, and that, according to these rumours, the struggle against the Versaillese troops would be a mere pretext to sweep the deck for the unopposed entry of an imperial army into Paris. Whence would that army be recruited? From among the prisoners going to leave Germany, who have been worked all the while in the interest of the Napoleonic dynasty. After all, we have as much right to overthrow the Government of Versailles as the Government of Versailles had the right to upset the Empire. Their powers are by no means more valid by virtue of the recent elections, than was the power of Louis-Napoléon by virtue of the plébiscite of 1870. Does M. Thiers really think that he is a better or greater man than Abraham Lincoln, who treated the Southerns as belligerents, not as insurgents?"

So far Cluseret. I am not prepared to say that he was a strictly honourable man, but he was a very intelligent one, probably the most intelligent among the leaders of the Commune. At any rate, his conversation made me anxious to get a nearer sight of some of the latter, and, as they had evidently made the Brasserie Saint-Séverin their principal resort of an evening, I returned thither several times.

A few nights afterwards, I was just in time to witness the arrival of Raoul Rigault, on horseback, accompanied by a staff running by the side of his animal. The whole reminded me irresistibly of Decamp's picture, "La Patrouille Turque." The Prefect of Police was scarcely less magnificently attired than the rest of his fellow-dignitaries. His uniform, if I remember rightly, was blue with red facings,

but it is impossible to say, because it was covered everywhere with gold lace. His myrmidons hustled the crowd in order to make room for their chief, and some one laughed: "Mais il n'y a rien de changé; c'est absolument comme sous l'Empire." For a moment Rigault sat quite still, surveying the crowd and ogling the women through his double eye-glasses. Then he alighted, and caught sight of my friend and myself standing on the threshold. "Quels sont ces citoyens?" he inquired, taking us in from top to toe, and stroking his long beard all the while. Some one told him our names, at which he made a wry face, the more that mine must have been familiar to him, seeing that a very near relative of mine, bearing the same, had been a special favourite with General Vinoy. He did not think fit to molest us; had he done so, it might have fared badly with us, for by the time Lord Lyons could have interfered, we might have been shot.

Ever since, my friend and I have been under the impression that we owed our lives to a dark, ugly little man who, at that moment, whispered something to him, and who, my friend told me, immediately afterwards, was the right hand of Raoul Rigault, Théophile Ferré. That name was also familiar to me, as it was to most Parisians, previous to the outbreak of the war, because Ferré was implicated in the plot against Louis-Napoléon's life, and was tried in the early part of '70 at Blois. Every one knew how he insulted the President, how he refused to answer, and finally exclaimed, "Yes, I am an anarchist, a socialist, an atheist, and woe to you when our turn comes." He kept his word; he was a fiend, and looked one. Whenever there was anything cruel and bloodthirsty going on, he made it a point to be present. He was, though ugly, not half so ugly as Tridon, but one involuntarily recoiled from him.

Curiously enough, this very Théophile Ferré, whom I then saw for the first time, had been the subject of a conversation I had with Gil-Pérès, the actor of the Palais-Royal, on the 25th or 26th of March. I had known Gil-Pérès from the moment he made his mark in "La Dame aux Camélias" as Gaudens. To my great surprise, a day or two after the proclamation of the Commune, I heard that he had been cruelly maltreated in the Rue Drouot, that he had narrowly escaped being killed. Two days later, I paid him a visit in his lodgings at Montmartre; for he had been severely, though not dangerously hurt, and was unable to leave his bed.

"I am very sorry for your mishap," I said; "but what, in Heaven's name, induced you to meddle with politics?"

He burst out laughing, in that peculiar laugh of his which I have never heard before or since, on or off the stage. The nearest approach to it was that of Grassot, but the latter's was like a discharge of artillery, while Gil-Pérès was like that of a musketry volley.

"I did not meddle with politics," he replied; "but you know how fond I am of going among crowds to study character. This day last week, I was passing along the Rue Drouot, when I saw a large group in front of the Mairie. I had left home early in the morning, I knew nothing of what was going on in my neighbourhood, so you may imagine my surprise when I heard them calmly discussing the death of Clément Thomas and Lecomte. My hair stood positively on end, and I must have pushed a bit in order to get nearer the speakers. I had a long black coat on, and they mistook me for a curé. I did all I could to tell them my name, but, before I could utter a word, I was down, and they began trampling on me. Some one, God alone knows who, saved me, by telling them my name. I knew nothing more, for I was brought home unconscious. And to think," he added, "that I might have been a member of the Commune myself, if I had liked."

"What do you mean?" I said, for I began to think that he was out of his mind.

"Well, you know that during the siege I tried to do my duty as a National Guard, and in my battalion was this Théophile Ferré of whom you have already heard. A most intelligent creature, but poor as Job and ferocious to a degree. He was a study to me, and, of late, he frequently came to see me in the morning. I generally asked him to stay to breakfast, for I liked to hear him talk of the future Commune, though I had not the slightest faith in his visions. I considered him a downright lunatic. About two or three days before this outbreak, he came, one morning, looking as pale as a ghost, but evidently very much excited. Before I had time to ask him the cause of his emotion, he exclaimed, 'This time there is no mistake about it; we are the masters.' I suppose my face must have looked a perfect blank, for he proceeded to explain. 'In two days we'll hold our sittings at the Hôtel-de-Ville, and the Commune will be proclaimed. And now,' he added, 'what can I do for you, citoyen Gil-Pérès? You have always been very kind to me, and I am not likely to forget it when I am at the top of the tree.'

"I told him that I'd feel much obliged to him if he could induce Sardou or Dumas to write me a good part, like the latter had done before, because I wanted to be something more than a comic actor. But I saw that he was getting angry.

"'Do you mean to tell me,' he almost hissed, 'that you do not want to belong to the Commune?'

"'I haven't the slightest ambition that way,' I replied. 'People would only make fun of me, and they would be perfectly right.'

"'Why should people make fun of you?'

"'Because, because——' I stammered.

"He left me no time to finish. 'Because you are a small man,' he said. 'Well, I am a small man, too, and an ugly one into the bargain. I can assure you that the world will hear as much of me before long as if I had been an Adonis and a Hercules.' With this he disappeared, and I have not seen him since."

My purpose in reporting this conversation is to show that the Commune, with all its evils, might have been prevented by the so-called government of Versailles, if its members had been a little less eager to get their snug berths comfortably settled.

To return for a moment to Ferré and his companions, who, without exception, were sober to a degree, though many were probably fond of good cheer. The English writers, often very insufficiently informed, have generally maintained the contrary, but I know for a fact that, among the leaders of the movement, drunkenness was unknown. Ferré himself was among the soberest of the lot: the few evenings I saw him he drank either cold coffee or some cordial diluted with water. Nevertheless, it was he who was directly responsible for the death of Archbishop Darboy, whom he could and might have saved.

In every modern tragedy there is a comic element, and in that of the Commune the comic parts were, to a certain extent, sustained by Gambon, Jourde, and a few others whom it is not necessary to mention. Gambon was one of the mildest of creatures, and somewhat of a "communard malgré lui." He would have willingly "left the settlement of all these vexed questions to moral force," and he proposed once or twice a mission to Versailles to that effect. He was about fifty, and a fine specimen of a robust, healthy farmer. His love of "peaceful settlement" arose from an experiment he had made in that way during the Empire, though it is very doubtful whether strictly logical reasoners would have looked upon it as "peaceful." Gambon had been a magistrate and a member of the National Assembly during the Second Republic, and voted with the conservative side. The advent of the Empire made an end of his parliamentary career, and, in order to mark his disapproval of the Coup-d'État and its sequel, Gambon refused to pay his taxes. The authorities seized one of his cows, and were proceeding to sell it by auction, when Gambon, accompanied by a good many of his former constituents, appeared on the scene. "This cow," he shouts, "has been stolen from me by the Imperial fisc, and whosoever buys it is nothing more than a thief himself." Result: not a single bid for the cow, and the auctioneer was compelled to adjourn the sale for a week. The auctioneer deemed it prudent to transport the cow to a neighbouring commune, but Gambon had got wind of the affair, and adopted the same expedient of moral persuasion. For nearly three months the auctioneer transported the cow from one commune to another, and Gambon followed him everywhere, until they reached the limits of the department. Gambon apprehended that moral persuasion would have no effect among strangers, and he let things take their course. The cost of selling the cow amounted to about ten times its worth. As a matter of course, the whole affair was revived by "les journaux bien pensants" at the advent of the Commune, and Gambon was elected a member by the 10th Arrondissement. Gambon managed to escape into Switzerland; but when the amnesty was proclaimed, he returned, and solicited once more the suffrages of his former constituents. At the Brasserie Saint-Séverin, Gambon was generally to be found at the ladies' table, about the occupants of which I cannot speak, seeing that I was not introduced to them.

Jourde was one of two "financial delegates" of the Commune. He had been a superior employé at the Bank of France, and was considered an authority on financial affairs. It was he to whom the Marquis de Ploeuc, the governor of the Bank, had handed the first million for the use of the Commune. My friend, the doctor, had known him in his former capacity, and often invited him to our table, to which invitation the "paymaster-general" always eagerly responded. One evening, the conversation turned upon the events which had preceded the request for funds. "On the second day of the Commune," he said, "the want of money began to be horribly felt. Eudes proposed that I should go and fetch some from the Bank of France. To be perfectly candid, I did not care about it. Had I been a soldier, I might have invaded the Bank at the head of a regiment; but, to go and ask my former chief for a million or so as a matter of course, was a different thing, and I had not the moral courage. The director of the Bank of France is very little short of a god to his subordinates, and, in spite of our boasted 'Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality,' there is no nation so ready to bow down before its governors as the French. Seeing that I hung back, Eudes proposed to go himself, and did, refusing to take a single soldier with him. But he did not want the responsibility of handling the million of francs the governor placed at our disposal, so I was, after all, obliged to beard my former chief in his own den. He was very polite, and called me 'Monsieur le délégué aux finances,' but I would have preferred his calling me all the names in the world, for I caught sight of a very ironical smile at the corners of his mouth when, on taking leave of him, he said, 'You may be my successor one day, Monsieur le délégué, and I hope you will profit by the lessons I have always endeavoured to teach my subordinates: obedience to the powers that be.'"

Jourde was by no means a fool or a braggart; he was a very good administrator, and exceedingly conscientious. Like most men who have had the constant handling of important sums of money, he was absolutely indifferent to it; and I feel certain that he did not feather his own nest during the two months he had the chance. But he vainly endeavoured to impress upon the others the necessity for economy. Every now and then he tore his red hair and beard at the waste going on at the Hôtel-de-Ville, where, in the beginning, Assi was keeping open table. Not that they were feasting, but every one who had a mind could sit down, and, though the sum charged by the steward was moderate, two francs for breakfast and two francs fifty centimes for dinner, the number of self-invited guests increased day by day, and the paymaster-general was at his wits' end to keep pace with the expenses. The Central-Committee put a stop to this indiscriminate hospitality by simply arresting Assi, whom I never saw.

When the Commune decreed the demolition of the Vendôme column, Jourde was still more angry and in despair. He was, first of all, opposed to its destruction, from a patriotic and common-sense point of view: secondly, he objected to the waste of money that destruction entailed; he endeavoured

to cut the Gordian knot by stopping the workmen's pay. Though three or four of his fellow "delegates" were absolutely of the same opinion, the rest sent him a polite intimation that if the necessary funds were not disbursed voluntarily they would send for them, and take the opportunity, at the same time, to "put him against the wall," and make an end of him. That night, Courbet, the painter, who had been the prime mover in this work of destruction, came to the Brasserie Saint-Séverin from the Brasserie Andler, hard by, to taste the sweets of his victory. His friend, Chaudey, of the *Siècle*, was no longer with him. Like Mgr. Darboy, the Abbés Lagarde, Crozés, and Deguerry, he had been arrested by Raoul Rigault as a hostage, in virtue of a decree by the Commune, setting forth that every execution of a prisoner of war, taken by the Versaillais, would be followed by the execution of three hostages to be drawn by lot.

Jourde did not wear a uniform; at any rate, I never saw him in one. I happened to remark upon it one evening, and he then gave me a partial explanation why the others did wear them in so ostentatious a manner.

"It is really done to please the National Guards; they mistrust those who remain 'in mufti;' they attribute their reluctance to don the uniform to the fear of being compromised, to the wish to escape unnoticed if things should go wrong. I grant you that all this does not warrant the uniforms most of my colleagues do wear, but to the Latin races the wisdom of Solomon lies in his magnificence, and they trace the elevation of Joseph to its primary cause—his coat of many colours. I am not only 'delegate of finances' and paymaster-general, but head cook and bottle-washer in all that concerns monetary matters to the Central-Committee. I have very few clerks to assist me in my work, and fewer still upon whose honesty I can depend; consequently, I am compelled to do a good deal of drudgery myself. Yesterday I received the fortnightly accounts of Godillot,[91] the military tailors and accoutrement manufacturers. They seemed to me simply monstrous, not so much in respect of the prices charged for each uniform, as in respect of the number of uniforms supplied. To have sent one of my clerks would have been of no earthly use; there is an old Normand saying about sending the cat to Rome and his coming back mewing; the clerk would have simply come back mewing, saying that there was no mistake, so I went myself. I saw the chief manager.

"'I am positive there is no mistake, monsieur,' he said, 'though I may tell you at once that I made the same remark when I passed the accounts; the number of uniforms seemed to me inordinately large; mais il faut se rendre à l'évidence, and I ticketed off every item by its corresponding voucher. Still I felt that there is a terrible waste somewhere, and said so to the head of the retail department. "If you will remain downstairs for one hour," was the answer, "you will have the explanation." I can only say the same to you, Monsieur le délégué.'

"I did remain on that ground-floor for one hour," Jourde went on, "and, during that time, no fewer than eight young fellows came in with vouchers for complete uniforms of lieutenants or captains of the staff. Most of them looked to me as if they had never handled a sword or rifle in their lives—yardsticks seemed more in their line; and the airs they gave themselves positively disgusted me; but I do not want another reminder of the Central-Committee about my cheeseparing, so I'll let things take their course. Look, here is a sample of how we deck ourselves out quand nous allons en guerre."

I looked in the direction pointed out to me, and beheld a somewhat dark individual with lank, black hair, of ordinary height, or a little below perhaps, dressed in a most extraordinary costume. He wore a blue Zouave jacket, large baggy crimson breeches tucked into a pair of quasi-hessian boots, a crimson sash, and a black sombrero hat with a red feather. A long cavalry sabre completed the costume. Upon the whole, he carried himself well, though there was a kind of swashbuckler air about him which smacked of the stage. I was not mistaken; the scent or the smell of the footlights was over it all.

"This is Colonel Maxime Lisbonne, an actor by profession, who has taken to soldiering with a vengeance," said Jourde. "There is no doubt about his bravery, but he is as fit to be a colonel as I am to be a general. It does not seem to strike my colleagues that, in no matter what profession, one has to serve an apprenticeship, and, most of all, in the science of soldiering; Maxime Lisbonne said he would be a colonel, so they, without more ado, made him one.[92] He never moves without that Turco at his heels."

On another occasion I saw the famous General Dombrowski, and the no less famous Colonel or General la Cécilia. I only exchanged a few words with the former, but I sat talking for a whole evening to the latter. He was a short, spare, fidgety man, strongly pitted with small-pox, with a few straggling hairs on the upper lip and chin. He was terribly near-sighted, and wore a pair of thick spectacles. Nervous and restless to a degree, but a voice of remarkable sweetness. His English was faultless, with scarcely any accent, and I was told that he spoke every European language and several Oriental ones with the same accuracy. He was the only Frenchman who could converse with Dombrowski and the other Poles in their native language. He was a clever mathematician, and, that evening, he endeavoured to prove mathematically that Von Moltke had committed several blunders, both at Sadowa and Sedan. "That kind of thing," said Jourde, after he was gone, "was sure to 'fetch' the Central-Committee; he always reminds me of the doctors in Molière trying to prove that one of their confrères had cured a patient contrary to the principles of medicine. Mind, do not imagine that La Cécilia is not a good soldier. He got all his grades in the Italian army, on the battle-fields of '59-'60, and, during the late war, he directed the brilliant defence of Alençon. But between a good soldier and a great general there is a vast difference."

Physically, Dombrowski was almost the counterpart of La Cécilia, with the exception of the glasses and the small-pox. But while the Frenchman—for Cécilia was a Frenchman notwithstanding his Italian

name—was modest though critical, the Pole was a braggart, though by no means devoid of courage. Up to the very end, he sent in reports of his victories, all of which were purely imaginary. Even as late as the 21st of May, when the Versailles troops were carrying everything before them, the newspaper-boys were shouting, "Brilliant victory of General Dombrowski." Dombrowski had been invested with his high command under the pretext that he had fought under Garibaldi and in the Polish struggle against Russia. It transpired afterwards that he had never seen Garibaldi nor Garibaldi him, and that, so far from having aided his own countrymen, he had been a simple private in the Russian army. Still, he was a better man than his countryman Wrobleski, who showed his courage by going to bed while the Versaillais were shelling Vanves.

Among my papers I find a torn programme of a concert at the Tuileries during the Commune. It reads as follows:—

COMMUNE DE PARIS,

PALAIS DES TUILERIES

Servant pour LA PREMIÈRE FOIS à une œuvre patriotique

GRAND CONCERT

Au Profit des Veuves et Orphelins de la République.

Sous le Patronage de la Commune et du Citoyen Dr. Rousselle.

Tout porteur de billet pris à l'avance pourra sans rétribution, visiter le Palais des Tuileries.

The rest is missing, but I remember that among the artists who gave their services were Mesdames Agar and Bordas; MM. Coquelin cadet, and Francis Thomé, the pianist.

I did not take my ticket beforehand, consequently was not entitled to a stroll through the Palace previous to the concert. When I entered the Salle des Maréchaux, where the concert was to take place, I felt thankful that the trial had been spared to me, and I mentally ejaculated a wish that I might never see that glorious apartment under similar circumstances. The traces of neglect were too painful to behold, though I am bound to say that I could detect no proofs of wilful damage. My wish was gratified with a vengeance. A little more than a month afterwards, the building was in flames, and, at the hour I write, it is being razed to the ground.

I did not stay long; I heard Madame Agar, dressed in deep mourning, declaim "the Marseillaise," and M. Thomé execute a fantasia on well-known operatic airs. Some of the reserved seats were occupied by the minor dignitaries of the Commune, but the greater part of the place was filled by working men and their spouses and the very *petite bourgeoisie*. The latter seemed to be in doubt whether to enjoy themselves or not; but the former were very vociferous, and had evidently made up their minds that the Commune was the best of all possible régimes, seeing that it enabled them to listen to a concert in a palace for a mere trifle. "That's equality, as I understand it, monsieur," said a workman in a very clean blouse to me, at the same time making room for me on the seat next to him. He and his companion beguiled the time between the first and second number on the programme by sucking barley-sugar.

About a month later—on Wednesday, May 17th, but I will not be certain—I was present at the first gala-performance organized by the Commune, although the Versailles troops were within gunshot of the fortifications. This time I had taken a ticket beforehand. The performance was to take place at the Opéra-Comique, and long before the appointed hour the Boulevards and the streets adjoining the theatre were crowded with idlers, anxious to watch the arrival of the bigwigs under whose immediate patronage the entertainment was to be given. The papers had been full of it for days and days beforehand; the posters on the walls had set forth its many attractions. In accordance with traditional usage on such occasions, the programme was a miscellaneous one, and the wags did not fail to remark that the Commune ought to have struck out something original instead of blindly following the precedents of tyrants; but in reality the Commune had no choice. Few of the principal artists of the subsidized theatres were available, and there was an evident reluctance to co-operate among some of those who were; hence it was decided to give fragments of such operas or comedies, calculated to stimulate still further the patriotic and republican sentiments with which the majority of the spectators were credited. There had been less difficulty in recruiting the orchestra, and a very fair band was got together. A great many invitations had been issued; few of the seats, especially in the better parts, were paid for.

All the entrances had been thrown open, and around every one there was a considerable gathering, almost exclusively composed of National Guards in uniform, and women of the working classes, who enthusiastically cheered each known personage on his arrival. The latter were too magnificent for words, the clanking sabres, resplendent uniforms, and waving plumes only paled in contrast with the toilettes of their female companions who hung proudly on their arms. For them, at any rate, "le jour de gloire était arrivé."

The crowd, especially the fairer portion of it, was decidedly enthusiastic, perhaps somewhat too

enthusiastic, in their ultra-cordial greetings and recognition of the ladies, so suddenly promoted in the social scale. Mélanie and Clarisse would have been satisfied with a less literal interpretation of "Auld Lang Syne," as they stepped out of the carriages, the horses of which belied the boast that at the end of the siege there were 30,000 serviceable animals of that kind left.

The performance had been timed for half-past seven; at half-past eight, the principal box set apart for the chiefs of the new régime was still empty. As I have already said, disquieting rumours had been afloat for the last few days with regard to the approach of the Versailles troops, the guns had been thundering all day long, and, what was worse, for the last forty-eight hours no "startling victory" had been announced either on the walls of Paris or in the papers. Some of the "great men," among the audience in the stalls and dress-circle, and easily to be distinguished from the ruck of ordinary mortals, professed themselves unable to supply authentic information, but as the performance had not been countermanded, they suggested that things were not so bad as they looked.

The theatre was crammed from floor to ceiling, and the din was something terrible. The heat was oppressive; luckily the gas was burning low because the companies were as yet unable to provide a full supply. There were few people out of uniform in either stalls or dress-circle, but the upper parts were occupied by blouses with a fair sprinkling of cloth coats. The women seemed to me to make the most infernal noise. The two stage-boxes were still empty; in the others there were a good many journalists and ladies who had come to criticize the appearance and demeanour of the "dames de nos nouveaux gouvernants." There was one box which attracted particular attention; one of its occupants, evidently a "dame du monde," was in evening dress, wearing some magnificent diamonds, while it was very patent that those of her own social status had made it a point to dress as simply as possible. I have never been able to find out the name of the lady; I had not seen her before, I have not seen her since.

At about a quarter to nine the doors of the stage-boxes were flung back, and the guests of the evening appeared. But alas, they were not the chief members of the Commune, only the secondary characters. It is doubtful, though, whether the former could have been more magnificently attired than were the latter. Their uniforms were positively hidden beneath the gold lace.

Immediately, the band struck up the inevitable "Marseillaise;" the spectators in the upper galleries joined in the chorus; the building shook to its foundations, and, amidst the terrible din, one could distinctly hear the crowds on the Boulevards re-echoing the strains. The occupants of the state boxes gave the signal for the applause, then the curtain rose, and Mdlle. Agar, in peplos and cothurnus, recited the strophes once more. When the curtain fell, the audience rushed to the foyer or out into the open air; at any rate, the former was not inconveniently crowded. Among those strolling up and down I noticed the lady of the diamonds, on the arm of a rather common-looking individual in a gorgeous uniform. I believe I caught sight of the American Minister, but I will not be certain.

This time the curtain rose upon an act of a comedy; the spectators, however, did not seem to be vastly interested; they were evidently waiting for the duo to be sung by Madame Ugalde and a tenor whose name I do not remember. He was, I heard, an amateur of great promise.

Scarcely had Madame Ugalde uttered her first notes, when a bugler of the franc-tireurs of the Commune stepped in front of an empty box and sounded the charge. The effect was startling. The audience rose to a man, and rushed to the exits. In less than five minutes the building was empty. I had let the human avalanche pass by. When I came outside I was told that it was a false alarm, or, rather, a practical joke; but no one re-entered the theatre. Thus ended the gala-performance of the Commune, and a careful observer would have had no difficulty in foreseeing the end of the latter. The bugler had, unconsciously perhaps, sounded its death-knell.

THE END.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

condensed and the material selected with a view to an always interesting narrative. To a considerable extent the plan of both text and illustrations is like that of Eggleston's "Household History of the United States." It is hardly necessary to say more regarding the fitness of this volume for a place in every American private, public, and school library.

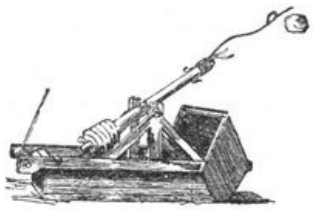

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IMAGE FOUND AT SANTO DOMINGO.

ON THE PLANTATION.

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Footnotes

[1] The "lettre de faire part" is an intimation of a birth, marriage, or death sent to the friends, and even mere acquaintances, of a family.—EDITOR.

[2] The lithographers were almost the first in France to form a co-operative society, but not in the sense of the Rochdale pioneers, which dates from about the same period. The Lacrampe Association was for supplying lithographic work. It began in the Passage du Caire with ten members, and in a short time numbered two hundred workmen.—EDITOR.

[3] Guillaume Lethière, whose real name was Guillon, was a native of Guadeloupe. He fought and seriously wounded several officers because the latter had objected to "a mere dauber wearing moustaches." He was obliged to leave Paris, but, thanks to the protection of Lucien Bonaparte, was appointed Director of the French Académie at Rome.—EDITOR.

[4] This reluctance to handle coppers proved a sore grief to his more economical and less fastidious brother Paul, who watched like a guardian angel over his junior, whom he worshipped. It is on record that he only said a harsh word to him once in his life, namely, when they wanted to make him, Paul, a member of the Académie Française. "C'est bien assez d'un immortel dans la famille," he replied to those who counselled him to stand. Then, turning to his brother, "Je ne comprends pas pourquoi tu t'es fourré dans cette galère, si elle est assez grande pour moi, tu dois y être joliment à l'étroit." It is difficult to imagine a greater instance of brotherly pride and admiration, because Paul de Musset was by no means a nonentity, only from a very early age he had always merged his individuality in that of Alfred. To some one who once remarked upon this in my hearing, he answered, "Que voulez-vous? c'est comme cela: Alfred a eu toujours la moitié du lit, seulement la moitié était toujours prise du milieu."

[5] The name of the military prison which was originally built on the site of the former Collége Montaigu, where the scholars were almost exclusively fed on haricot beans. Throughout its removals the prison preserved its nickname.—EDITOR.

[6] There were two Tivoli gardens, both in the same neighbourhood, the site of the present Quartier de l'Europe. The author is alluding to the second, so often mentioned in the novels of Paul de Kock.—EDITOR.

[7] The latter plea was, in fact, advanced by Pillet's counsel in the first instance, on Roqueplan's advice, and perhaps influenced the court; for though it gave a verdict for the plaintiff, it was only for *seven francs* (the price of the stall), and costs. The verdict was based upon the "consideration" that the defendant had not carried out altogether the promise set forth on the programme.

[8] Alexandre Dumas had a marvellously small foot.—EDITOR.

[9] Literally, a basket with holes in it; figuratively, the term applied to irreclaimable spendthrifts.—EDITOR.

[10] The word "shrew" is the nearest equivalent.—EDITOR.

[11] Jules-Henri de Saint-Georges, one of the most fertile librettists of the time, the principal collaborateur of Scribe, and best known in England as the author of the book of Balfe's "Bohemian Girl."—EDITOR.

[12] The Élysée-Bourbon, which was the official residence of Louis-Napoléon during his presidency of the second republic, was almost untenanted during the reign of Louis-Philippe.

The Hôtel Pontalba was partly built on the site of the former mansion of M. de Morfontaine, a staunch royalist, who, curiously enough, had married the daughter of Le Peletier de Saint-Fargeau, the member of the Convention who had voted the death of Louis XVI., and who himself fell by the hand of an assassin. Mdlle. le Peletier Saint-Fargeau was called "La Fille de la Nation."—EDITOR.

[13] One of the great wits of the Revolution.—EDITOR.

[14] M. Eugène Pelletan, the father of M. Camille Pelletan, the editor of *La Justice*, and first lieutenant to M. Clemenceau, having severely criticized some passages in M. Blanc's "Histoire de la Révolution," relating to Marie-Antoinette, the author quoted a

passage of Madame Campan's "Mémoires" in support of his writings. The critic refused to admit the conclusiveness of the proof, whereupon M. Blanc appealed to the Société des Gens de Lettres, which, on the summing up of M. Taxile Delord, gave a verdict in his favour. M. Pelletan declined to submit to the verdict, as he had refused to admit the jurisdiction, of the tribunal. M. Blanc, who had at first scouted all idea of a duel, considered himself obliged to resort to this means of obtaining satisfaction, seeing that M. Pelletan stoutly maintained his opinion. A meeting had been arranged when the Revolution of '48 broke out. The opponents having both gone to the Hôtel-de-Ville, met by accident at the entrance, and fell into one another's arms. "Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Thiers, when he heard of it. "If Pelletan had killed Blanc, I should have been the smallest man in France."

M. Blanc's allusion to other "preux chevaliers" aimed particularly at M. Cousin, who, having become a minister against his will, resumed with a sigh of relief his studies under the Second Empire. He was especially fond of the seventeenth century, and all at once he, who had scarcely ever noticed a pretty woman, became violently smitten with the Duchesse de Longueville, who had been in her grave for nearly two centuries. He positively invested her with every perfection, moral and mental; unfortunately, he could not invest her with a shapely bust, the evidence being too overwhelmingly against her having been adorned that way. One day some one showed him a portrait of the sister of the "grand Condé," in which she was amply provided with the charms the absence of which M. Cousin regretted. He wrote a special chapter on the subject, and was well-nigh challenging all his contradictors.—EDITOR.

[15] The great fencing-master, whom Dumas immortalized in his "Maître d'Armes."—EDITOR.

[16] The English nobleman must have been Lord Malmesbury, who alludes to her as follows: "This was a most remarkable woman, and may be said by her conduct at Munich to have set fire to the magazine of revolution, which was ready to burst forth all over Europe, and which made the year 1848 memorable. I made her acquaintance by accident, as I was going up to London from Heron Court, in the railway. The Consul at Southampton asked me to take charge of a Spanish lady who had been recommended to his care, and who had just landed. I consented to do this, and was introduced by him to a remarkably handsome person, who was in deep mourning, and who appeared to be in great distress. As we were alone in the carriage, she, of her own accord, informed me, in bad English, that she was the widow of Don Diego Leon, who had lately been shot by the Carlists after he was taken prisoner, and that she was going to London to sell some Spanish property that she possessed, and give lessons in singing, as she was very poor. On arriving in London she took some lodgings, and came to my house to a little concert which I gave, and sang some Spanish ballads. Her accent was foreign, and she had all the appearance of being what she pretended to be. She sold different things, such as veils, etc., to the party present, and received a good deal of patronage. Eventually she took an engagement for the ballet at the Opera House, but her dancing was very inferior. At last she was recognized as an impostor, her real name being Mrs. James, and Irish by extraction, and had married an officer in India. Her engagement at the Opéra was cancelled, she left the country, and retired to Munich. She was a very violent woman, and actually struck one of the Bavarian generals as he was reviewing the troops. The king became perfectly infatuated with her beauty and cleverness, and gave her large sums of money, with a title, which she afterwards bore when she returned to England." ("Memoirs of an Ex-minister," by the Earl of Malmesbury.)

Lord Malmesbury is wrong in nearly every particular which he has got from hearsay. Lola Montès did not retire to Munich after her engagement at the Opera House had been cancelled, but to Brussels, and from there to Warsaw. Nor did she play the all-important part in the Bavarian riots or revolution he ascribes to her. The author of these notes has most of the particulars of Lola Montès' career previous to her appearance in Munich from her own lips, and, as he has already said, she was not in the least reticent about her scheming, especially when her scheming had failed. For the story of the events at Munich, I gather inferentially from his notes that he is indebted to Karl von Abel, King Ludwig's ultramontane minister, who came afterwards to Paris, and who, if I mistake not, was the father or the uncle of Herr von Abel, the Berlin correspondent of the *Times*, some fourteen or fifteen years ago.—EDITOR.

[17] Lola Montès was perfectly correct. It was Frederick IV. of Denmark, only the woman was not an adventuress like herself, but the Countess Reventlow, whom he had abducted.—EDITOR.

[18] "Companions in Walhalla."—EDITOR.

[19] The following is virtually a summary of an article by Count G. de Contades, in a French bibliographical periodical, *Le Livre* (Dec. 10, 1885), and shows how near Alexandre Dumas was to the truth. I have given it at great length. My excuse for so doing is the extraordinary popularity of Dumas' play with all classes of playgoers. As a consequence, there is not a single modern play, with the exception of those of Shakespeare, the genesis of which has been so much commented upon. It is no

exaggeration to say that most educated playgoers, not to mention professional students of the drama, have at some time or other expressed a wish to know something more of the real Marguerite Gautier's parentage and antecedents than is shown by Dumas, either in his play or in his novel, or than what they could gather from the partly apocryphal details given by her contemporaries. Dumas himself, in his preface to the play, says that she was a farm servant. He probably knew no more than that, nor did Alphonsine Plessis herself. In after-years, the eminent dramatist had neither the time nor the inclination to search musty parish registers; Count de Contades has done so for him. Here are the results, as briefly as possible, of his researches. Alphonsine Plessis' paternal grandmother, "moitié mendiante et moitié prostituée," inhabited, a little less than a century ago, the small parish of Longé-sur-Maire, which has since become simply Longé in the canton of Briouze, arrondissement of Argentan (about thirty miles from Alençon). She had been nicknamed "La Guénuchetonne," a rustic version of the archaic French word *guénippe* (slattern). Louis Descours, a kind of country clod who had entered the priesthood without the least vocation, and just because his people wished him to do so, becomes enamoured of "La Guénuchetonne," and early in January, 1790, the curé Philippe christens a male child, which is registered as Marin Plessis, mother Louis-Renée Plessis, father unknown. That the father was known well enough is proved by the Christian name bestowed upon the babe, Marin, which was that of Louis Descours' father. This gallant adventure of the country priest was an open secret for miles around.

Marin Plessis grew into a handsome fellow, and when about twenty took to travelling in the adjacent provinces of lower and upper Normandy with a pack of small wares. Handsome and amiable besides, he was a welcome guest everywhere, and soon became a great favourite with the female part of the Normandy peasantry. For a little while he flitted from one rustic beauty to another, until he was fairly caught by one more handsome than the rest, Marie Deshayes. She was not, perhaps, immaculately virtuous, but, apart from her extraordinary personal attractions, she was something more than an ordinary peasant girl.

Some sixty years before Marin Plessis' union with Marie Deshayes, there lived in the neighbourhood of Evreux a spinster lady of good descent, though not very well provided with worldly goods. She was comely and sweet-tempered enough, but then, as now, comeliness and a sweet temper do not count for much in the French matrimonial market, and least of all in the provincial one. Owing to the modesty of her marriage portion, she had no suitors for her hand, and, being of an exceedingly amorous disposition, she bestowed her affection where she could, "without regret, and without false shame," as the old French chronicler has it.

The annals of the village—for, curiously enough, these annals do exist, though only in manuscripts—are commendably reticent about the exact number and names of her lovers. It would seem that the author, a contemporary of Mdlle. Anne du Mesnil d'Argentelles and the great-grandfather of the present possessor of the notes, a gentleman near Bernay, was divided between the wish of not being too hard upon his neighbour, who was, after all, a gentle-woman, and the desire to leave a record of a peculiar phase of the country manners of those days to posterity. Be this as it may, Mdlle. d'Argentelles' swains, previous to the very last one, have been doomed to anonymous obscurity. But with the advent of Étienne Deshayes, the annalist becomes less reticent, he is considered worthy of being mentioned in full, perhaps as a reward for having finally "made an honest woman" of his inamorata. For that is the final upshot of the love-story between him and Mdlle. d'Argentelles, which, in its earlier stages, bears a certain resemblance to that between Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Madame de Warens, with this difference—that the Normand Jean-Jacques is considerably older than his mistress.

The children born of this marriage were very numerous. One of them, Louis-Deshayes, married a handsome peasant girl, Marie-Madeleine Marra, who appears to have been somewhat too intimate with a neighbouring squire, but who gave birth a few years after to a daughter, of whose paternity there could not be the smallest doubt, seeing that she grew up into a speaking likeness of her maternal grandmother, the erstwhile Mdlle. Anne du Mesnil d'Argentelles. Fate ought to have had a better lot in store for beautiful Marie Deshayes than a marriage with a poor pedlar like Marin Plessis; but the latter was very handsome, and, notwithstanding the opposition of the family, she became his wife. On the 15th of January, 1824, the child which was to be immortalized as "La Dame aux Camélias" saw the light, in a small village in Lower Normandy.—EDITOR.

[20] Curiously enough, he belonged to the same department, and died almost on the very spot where Marin Plessis was born.—EDITOR.

[21] An imitation of the line of Don Carlos in Hugo's "Hernani": "Empereur!... au refus de Frédéric-le-Sage!"—EDITOR.

[22] It shows that Lireux was not very familiar with the royal edicts affecting that order, and that Balzac himself exaggerated the social and monetary importance of its wearers. For, though Louis-Philippe at his accession suppressed the order, not less than twelve

thousand new knights had been created by his two immediate predecessors. They, the recently created knights, were allowed to retain their honours and pensions; but, even before the fall of the Bourbons, the distinction had lost much of its prestige. After the Battle of Navarino, Admiral de Rigny, soliciting rewards for his officers who had distinguished themselves, tacitly ignored the order of Saint-Louis in favour of that of the Legion of Honour. The order, as founded by Louis XIV. in 1693, was only available to officers and Catholics. Several modifications were introduced afterwards in its statutes. The Order of Saint-Louis and that of "Military Merit" were the only two recognized by the Constituent Assembly of 1789; but the Convention suppressed the former, only leaving the latter.—EDITOR.

[23] The play upon the word is scarcely translatable. "Contre-maître" in the singular means foreman; as it is used here it means against the master.—EDITOR.

[24] Régnier's nose was always a subject of jokes among his fellow-actors. "It is not because it is large," said Beauvallet, "but because it is his principal organ of speech."—EDITOR.

[25] Damages claimed by one of the parties, pending the final verdict.—EDITOR.

[26] Curiously enough, it was Émile Augier's "Aventurière" that caused Mdlle. Plessy's secession, just as it did thirty-five years later, in the case of Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt. —EDITOR.

[27] There are several English versions of the play, and I am under the impression that the late Tom Robertson was inspired by it when he adapted "Caste." I allude to that scene in the third act, where George d'Alroy returns unexpectedly and where Polly Eccles breaks the news to her sister.—EDITOR.

[28] I have taken some pains to unearth this play. It was called "Amazampo; or, The Discovery of Quinine." The scene was laid in Peru in 1636. Amazampo, the chief of a Peruvian tribe, is in love with Maïda, who on her part is in love with Ferdinand, the son of the viceroy. Amazampo is heart-broken, and is stricken down with fever. In his despair and partial delirium he tries to poison himself, and drinks the water of a pool in which several trunks of a tree called *kina*, reported poisonous, have been lying for years. He feels the effect almost immediately, but not the effect he expected. He recovers, and takes advantage of his recovered health to forget his love passion, and to be avenged upon the oppressors of his country, many of whom are dying with fever. Lima becomes a huge cemetery. Then the wife of the viceroy is stricken down. Maïda wishes to save her, but is forestalled by Amazampo, who compels Dona Theodora to drink the liquor, and so forth. But Amazampo and Maïda die.—EDITOR.

[29] Alexis Azevedo, one of the best musical critics of the time, as enthusiastic in his likes as unreasoning in his dislikes. He became a fervent admirer of Félicien David. —EDITOR.

[30] Written in 1882.

[31] The Hôtel Bullion was formerly the town mansion of the financier of that name, and situated in the Rue Coquillière.—EDITOR.

[32] The annual salon was held in the Louvre then; in 1849 it was transferred to the Tuileries. In 1850, '51, and '52 it was removed to the galleries of the Palais-Royal; in 1853 and '54 the salon was held in the Hôtel des Menus-Plaisirs, in the Faubourg Poissonnière, which became afterwards the storehouse for the scenery of the Grand Opéra. In 1855 the exhibition took place in a special annex of the Palais de l'Industrie; after that, it was lodged in the Palais itself.—EDITOR.

[33] Alfred de Dreux was not an unknown figure in London society. He came in 1848. He was a kind of Comte d'Orsay, and painted chiefly equestrian figures. After the Coup d'État he returned to Paris, and was patronized by society, and subsequently by Napoléon III. himself, whose portrait he painted. He was killed in a duel, the cause of which has never been revealed.—EDITOR.

[34] Laurent-Jan was a witty, though incorrigibly idle journalist. He is entirely forgotten now save by such men as MM. Arsène Houssaye and Roger de Beauvoir, who were his contemporaries. He was the author of a clever parody on Kotzebue's "Menschenhasz und Reue," known on the English stage as "The Stranger."—EDITOR.

[35] When there was no public occasion, his political antagonists or merely practical jokers who knew of his dislike invented one, like Edouard d'Ourliac, a well-known journalist and the author of several novels, who, whenever he had nothing better to do, recruited a band of street arabs to go and sing the Marseillaise under the king's windows. They kept on singing until Louis-Philippe, in sheer self-defence, was obliged to come out and join in the song.—EDITOR.

[36] In France it is the Patron Saint's day, not the birthday, that is kept.

[37] I have inserted them here in order not to fall into repetitions on the same subject. —Editor.

[38] Louis-François Dubois, the author of several heroic poems, "Ankarström," "Geneviève et Siegfried," etc., which are utterly forgotten. His main title to the recollection of posterity consists in his having saved, during the Revolution, a great many literary works of value, which he returned to the State afterwards.—Editor.

[39] It reminds one of the answer of the younger Dumas to a gentleman whose wife had been notorious for her conjugal faithlessness, and whose sons were all weaklings. "Ah, Monsieur Dumas, c'est un fils comme vous qu'il me fallait," he exclaimed. "Mon cher monsieur," came the reply, "quand on veut avoir un fils comme moi, il faut le faire soi-même."—Editor.

[40] She had unconsciously borrowed the words from the Duchesse de Coislin, who, under similar circumstances a few years before, said to Madame de Chateaubriand, "Cela sent la parvenue; nous autres, femmes de la cour, nous n'avions que deux chemises; on les renouvelait quand elles étaient usées; nous étions vêtues de robes de soie et nous n'avions pas l'air de grisettes comme ces demoiselles de maintenant."—Editor.

[41] The mother of Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, the present ruler of Bulgaria. She was a particular favourite of Queen Victoria, and Louis-Philippe himself not only considered her the cleverest of his three daughters, but the most likely successor to his sister Adelaide, as his private adviser. That the estimate of her abilities was by no means exaggerated, subsequent events have proved. The last time I saw the princess was at the garden party at Sheen-House, on the occasion of the silver wedding of the Count and Countess de Paris. I did not remember her for the moment, for a score of years had made a difference. I asked an Austrian attaché who she was. The answer came pat, "Alexander III.'s nightmare, Francis-Joseph's bogy, and Bismarck's sleeping draught; one of the three clever women in Europe; Bulgaria's mother."—Editor.

[42] There was a similar divergence of dynastic opinion during the Second Empire between the sovereign and those placed very near him on the throne. When Alphonse Daudet came to Paris to make a name in literature, the Duc de Morny offered him a position as secretary. "Before I accept it, monsieur le duc, I had better tell you that I am a Legitimist," replied the future novelist. "Don't let that trouble you," laughed De Morny; "so am I to a certain extent, and the Empress is even more of a Legitimist than I am."—Editor.

[43] In order to understand this dread on Montauban's part, the English reader should be told that the term *pékin* is the contemptuous nickname for the civilian, with the French soldier.—Editor.

[44] The author, as will be seen directly, saw nothing of that massacre, though he must have passed within a few hundred yards of the spot immediately before it began. It would have been the same if he had; he could not have explained the cause, seeing that the most painstaking historians who have consulted the most trustworthy eye-witnesses have failed to do so. It will always remain a mystery whence the first shot came, whether from the military who were drawn up across the Boulevard des Capucines, on the spot where now stands the Grand Café, or from the crowd that wanted to pass, in order to proceed to Odilon-Barrot's to serenade him, because, notwithstanding the opposition of the king, he was to be included in the new ministry, which Molé had been instructed to form. It may safely be said, however, that, but for that shot and the slaughter consequent upon it, the revolution might have been averted then—after all, perhaps, only temporarily.—Editor.

[45] The author is slightly mistaken. The two ugliest men in France in the nineteenth century were Andrieux, who wrote "Les Étourdis," and Littré; but Cremieux ran them very hard.—Editor.

[46] So called after a large ornamental fountain; the same, I believe, which subsequently was transferred to what is now called the Place de la République, and which finally found its way to the Avenue Daumesnil, where it stands at present.—Editor.

[47] In the documents relating to the affair at Strasburg, there is the report to Louis-Philippe by an officer in the 46th regiment of the line, named Pleigné, in which the latter, borrowing the process of Balzac as applied to the French of the Baron de Nucingen, credits Louis-Napoléon with the following phrase: "*Fous êtes tecoré de Chuillet; fous tefez être un prafe, che vous técore.*"—Editor.

[48] The four knights of a Carlovingian legend, who were mounted on one horse named Bayard.—Editor.

[49] During the sacking of the Tuileries, the mob ruthlessly destroyed the busts and pictures of every living son of Louis-Philippe, with the exception of those of the Prince

de Joinville.—Editor.

[50] The remark was not original. The Marquise d'Espreménil said it of herself when she saw her son join the Revolution of '89.—Editor.

[51] The peripatetic vendors of songs, dressed as nobles, who up till '60 were frequently singing their compositions in the street.—Editor.

[52] Frédéric Xavier de Mérode was the descendant of an ancient Flemish family, and became an influential member of the Prelatura. He took an active share in the organization of the Papal troops which fought at Mentana. There is a romantic but absolutely true story connected with his military career. He was from his very youth intended for the priesthood, but one day, when he was but nineteen, he had a quarrel with a fellow-student, who gave him a box on the ears. M. de Mérode was too conscientious a Catholic to fight a duel, and still his pride forbade him to remain under the imputation of being a coward. So he enlisted first in a Belgian, subsequently in a foreign regiment, and proved his courage. He was very hot-tempered, and had frequent disagreements with Generals Lamoricière and De Guyon, and even with Pius IX. himself, who, on the occasion of the promulgation of the decree of infallibility, positively forbade him to enter the Vatican again. But he soon afterwards made his peace with the Pontiff. His worst enemies—and he had many—never questioned his sincerity and loyalty.—Editor.

[53] If Comte Walewski ruled Napoléon III., the second Comtesse Walewska, who was an Italian by birth and very handsome, absolutely ruled her husband. The first Comtesse Walewska was Lord Sandwich's daughter.—Editor.

[54] It is equally curious to note, perhaps, that M. Grévy, who occupied the presidential chair of the Third Republic for a longer period than his two predecessors, was in many respects like Louis-Philippe, notably in his love of money.—Editor.

[55] Before that it bore the name of the Rue des Trois-Hautbois, and in the heyday of the Second Empire it was changed into the Rue Eugène-Rouher. But at the fall of Sedan the indignation against the Emperor's powerful minister was so great that his carriages had to be removed from Riom lest they should be burned by the mob, and the street resumed its old appellation. In November, 1887, three years after Rouher's death, I happened to be at Clermont-Ferrand waiting for General Boulanger to go to Paris. I went over to Riom and had a look at the house. It was occupied by a carpenter or joiner, to whose father it had been sold years previously by the express wish of one of Eugène Rouher's daughters. I got into conversation with an intelligent inhabitant of the town, who told me that on the 4th of September, 1870, the feeling against Rouher was much stronger than against Louis-Napoléon himself, yet that feeling was an implied compliment to Rouher. "He was the cleverer of the two," the people shouted; "he ought not to have allowed the Emperor to engage in this war. He could have prevented it with one word." Nevertheless, in a little while it abated, and Rouher was elected a member of the National Assembly.—Editor.

[56] De Morny's prophecy turned out correct. M. Eugène Rouher died a poor man. There is a comic story connected with this poverty. At the beginning of the Republic, and during the presidency of Thiers, Rouher's house was constantly watched by detectives. The weather was abominably bad; it rained constantly. Madame Rouher sent them some cotton umbrellas, excusing herself for not sending silk ones, because she could not afford it.—Editor.

[57] The diminutive of "cave" (cellar). Really a gathering of poets and songwriters, which reached its highest reputation in Paris during the early part of the present century. The Saturday nights at the Savage Club are perhaps the nearest approach to it in London. —Editor.

[58] The term for the French bench, consisting of judges; the *parquet, i. e.* those to whom the public prosecution is confided, are called "la magistrature debout." As a rule, the latter have a great deal more talent than the former. "What are you going to do with your son?" asked a gentleman of his friend. "I am going to make a magistrate of him —'debout,' if he is strong enough to keep on his legs; 'assis,' if he be not."—Editor.

[59] The author alludes to the Madame Cardinal of Ludovic Halévy, who sequestrates her daughter because the baron, her would-be protector, is hanging back with the settlements.—Editor.

[60] Dupin's feet were enormous, and, furthermore, invariably shod in thick, hobnailed bluchers. He himself was always jestingly alluding to them; and one day, on the occasion of a funeral of a friend, which he could not possibly attend, he suggested sending his boots instead. "People send their empty conveyance: I'll send mine," he said.—Editor.

[61] Mérimée, the author of "Carmen," who knew something of Spanish women, and of

the female members of the Montijo family in particular, said that God had given them the choice between love and wit, and that they had chosen the former.—Editor.

[62] The lampion was the three-cornered hat, cocked on all sides alike in the shape of a spout, and stiffened with wire.—Editor.

[63] "Wearing the king's button" is a very old French sporting term, signifying permission to wear the dress or the buttons or both, similar to those of the monarch when following the hounds.—Editor.

[64] Known on the English stage as the "Queen's Shilling," by Mr. Godfrey.—Editor.

[65] The Sainte-Eugénie, according to the Church Calendar. In France, it is not the birthday, but the day of the patron-saint whose name one bears, which is celebrated. —Editor.

[66] "D'Hozier," the French "Burke," so named after its founder, Pierre D'Hozier, the creator of the science of French genealogy.—Editor.

[67] Anne, Louise, Bénédicte de Bourbon, Princesse de Condé, who married the Duc du Maine, the illegitimate son of Louis XIV. and Madame de Montespan. She disliked her husband, whom she considered socially beneath her, and who was very ugly besides. The lines quoted above are probably not hers, but Malezieu's, "her poet in ordinary," who also organized her amateur theatricals.—Editor.

[68] Idiomatically, "the bores, the spoil-sports, or wet-blankets."—Editor.

[69] A character of one of Molière's plays, who lends her name to the play itself, and who, with her provincial clique, apes the manners of the court.

[70] Mesdames Du Barry and Pompadour.

[71] "Équipage" is the right word. Applied to any but military or hunting uses, it is out of place, though frequently thus used.—Editor.

[72] My translation by no means renders the vulgarity of the sentence. The French have three words to express their contempt for a speaker's opinion, *se moquer*, *se ficher*, and *se* ... I omit the latter, but even the second is rarely used in decent society.—Editor.

[73] It is a mistake. Not to mention Camille Desmoulins, who, when asked his age by his judge, replied, "The age of another *sans-culotte*, Jesus." Esquiros frequently spoke of "that good patriot, Christ;" Lammenais began the draft of his constitution with "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and by the will of the French people."—Editor.

[74] Of course, David meant the spot where the remains had been interred at first. —Editor.

[75] In 1782, when Heurtier, the architect, submitted his plan of the building which was intended for the Italian singing-actors, the latter offered a determined opposition to the idea of the theatre facing the Boulevards, lest they should be confounded with the small theatres on the Boulevard du Temple and in the direction of the present Boulevard des Filles-du-Calvaire. This extraordinary vanity was lampooned on all sides, and especially in a *quatrain*, which I forbear to quote even in French.—Editor.

[76] Alexandre Dumas referred to a story in connection with the Comte de Saint-Simon and Madame de Staël which is not very generally known. One day the head of the new sect went to see the authoress of "Corinne." "Madame," he said, "vous êtes la femme la plus remarquable en France; moi, je suis l'homme le plus remarquable. Si nous nous arrangions à vivre quelques mois ensemble, nous aurions peut-être l'enfant le plus remarquable sur la terre." Madame de Staël politely declined the honour. As for the epithet of "l'ignorant" which Dumas was fond of applying to himself, it arose from the fact of Dumas, the celebrated professor of chemistry, being spoken of as "Dumas le savant." "Done," laughed the novelist, "je suis Dumas l'ignorant."—Editor.

[77] Joseph Ferrari was an Italian by birth, but spent a great part of his time in France. He is best known by his "Philosophes Salariés," and died in Rome, 1876.—Editor.

[78] I believe there exists an English version of the play, entitled "A Son of the Soil." I am not certain of the title.—Editor.

[79] It was, in fact, an English officer who shouted, "Messieurs des gardes françaises, tirez;" to which the French replied, "Messieurs, nous ne tirons jamais les premiers; tirez vous mêmes." But it was not politeness that dictated the reply; it was the expression of the acknowledged and constantly inculcated doctrine that all infantry troops which fired the first were indubitably beaten. We find the doctrine clearly stated in the infantry instructions of 1672, and subsequently in the following order of Louis XIV. to

his troops: "The soldier shall be taught not to fire the first, and to stand the fire of the enemy, seeing that an enemy who has fired is assuredly beaten when his adversary has his powder left." At the battle of Dettingen, consequently, two years before Fontenoy, the theory had been carried *beyond* the absurd by expressly forbidding the Gardes to fire, though they were raked down by the enemy's bullets. Maurice de Saxe makes it a point to praise the wisdom of a colonel who, in order to prevent his troops from firing, constantly made them shoulder their muskets.—EDITOR.

[80] "The receiver of the goods stolen from monarchies."—EDITOR.

[81] In olden times, every community, corporation, and guild in France elected annually a king;—even the mendicants, whose ruler took the title of King Pétaud, from the Latin *peto*, I ask. The latter's court, as a matter of course, was a perfect bear-garden, in which every one did as he liked, in which every one was as much sovereign as the titular one. The expression, "the Court of King Pétaud," became a synonym for everything that was disorderly, ridiculous, and disgusting.

"Oui, je sors de chez vous fort mal édifiée;
Dans toutes mes leçons j'y suis contrariée;
On n'y respecte rien, chacun y parle haut,
Et c'est tout justement la cour du roi Pétaud."

(MOLIÈRE, "Tartuffe," Act i. Sc. 1.)—EDITOR.

[82] The first from "Les Mousquetaires de la Reine;" the second from "Charles VI."—EDITOR.

[83] Goethe, in his journey through France, noticed that the peasants who drove his carriage invariably refused to eat the soldiers' bread, which he found to his taste. —EDITOR.

[84] "Mettre du beurre dans ses épinards," means, figuratively, to increase one's comforts.—EDITOR.

[85] The proverb is, "Ventre affamé n'a pas d'oreilles."—EDITOR.

[86] The Arab *kuskus* generally consists of a piece of mutton baked in a paste with the vegetables of the season, flavoured with herbs; and the addition of half a dozen hard-boiled eggs. The whole of the flesh is boned.—EDITOR.

[87] Five hundred French grammes make seventeen ounces English, and a fraction. —EDITOR.

[88] A similar measure had been decided upon in 1814, under analogous circumstances, but the maximum was twenty francs instead of fifty francs.—EDITOR.

[89] A curious feature in connection with the pledging of tools and implements may be recorded here. At the termination of the siege, a committee in London transmitted 20,000 francs (£800) for the express purpose of redeeming these. The Paris committee entrusted with the task, while grateful for the solicitude shown, rightly considered that it would not *go* very far, considering that, at the time, the Mont-de-Piété held a total of 1,708,549 articles, representing loans to the amount of 37,502,743 francs. The authorities took particular pains to publish the receipt of the 20,000 francs, and the purposes thereof. Within a given time, they returned 6,430 francs to the committee. Only 2,383 tools (or sets of tools) had been redeemed, representing a lent value of 13,570 francs.

[90] Here are the two English readings, as far as I am able to give them:—

"WINE AT EIGHTEEN SOUS THE LITRE
AND UPWARDS.
ROAST BEEF.
RAGOUT OF MUTTON."

"WINE AT EIGHTEEN SOUS THE LITRE
AND WATER ATOP.
OLD CROCK'S FLESH.
RAT TASTING OF MUTTON."—EDITOR.

[91] The word "Godillot" has passed into the French language, and, at present, means the soldier's shoes.—EDITOR.

[92] During my stay in Paris, 1881-86, as the correspondent of a London evening paper, I had occasion to see a great deal of M. Maxime Lisbonne, who is a prominent figure at nearly every social function, such as premières, the unveiling of monuments, the opening of public buildings, etc. The reason of this prominence has never been very clear to me, unless it be on the assumption that the Paris journalists, even the foremost

of whom he treats on the footing of equality, consider him "good copy." Only as late as a few years ago, he made a considerable sensation in the Paris press by appearing at one of M. Carnot's receptions in evening dress, redolent of benzine, "because the dress had been lying *perdu* for so many years." It was he who started the famous "taverne du bagne," on the Boulevard Rochechouart, to which "all Paris" flocked. Previous to this, he had been the lessee of the Bouffes du Nord, at which theatre he brought out Louise Michel's "Nadine." Though by no means an educated man, he can, on occasions, behave himself very well, and truth compels me to state that he is very good-natured and obliging. One day, on the occasion of an important murder trial, I failed to see Commandant Lunel at the Palais de Justice, and was turning away disconsolately, when, at a sign from M. Lisbonne, the sergeant of the Gardes de Paris, who had refused to admit me on the presentation of my card, relented. That same afternoon, at the mere expression of his wish, the manager of the Jardin de Paris, which had just been opened, presented me with a season ticket, or, to speak correctly, placed my name on the permanent free list. In short, I could mention a score of instances of a similar nature; all tending to show that M. Maxime Lisbonne's "participation in the events of the Commune" has had the effect of investing him with a kind of social halo.—EDITOR.

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