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Author: Eugène Sue

Translator: Daniel De Leon

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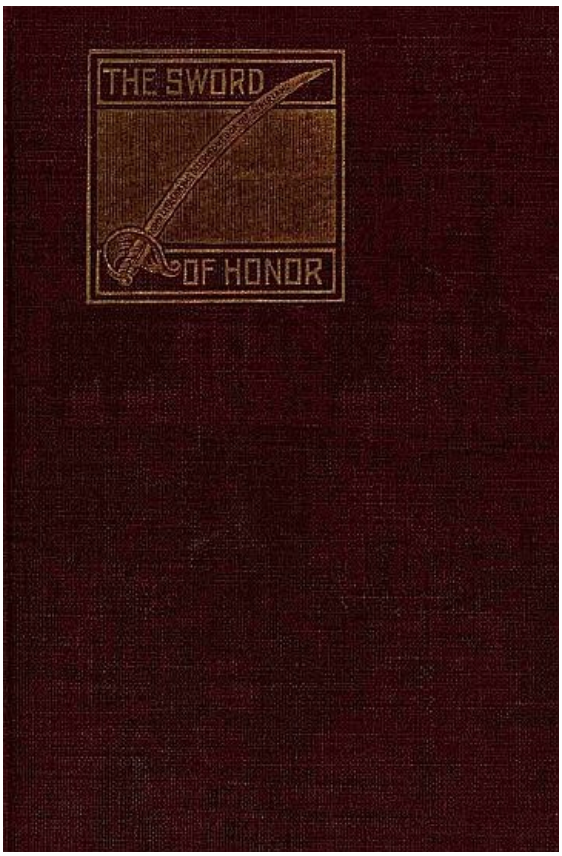

THE SWORD OF HONOR

THE FULL SERIES OF

The Mysteries of the People

OR

History of a Proletarian Family
Across the Ages

By EUGENE SUE

Consisting of the Following Works:

THE GOLD SICKLE; or, *Hena the Virgin of the Isle of Sen*.
THE BRASS BELL; or, *The Chariot of Death*.
THE IRON COLLAR; or, *Faustine and Syomara*.
THE SILVER CROSS; or, *The Carpenter of Nazareth*.
THE CASQUE'S LARK; or, *Victoria, the Mother of the Camps*.
THE PONIARID'S HILT; or, *Karadeucq and Ronan*.
THE BRANDING NEEDLE; or, The *Monastery of Charolles*.
THE ABBATIAL CROSIER; or, *Bonaik and Septimine*.
THE CARLOVINGIAN COINS; or, *The Daughters of Charlemagne*.
THE IRON ARROW-HEAD; or, *The Buckler Maiden*.
THE INFANT'S SKULL; or, *The End of the World*.
THE PILGRIM'S SHELL; or, *Fergan the Quarryman*.
THE IRON PINCERS; or, *Mylio and Karvel*.
THE IRON TREVET; or Jocelyn the Champion.
THE EXECUTIONER'S KNIFE; or, Joan of Arc.
THE POCKET BIBLE; or, *Christian the Printer*.
THE BLACKSMITH'S HAMMER; or, *The Peasant Code*.
THE SWORD OF HONOR; or, *The Foundation of the French Republic*.
THE GALLEY SLAVE'S RING; or, *The Family Lebrenn*.

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THE SWORD OF HONOR

: : : : OR : : : :

The Foundation of the French Republic

A Tale of The French Revolution

By EUGENE SUE

In Two Volumes

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH BY

DANIEL DE LEON

NEW YORK LABOR NEWS COMPANY, 1910

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

Most persons know the French Revolution as a tremendous outburst in human affairs. Many know it as one of the race's great steps forward. That, however, it was the revolution which carried into power the then rising bourgeois, now capitalist, class; that this class, while appealing for and using the help of the working class, secretly hated and feared the demands of the latter, and blocked them at every opportunity; that finally the bourgeoisie, having obtained as revolutionists, by the aid of the workers, their end of the revolution, became as violently reactionary as had been the nobility they fought, and ruthlessly shot and guillotined to pieces the then definite proletarian movement for full political equality and collective ownership of the tools of production—that is an insight into the French Revolutionary period hitherto vouchsafed to few. To that insight Eugene Sue's genius has, with the present thrilling novel, made straight the way for all.

This, *The Sword of Honor; or, The Foundation of the French Republic*, is the eighteenth and culminating unit in Sue's great historic-fiction series, *The Mysteries of the People; or, History of a Proletarian Family Across the Ages*. Following close upon the previous volume, *The Blacksmith's Hammer; or, The Peasant Code*, in which the popular storm was seen gathering head under the atrocities of the gilded age of the Grand Monarch, the present story portrays that storm breaking in all the accumulated vigor of its centuries of postponement, and sweeping away the empty lay figures of an outgrown feudalism. True, one barrier to human liberty was thrown down only to disclose another. To the empire of birth and privilege was to succeed the empire of the shekel; to the rule of do-nothing kings, the rule of do-nothing plutocracy. But it is in the act of drilling itself for the overthrow of that final parasite class—for the final conquering, in other words, of freedom for the race—that Sue portrays the proletariat in the next and closing work of the series, *The Galley Slave's Ring; or, The Family of Lebrenn*. Though he minimizes none of the difficulties, his message for the future is of hope only.

Nothing is more unanimous among historians of the period than expressions of commiseration for the condition of the French people before the Revolution. Yet nothing, on the other hand, is more unanimous either than the

condemnation showered upon this people the moment it seizes the reins and enters upon the task of putting down its age-long tyrannizers. Into this absurd breach of consistency Sue's genius saved him from falling. In his pages Marat, Danton and Robespierre walk to their doom with head erect, clean from the smut slung at them by their bourgeois enemies, for whom *they were going too far*. Friends of the People once, so they remained to the end; and in that mantle Sue has preserved their memory for all time. For him who would rail at their summary deeds Sue has far from spread a bed of roses. The memory of the royalist massacres in the Vendee and of the triumphant bourgeois massacres during the White Terror, rescued by his pen from the oblivion in which they were sought to be buried, have thrown the Revolutionary Terror into its proper perspective. It is a bagatelle beside the acts committed by its denouncers.

Sue's clear presentation of the maxim, "To the peasant the land, to the workman the tool"; his unflinching delineation of the debauchery of court and ecclesiastical circles of the time; his revelation of the role of the political machine under the guise of religion sending out its arms as willing regicides or *agents provocateurs* by turn; and his clear depiction of the cowardly, grasping, double-dealing and fraud-perpetrating character of the bourgeois, all of which is presented in the easy reading of a story, make this thrilling work of fiction an unsurpassable epitome of the period in which its action elapses.

Finally, it is the distinctive test of good literature upon any topic, that it does not sate, but incites to further thought and study. Not the least of the values of *The Sword of Honor; or, The Foundation of the French Republic*, is that it performs this reverent duty matchlessly for the momentous period of which it treats.

SOLON DE LEON.

New York, April, 1910.

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PART II—THE BOURGEOIS REVOLUTION.

(Continued) (volume 2)

INTRODUCTION.

I, John Lebrenn, the son of Ronan, whose father was Alain, the last son of Salaun Lebrenn the mariner, now take up the thread of our family history, by writing the following narrative.

Thanks to God, Oh, sons of Joel! my eyes have seen the beautiful day predicted to our ancestor Scanvoch the soldier by Victoria the Great, now more than fifteen centuries ago, and awaited from age to age by our family. I have witnessed the solemn judgment, the expiatory punishment of Louis Capet, called Louis XVI, the last of that line of Kings of Frankish origin. Rejoice, ye shades of my ancestors—ye martyrs of the Church, of the Nobility, and of Royalty! Rejoice, ye obscure soldiers who fought in the bloody conflicts that you engaged in from age to age, in resolute insurrections of the oppressed against the oppressors of centuries—of the sons of the conquered Gauls against the conqueror Franks! Rejoice! Old Gaul has recovered her ancient republican freedom! She has broken the abhorred yoke of the Kings, and the infamous yoke of the Church of Rome.

I am writing this narrative in the year II of the French Republic, one and indivisible.

My great-grandfather, Salaun Lebrenn, died at Amsterdam in his ninety-first year, on December 20, 1715. His son Alain, born in 1685, was then thirty years of age. He worked in Amsterdam as a printer, one of the most lucrative trades, in that the large number of books, then being written against the Church and royalty, could be published only

at Geneva, or in Holland, free countries in which the right of intellectual free research was recognized and protected. My ancestor Alain sold in 1715 the modest patrimony which he inherited from his father Salaun, left Holland, and settled down in France at the beginning of the Regency under Louis XV, the successor of Louis XIV. The freedom then enjoyed was great compared with conditions at the period of Louis XIV. Being exceptionally skilled at his trade, my grandfather secured the position of foreman in the printing house of one of the descendants of the famous Estienne, in whose establishment our ancestor Christian was long employed. Alain married the niece of his employer. Of that marriage was born, in 1727, my father Ronan. He followed my grandfather's trade. The latter died in 1751. My father had two children—my sister Victoria, born in 1760, and myself, John Lebrenn, born in 1766.

My grandfather's life was spent in peace and obscurity. But great misfortunes fell upon our family. As you will read in the course of the following history, Oh, sons of Joel! it was not vouchsafed to my father to witness, as I did, the brilliant victory that crowned fifteen centuries of incessant, painful and bloody endeavor, thanks to which our ancestors—successively slaves, serfs and vassals—conquered, at the price of their lives and of innumerable rebellions, step by step, one by one, the franchises that the French Republic has now confirmed and consecrated in the face of the whole world, by proclaiming, in the name of the Rights of Man, the downfall of Kings and the sovereignty of the People.

PART I.

FALL OF THE BASTILLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE HOUSE IN ST. FRANCOIS STREET.

One night toward the middle of April, 1789, when the moon with its radiance clearly lighted the scene, a man, wrapped in a great-coat, and with his hat pulled far over his countenance, might have been seen carefully surveying the neighborhood of a building located in one of the most deserted streets of Paris, St. Francois Street, in the Swamp. A lofty wall, its black stones weathered with years of exposure, ran nearly the whole length of the thoroughfare, and served as facing to a terrace surmounted with trees that had laughed to scorn the storms of a century. Through their heavy foliage one caught glimpses of the stone front, the peaked roof, and the high brick chimneys of a mansion in the style of Louis XIV. A wall, pierced by several grated openings, formed a deep, semi-circular approach, leading up to a coach gate of massive oak, studded with enormous spikes of iron. To judge from the thick layers of dust and cobwebs which covered the gate, many had been the days since it was opened. A little bastard gate, closed with a wicket, and no less massively built than the principal entrance, gave on its other side onto a narrow and vaulted passage. To the left of this passage stood the door of a lodge the windows of which overlooked a spacious garden, laid out in the fashion of the previous century, and ornamented with vases and statues of stone, stained and broken by time. In the center of the garden rose another dwelling whose doors had been walled up, and whose windows were sealed with plates of lead, soldered into iron frames set in the masonry.

One more little building, snuggled up against the entry-gate and evidently intended for the porter, was occupied only by a Jew and his wife. The couple this evening were chatting in a lower room whose half-open door communicated with the vaulted passage running to the street.

David Samuel was in the neighborhood of thirty, his wife Bathsheba, twenty-five. The lineage of Israel was strongly stamped on their features. Bathsheba, seated before a little table lighted by a copper lamp, was preparing to write at her husband's dictation. The latter, sunk in an arm-chair, his forehead in his hands, was in grave mood, and said to his wife after a silence of several minutes:

"The more I think over the present state of affairs, the more am I convinced that it is the part of prudence and necessity for us to prepare against unfortunate eventualities. In spite of our precautions within and without, what goes on here may one day be uncovered by the creatures of the Lieutenant of Police. We would then both be imprisoned, my dear Bathsheba! Then, if I should die in prison—"

"Ah, my friend, what gloomy forebodings! Think not of such sad chances."

"Everything must be reckoned with. So, then, in case I die, our cousin Levi, on whom I count as on myself—you know him—"

"Your confidence is well placed."

"I am sure of it. I wish to charge him, in that case, to take my place in the sacred mission which my grandfather

and father have handed down to me. That is why I wish to hold ready, in advance, the memorandum which will place our relative in possession of the knowledge he will need in order to replace me. Come then, write as I dictate."

At the moment that Samuel uttered these last words, he heard a knocking in a peculiar manner at the little bastard gate. First there were three blows, then two, separated from the others by a pause; and then two again; total, seven, the cabalistic number.

Samuel manifested no surprise at the signal. He left the room, traversed the passage, drew close to the wicket, and asked in an undertone:

"Who knocks?"

"*A blind one.*"

"What does he seek?"

"*The light.*"

"What time is it?"

"*The hour of darkness, my brother!*"

Immediately upon the last response, Samuel swung back the gate. Two persons wrapped in cloaks hurried through the passage and disappeared in the garden. The Jew secured again the gate, and returned to his wife, who, no more surprised than he by the mysterious entrance of the two newcomers, said:

"Dictate, my friend; I shall write."

"In the year 1660," began Samuel, "Monsieur Marius Rennepont, a rich Protestant shipowner and captain, lay in Lisbon. He had carried from France, on his ship, Monsieur the Duke of San Borromeo, one of Portugal's greatest lords. The very day of his arrival in Lisbon, Monsieur Rennepont saw from his hotel on the Plaza Mayor, the preparations for an auto-da-fé. On inquiry he learned that the next day a Jew named Samuel was to be burnt in the cause of religion. Monsieur Rennepont, being a humane and generous-minded man, and, moreover, having sympathy for the fate of heretics as his own Protestant co-religionists were beginning in France to be persecuted in spite of the Edict of Nantes, resolved to snatch this Jew from the torture, and counted on the support and protection of the Duke of San Borromeo.

"The latter, more than once during the passage, had made tender of his services to the captain. Chance so willed it that he was the elder brother of the Inquisitor of Lisbon. Monsieur Rennepont's hopes were realized. The Duke of San Borromeo by his credit obtained from the tribunal of the Inquisition a commutation of the Jew's sentence from capital punishment to one of perpetual banishment. Monsieur Rennepont, having saved his protegé, made inquiries as to his character, and received the best accounts thereof. He proposed that the Jew accompany him to France, an offer which the latter accepted with gratitude. Later on Monsieur Rennepont entrusted him with the money matters of his trade; and Samuel devoted himself body and soul to his benefactor.

"That Hebrew, my grandfather, was soon able to prove his gratitude to Monsieur Marius Rennepont. The Protestant persecutions increased in fury. Those who refused to be converted were exposed to violence and exactions of every sort. Monsieur Rennepont had a son whom he loved passionately. In order to ensure to this son the enjoyment of his goods by sheltering them from confiscation, he abjured the Protestant faith. Dearly he paid for that moment of weakness. The Jesuit Society, for some hidden reason which my grandfather never could fathom, pursued from age to age with their secret surveillance and hatred a certain Lebrenn family, with which one of Monsieur Rennepont's ancestors had been connected by marriage in the middle of the Sixteenth Century.[1] For reasons to be revealed later, that branch of the Renneponts had broken off its relations with the Lebrenns; it was even ignorant of whether its former allies had left any descendants.

"The Society of Jesus, enveloping in its covert network of espionage all who, either closely or distantly, were connected with the Lebrenn family, learned through its agents that Monsieur Marius Rennepont, in spite of his apparent conversion to Catholicism, was in the habit of attending, along with several of his co-religionists, a certain Protestant church. Denounced by the Jesuits, Monsieur Rennepont incurred the terrible penalties visited upon the fallen from faith—the galleys for life, and the confiscation of his property. At the same time his only son fell a victim to a duel without witnesses. Some time thereafter, the father conceived the hazardous idea of escaping, at his age, from the rigors of the galleys. He fled to a house several hours distant from Paris, called my grandfather Samuel to his side, and entrusted to him his wishes and his last testament. The goods confiscated from him, had, by a royal order, been turned over to his betrayers, the Jesuits, who thus profited by his fortune. But Monsieur Rennepont, having long intended to leave to his son, should the latter survive him, a certain patrimony had laid away in a secret place fifty thousand crowns in gold. That sum he confided to my grandsire, charging him to re-purchase this estate where we now are, then estimated at between seven and eight thousand crowns. Samuel was instructed to carry out certain orders with regard to the main dwelling of the estate, and to live, with his descendants, in the lodge which we occupy.

"The sum thus remaining in my grandfather's hands, amounting to some forty thousand crowns, he was to put out at interest as securely as possible; the sums accruing from this interest were to be capitalized and added to the principal for the space of about a century and a half, that is to say, till the year 1832. Samuel was authorized to draw every year two thousand livres from the profit of these investments, and to pass on this duty, and the salary attached to it, to his own son, or in case of the latter's death, to some relative, or co-religionist, known to him for probity.

"Such is the solidarity which binds us Hebrews together, and which constitutes our strength, that my grandsire, even had he no son, would have found some faithful repository for his trust. But God willed that it should be my father Isaac himself who was to acquit himself of this debt of gratitude towards the protector of our ancestor, and that I, in turn, should fulfil the same duty.

"The object of Monsieur Marius Rennepont in thus bequeathing to us the duty of investing the interests on the sum which he confided to our ancestor, was to leave to the third or fourth generation of his heirs an enormous fortune, the employment of which will only be disclosed upon the opening of his will, which his representatives will perform in forty-three years, on the 13th of February, 1832, in this house, the door of which is to remain sealed and the windows fastened until that date."

At this point of his dictation Samuel was interrupted by a new series of raps, in the pre-arranged fashion, at the little gate. He disappeared for a moment, and almost as soon returned, saying to his wife:

"We shall have to postpone our writing—we can take it up later. You may withdraw now about your household affairs. Prince Franz of Gerolstein has just arrived with a new comrade whom he wishes to entertain here in this chamber, before his initiation."

"We shall continue the dictation again, then, my friend," responded Bathsheba, rising. And she added, with a deep sigh, "O, may you never regret having affiliated yourself with the 'Seeing Ones,' or 'Voyants,' as they call themselves."

"No, my beloved wife, never shall I regret my affiliation with the Voyants. The ideas of which they have made themselves the propagandists must infallibly bring about the reign of fraternity and the emancipation of the human race. Then we, contemned Jews, shall enter into the communion of the great human family. In affiliating myself with the Voyants of Paris, in offering them the subterranean chambers which I place at their disposal for their meetings, I serve our own personal cause and also the cause of the disinherited, the downtrodden ones of the world. I am fulfilling thereby a sacred duty. Whatever may hap, I shall not regret having put my shoulder to the work of emancipation."

"Oh, will that sacred cause, to which you have given yourself, soul and body, ever triumph? What dangers must be run, and for an uncertain end!"

"Everything proclaims the early victory of our cause! Be of good cheer!"

"Illusion, Samuel; the illusion of a generous heart. I fear you are but cruelly deceived."

"It is no illusion, Bathsheba! Must it not be truth, which has so irresistible an attraction? Why else should the offspring of a prince be a Voyant?"

"You mean Prince Franz of Gerolstein?"

"He was initiated in Germany, the very cradle of our secret society. He has become one of our most ardent converts. Blessings on the day when it was given me to make acquaintance with the noble young man. Never did the cause of humanity have a more eloquent apostle, a more great-hearted defender. And still withal the society of which he is a member has declared an implacable war upon all privilege of birth or riches, upon all authority, royal or religious. 'Neither Kings nor priests!'—that is our motto. The Prince holds these ideas of equality, of emancipation—he, of a sovereign race! he, one destined to rule! Are not these thrilling signs? The doctrines of the enfranchisement of the working class are spread by the sovereign princes. The Emperor of Austria, Joseph II, brother of Marie Antoinette, the Queen of France, without owning allegiance to the Voyants, without completely accepting their principles, nevertheless travels Europe incognito as a philosopher, nowhere permitting that they pay him the honors due to royal blood, visiting the bourgeois, the lower ranks, mingling with all classes of society, observing for himself the trend of their spirit, sympathizing with their new ideas, submitting himself, perhaps without his own knowledge, to the influence of that regenerating breeze which is sweeping over the old world. The reign of justice and equality is close at hand!"

"In truth—these signs are thrilling," mused Bathsheba pensively.

"Yes, dear wife, the end of persecution and iniquity draws nigh. In a few years, one will find difficulty in persuading himself that there was a time when we Israelites were under the ban of the world; when there was a price upon us; when we were tortured, hanged, burned, all because we were Jews; and when the Protestants, like us, were sent to the galleys or to death, solely because they were Lutherans or Calvinists. Ah, no fear, the descendants of Monsieur Marius Rennepont will be able to enjoy in security the huge fortune which they are to inherit, whether they are Catholics or Protestants—my hope is firm."

Bathsheba reflected a moment and answered:

"My friend, I do not understand you. Monsieur Marius Rennepont left at his death but fifty thousand crowns in gold as his whole heritage. Out of this your ancestor paid the price of this mansion. How, then, will his heirs inherit the colossal fortune of which you speak!"

"In this way, Bathsheba. My grandfather, after the death of Monsieur Rennepont, by means of certain financial operations, succeeded, after some little time, in recouping the eight thousand crowns paid for the estate. In 1683 he had completely restored the fifty thousand crowns. He took the cash; invested it, together with the interest and emoluments, and fifteen years later, in 1696, the sum had already grown to three hundred thousand livres, which, doubled by investment in 1710, made six hundred thousand. Finally, in 1719, when my grandfather died, the sum had reached nearly a million. The doubling of the capital took place in ten, twelve, or fourteen years, depending on the rate of interest, it being in different years seven, six, or five per cent.

"The million which my grandfather Samuel left at his death," continued Samuel, "had, by 1724, become 1,200,000; 1742, two years after my birth, nearly 5,000,000; in 1766, it was 9,600,000 livres; in 1780, 19,600,000 livres; and at this moment the bequest of Marius Rennepont has attained the magnitude of 34,300,000 livres, 8 sous, 11 deniers. That is not all. Just think of what it will be forty years from now, progressing at the same rate: In 1794 it will climb to nearly 38,000,000; in 1808, to 76,000,000; in 1822, to 150,000,000; and in 1832, the time set for the opening of the will of Monsieur Marius Rennepont and for the partition of his fortune among his descendants, the fortune will have

capped the enormous figure of 220,000,000 livres!"

"It is certainly prodigious," rejoined Bathsheba. "Even with your explanation, my surprise makes me dizzy. But that dizziness," she added, with great emotion, "shall not keep me from feeling a noble pride in the fact that it was your grandsire, your sire, and you yourself, who have been till now the worthy repositories of such a treasure. Oh, Samuel, you indeed acquit the debt of gratitude contracted by your grandfather toward Monsieur Marius Rennepont."

"We but perform a sacred duty confided to our integrity and our prudence," returned the Jew. "My grandparent, my parent and I have ever been careful not to endanger the smallest part of this sum in risky ventures. Thanks to the financial relations of our co-religionists with all the banks of Europe, we have been able to confine ourselves rigorously to investments of the highest security. Should God give to us a son, my dear wife, he will have, I hope, the prudence and the probity of his fathers. If the joy of having a son is denied us, or if some unforeseen development should prevent me from carrying on this mission of honor, our cousin Levi, whose uprightness I well know, will take my place. Or better still, perhaps the Lord will grant me a green old age, thus enabling me in 1832, with ninety winters on my back, to return in person to the heirs of the house of Rennepont the sacred trust which their ancestor so long ago confided to mine. That will be a day too good to hope for, if I can be present at the opening of Monsieur Rennepont's testament. But God alone knows the future!"

After a pause, Samuel continued:

"To bring his heirs together at the distant time set for the opening of his will, Monsieur Rennepont, a short time before his death, hit upon an ingenious plan. He transmitted to each of his descendants a medal which bore on one side the legend:

VICTIM OF S. J.
PRAY FOR ME
1682.

And on the reverse, the words:

AT PARIS, SAINT FRANCOIS STREET, NO. 3
IN A CENTURY AND A HALF YOU WILL BE
FEBRUARY THE 13TH, 1832.

"It is by means of these medals, handed down from generation to generation, that the Rennepont heirs will one day be reunited here, in this, the house of their ancestor."

"My friend," asked Bathsheba, "in the note you were dictating to me for our friend Levi, you made mention of a Lebrenn family, related to Monsieur Rennepont, which, in spite of its relationship, will probably not partake in the division of the fortune. Whence and why this exclusion?"

"I learned from my father that the grandfather of Monsieur Rennepont, after his abjuration, conceived the greatest aversion for his relatives of the Lebrenn branch, severed all connection with them, and even concealed the fact of their existence from his son, out of dread to submit him some day to the influence of that family, the implacable enemy, as it was, of the Church."

"And did the father of Monsieur Marius Rennepont remain true to the Roman faith?"

"He did, my beloved Bathsheba; but his son, Monsieur Marius himself, reaching the age of reason shortly after his father's death, embraced Protestantism, which still later he feigned to renounce, in order to protect his fortune for his son—a regrettable act of weakness."

"How, then, was the existence of this Lebrenn branch discovered? It all grows more and more mysterious to me, and whets my curiosity."

"Shortly before his death, by suicide, Monsieur Marius Rennepont was looking over some family papers running back to the Sixteenth Century, to the period of the religious wars. There he found to a certainty proof of the connection between the Renneponts and the Lebrenns. But whether the latter had left any descendants he was unable to determine."

"Does that mean, Samuel, that should there be living survivors of the Lebrenn family at the time the Rennepont fortune is partitioned, they will have no share in it?"

"The formal wish of the testator," replied Samuel, "is that only those who in 1832 present themselves here armed with their hereditary medallion shall be admitted to benefice in the inheritance. I shall abide by the instructions which have been handed down to me. According to what my father said, who had his information direct from his father, the confidant of Monsieur Rennepont himself, that clause was dictated by motives which will be revealed in the will."

"Everything in this affair is strange and singular. Probably no one even knows where to find the present descendants of Monsieur Rennepont."

"As to me, Bathsheba, I have not the slightest clue. Still—my father did tell me that twice in his life, Rennepont heirs presented themselves here with their hereditary medals bearing the address of this house, drawn hither by curiosity or vague pecuniary expectations—curiosity and expectations which met only with disappointment."

"What said your father to them?"

"Just what I should say in like case: 'I have nothing to communicate to you. This house belongs to me; it was left me by my father. I know not for what purpose or with what plan in view your ancestor designated this building to his heirs as their rendezvous a century and a half from date.'"

"That is, in fact, the answer commanded by prudence, Samuel. The world must remain in ignorance of the great value of the bequest you are charged with."

"Reasons of the utmost gravity impose upon us an absolute secrecy on the subject. In the first place, according to what my father had from my grandfather, the Society of Jesus, always so well served by its innumerable host of spies, succeeded in finding out that Monsieur Rennepont had saved an important sum from the confiscation which proved so profitable to the reverend fathers; for the informers and the executioners parted the spoils."

"Samuel! If these priests, so powerful, so masterful, and with so many avenues of underground working should ever suspect the truth! I tremble at the mere thought."

"Take heart, my good wife. The danger would be great, but I should know how to escape it. It was even more necessary in my grandfather's and especially in my father's case that they kept in profound secrecy the treasures they possessed; for the governments of Louis XIV, the Regent, and Louis XV, always in want, always at their wits' end for cash, were none too scrupulous in the means they chose to replenish their coffers. We Jews have always been a little beyond the pale of common rights, so that my grandfather or my father, once suspected of being the possessors of a sum amounting to several millions, would have been haled off on *lettres de cachet*, thrown into the cell of some State prison, and kept there till they had bought off their liberty, or, perhaps, their very lives at the price of the treasure which they were suspected of guarding."

"Ah, Samuel, I shudder to think that in those days every wickedness was possible. They might even have put your father to the torture."

"Thanks be to God, all that is out of the question to-day. And still, anticipating ill chances and exactions, we have always stowed our treasure in safe places and safe hands. Should the mansion be ransacked from cellar to eaves, the wealth of which we are the keepers would escape the search—"

Pricking his ear, Samuel checked his speech and listened intently a moment in the direction of the street gate. Then he said aloud to himself:

"Who is knocking there? It is not one of our men."

"The hour is unearthly," answered Bathsheba, uneasily. "It is past midnight. This lonely street has long since been deserted. May it not be our lookout come to warn us of the approach of some peril?"

"No, our lookout would have given the established signal," answered the Jew. "I'll go see what it may be."

And taking the lamp, he passed out of the chamber.

CHAPTER II.

REVOLUTIONARY EFFERVESCENCE.

Lamp in hand, Samuel approached the wicket gate. The light he carried revealed to him standing outside a lackey in a livery of orange and green, trimmed with silver lace. The fellow, swaying unsteadily on his feet, and with the air of one half-seas over with drink, knocked again, violently.

"Ho, friend!" cried Samuel. "Don't knock so hard! Perhaps you mistake the house."

"I—I knock how I please," returned the lackey in a thick voice. "Open the door—right off. I want to come in—gallows-bird!"

"Whom do you wish?"

"You do not want to open; dog of Jewry! Swine! My master will beat you to death with his stick. He said to me: 'Carry—this letter to Samuel the Jew—and above all—rascal—do not tarry at the inn!' So I want to get in to your dog-kennel, you devil of a Jew!"

"May I ask your master's name?"

"My master is Monseigneur the Count of Plouernel, colonel in the Guards. You know him well. You have before now lent him money—triple Arab!—according to what my lord's steward says—and at good interest, too."

"Have you your master's letter?"

"Yes—pig! And so, open. If not—I'll break in the gate."

"Then pass me the letter through the wicket, and hurry about it. Else I shall go in and leave you as you are."

"Mule! Isn't he stubborn, that animal!" grumbled the lackey as he shoved the letter through the grating. "I must have an answer, good and quick, I was told," he added.

"When I have read the letter," replied Samuel.

"To make me wait outside the door—like a dog!" muttered the tipsy servingman. "Me, the first lackey of my lord!"

Samuel, without paying the least attention to the impertinences of the lackey, read the letter of the Count of Plouernel by the light of his lamp, and then answered:

"Say to your master that I shall visit him to-morrow morning at his rooms. Your errand is done. You may leave."

"You won't give me a written answer?"

"No, the reply I have just given you will suffice."

Leaving the valet outside to fume his wrath away, Samuel refastened the wicket and returned to the room where he had left his wife. Bathsheba said to him, with some uneasiness:

"My friend, did I not hear a threatening voice?"

"It was a drunken lackey who brought me a letter from the Count of Plouernel."

"Another demand for a loan, I suppose?"

"Exactly. He has ordered me to undertake to secure for him the sum of 100,000 livres. He did not call on me direct for the loan, because he thought me too poor to be able to furnish it."

"Will you lend him the money, my friend?"

"Surely, on excellent securities of thirty deniers to one. The Count is good for it, and it will please me to squeeze him, along with other great seigneurs, to the profit of the strong-box of the Voyants."

Hardly had Samuel uttered these words when Prince Franz of Gerolstein, accompanied by one single companion, entered the room. Samuel and his wife silently passed upstairs to the floor above, leaving the two alone.

Franz of Gerolstein, then at the age of twenty-five, tall of stature and at once graceful and robust, presented an appearance both noble and impressive. In his face could be read frankness, resolution, and generosity. He was simply dressed. His companion, who was evidently a woman disguised in male habiliments, seemed as young as he, though she was really thirty. In spite of their rare beauty, her features bore the stamp of virility. Her figure was tall and lithe; a brownish down marked strongly her upper lip; everything harmonized with her masculine garments. Yet the beauty of this woman was of a sinister character. The marble-like pallor of her brow, the flashes of her black eyes, the contraction of her pupils, the bitterness of the smile, frequently cruel, which curled on her lips—all seemed to bear witness to the ravages of passion or to some incurable chagrin. She seemed either a superb courtesan, or a repentant Magdalen.

Neither Franz nor his companion broke the silence of the lower room for an instant. The Prince spoke first, in a voice grave and almost solemn:

"Victoria, it is now three months since my visit to the Prison of the Repentant Women. Your beauty, marked with a depth of sadness, seized possession of me at once. I learned why you had been condemned to confinement. Those reasons, once learned, moved me deeply. From that time dates the interest with which you have inspired me. By the intervention of a powerful friend, I am fortunate enough to have secured your release."

"Yes, I owe you my liberty," responded she whom he called Victoria, in a virile voice. "And moreover, you have given me, in my misfortune, many proofs of affection."

"But the interest I have shown you has other springs than in your misfortune—although that has much augmented it."

"What may they be, Franz? Speak—I am listening."

The Prince paused in silence for a second, and then asked:

"Know you who I am?"

"Have you not told me that you were a student in one of the universities of Germany, your native land?"

"I deceived you as to my station, Victoria. I am no student."

"You deceived me! You whom I thought so true?"

"You will soon learn for what cause I hid from you the truth. But first I would make you aware of the nature of the sentiments you inspire in me. I can no longer hold back the confession. Hear me, then, Victoria—"

The young woman shuddered, stopped the Prince, and said in tones of bitterness:

"Unless I greatly mistake, I foresee the end of this speech, Franz. So before you proceed, and in the hope of sparing you a refusal which would be an insult to you, I must declare that I have not changed since I met you. I must repeat what I said to you in our first interview: My heart is dead to love—one single passion rules me, and that is, vengeance. I have hid from you nothing of the past."

"Aye, I know that you have suffered. Victoria, if your heart is dead, mine is no longer mine. I left behind in Germany a young girl, an angel of candor, of virtue, of beauty. She is poor and obscure of birth, but I have sworn before God to make her my wife. I shall remain true to my love and to my oath."

"Oh, thanks, Franz, thanks for your confidence. It has lifted from me a fearsome apprehension," said Victoria, with a sigh of joy. "I love you with the tenderness of a sister, or rather, of a friend. For I am no longer a woman, and it would have been cruelty on my part to inspire in you a sentiment I could not share. But what, then, is the nature of your feeling towards me?"

"I feel for you the tender compassion due to the sorrows of your childhood and early youth—a profound esteem for

the qualities which in you have survived, have overcome, all the causes of your degradation;—and finally, Victoria, I am united to you by an indissoluble bond which reaches into the most distant past—that of kinship."

Victoria gazed at the Prince in a sort of stupor as he proceeded: "We are of one blood, Victoria. We are relatives. One cradle, one origin, embraced our two families. Have you ever read the records your fathers have handed down from age to age, for now over sixteen centuries?"

"I learned of those writings during the two years I spent with my mother and brother, subsequent to the event I have related to you. The reading of our annals, added to all the ferments of hate, already planted in my soul, and to the disappearance of my father, now dead or languishing in some pit of the Bastille, all created and matured in me that craving for vengeance, or rather for reprisals, which now possesses me. I long to serve that vengeance, at the cost of my life, if need be. That is why I have consented to this initiation, the hour of which is now approached. Vengeance will be but justice, and I wish it to be implacable."

"The hour is indeed arrived, Victoria, and also the moment to reveal to you what we are to each other. You have in your plebeian annals a princely name, that of Charles of Gerolstein. That prince was a descendant of Gaëlo the Pirate, who in the Tenth Century accompanied old Rolf, chief of the Northman pirates, to the siege of Paris.[2] One of the descendants of Gaëlo, taking his departure from Norway, went, some time in the Tenth Century, to establish himself with one of the independent tribes of Germany. His courage, his military prowess, caused his election as chief of the tribe. His son, equal to his father for wisdom and bravery, succeeded him to the command. The chieftainship from that time forward became hereditary in the family. Later, the tribe of Gerolstein became one of the foremost in the German confederation. Thus did the descendants of Gaëlo found the sovereign house of Gerolstein, to-day represented by my father, who now holds sway in his German principality. Our relationship is beyond doubt, Victoria, and the bonds thereof were again strengthened in the Sixteenth Century, when, in the religious wars, the ancestors of us both fought together under Admiral Coligny."

"So, Franz, you are of the race of sovereigns," Victoria made answer. Then she continued: "It is now three months since you rescued me from prison. Shame, grief, self-contempt have deterred me from returning to my mother and brother. I am penniless. I wished to earn my living as a sempstress, a trade in which my mother instructed me during my stay with her. That would be the wisest thing to do. Why have you opposed my desires?"

"Because I thought you could serve the cause of humanity more fruitfully than by occupying yourself with the needle."

"You told me that I was to go through a novitiate of several months, during which time I might demand no assistance in my work. I accepted of you the money necessary for my modest needs. You were to me both brother and teacher. I saw you every day for hours. Little by little my eyes were opened to the light. Radiant horizons dazzled my vision. You filled me with your generous aspirations. You fired me with that fever of devotion and resignation, that thirst for sacrifices, from which spring saints and martyrs. You followed with interest my progress in the new path that you opened out to me. Day by day I wished that my initiation might end. I wished to take my part in action, in your projects. But now that you have revealed your birth, your station, I begin to doubt you. Is the object of your society really that which you have taught me it was, the recovery of the rights ravaged from the disinherited classes?"

"The least doubt on your part on that score, Victoria, would be a cruel blow to me. We have taken arms for justice and right."

"Pardon me, Franz. Then the *level*, that inflexible emblem—the social level—"

"Is our emblem. Equality of rights for man and woman!"

"It is your emblem, my lord? Yours, the son of a sovereign?"

"The aim of my life is the triumph of liberty, the birth of the Republic! Hear me, Victoria. You have borne the hardships, the sufferings, the shame of a prison. Which, you or a person unknown to prison horrors, knows them better? Which would hate them more?"

"I read your thought. Despotism itself has taught you its horror."

"And you will no longer wonder at me—of a sovereign race, but yet as lowly of origin as you, as both our families originated in the same place—when I take the level as my emblem?"

"I shall wonder no more, Franz; but to my wonder succeeds a glow of admiration." With her eyes full of tears, and bowing her knee before the Prince of Gerolstein, Victoria kissed his hand, saying, "May you be blessed and glorified for your generous sentiments."

"Rise, Victoria," answered the Prince with emotion. "My conduct does not merit your admiration. It is but a puny sacrifice for us to make of our privileges, compared with the grandeur of our cause." Then after a pause, he resumed in mild and grave tones: "But now reflect on this solemn moment of your initiation. There is still time for you to retract your allegiance to us."

"Franz, after three months of proof, I shall not weaken at the last moment. I am ready for the ceremony."

"Think of the terrible vows you are about to take."

"Be they what they may, I shall not be found wanting in faith, courage, or devotion."

"I wished to reveal to you our family connection in order that you could accept from me without embarrassment, as should be between relatives, your means of livelihood for the future, should you not care to carry out your plan. Your liberty of action shall remain complete and absolute."

"I shall always accept from you, Franz, a service without blushing. But more than ever before, am I resolved to

pledge myself to your cause, to the cause of the expropriated—if you think me worthy to serve it."

"I shall not speak to you of the perils confronting us. You are above all, valiant. But it is necessary to reconcile you to a complete renunciation of self. You will be an instrument; not a blind one, but at once intelligent and passive. The Voyants are obliged to employ, for the deliverance, regeneration and happiness of mankind, some of the very means which the Society of Jesus uses to enslave and brutalize it. The sword, according as it is used, may be the dagger of the assassin or the glaive of the citizen wielded in defense of his country. It was the glaive with which Brutus opposed the Roman aristocracy, and smote Caesar."

"I know the end toward which I shall be guided, the triumph of right and of justice. I shall obey."

"Perhaps you will also have to renounce your hopes of vengeance and reprisals. Will you be equal to that?"

The young woman shook and her features darkened under the stress of the internal struggle which these words caused her. Finally she broke out in an altered voice:

"What, Franz! Shall centuries of oppression not have their day of retribution? Shall the crimes of ages go unpunished? Shall the shades of our martyred fathers not be appeased by vengeance? Shall the example of inexorable justice not be given to the world, in the name of eternal good? What! They would deny us one day, one single day of legitimate reprisals after fifteen centuries of crime? Must the victims be constrained to pardon their executioners?"

"Victoria, those who seek the birth of the reign of fraternity on earth hold blood in abhorrence. They hope to accomplish the freedom, the regeneration of mankind by mercy and pardon, and by educating the working class."

"Then I renounce my vengeance!" said the young woman. "But if the eternal enemies of humanity oppose themselves, by trickery or by violence, to the emancipation of the oppressed; if on their part, the conflict is engaged without either mercy or pity, shall the victims have to kneel, and offer their throats to the knife?"

"In that case, Victoria, may the blood fall on the heads of those who first shed it. Accursed be those who respond by treachery or violence to our words of love, of concord, of justice and of reparation! Then will be fulfilled once more, perhaps for the last time, that law of human progress, which, so many times across the ages, has encrimsoned the conquest of the most equitable reforms. Insurrection will have to impose upon the oppressors concessions the voluntary granting of which would have saved the world from all these woes. Accursed be those who shall then attempt to oppose force to the demands of the times. Then, Victoria, there shall be war, war tremendous, pitiless! It will be the unchaining of popular passions. No bridle can hold them. The justice of God will pass over a terror-stricken world. Then, in the midst of that tempest which shall overturn thrones and altars—then, Victoria, you shall appear, terrible as the Goddess of Vengeance, striking with her broad sword the old world, condemned in the name of the good of the peoples."

"Oh, my life, my whole life for one hour of such vengeance!" cried the young woman, palpitating in wild exaltation. "Aye, let my life be a hundred times more miserable, more abject, more horrible than that which a King put upon me—I shall live it twice over in order to assist in the hour of this vengeance. A day, an hour of reprisals, for my life of misery!"

"Come then, Victoria, you shall be ours as we shall be yours, in life, in death, in triumph, in vengeance!"

So speaking, the Prince of Gerolstein led Victoria Lebrenn out of Samuel's chamber, across the garden, and into a deserted and half-subterranean green-house.

CHAPTER III.

THE VOYANTS.

The half-underground hot-house into which Franz of Gerolstein conducted his new convert was dimly lighted by a lamp placed at the foot of a stairway leading still further beneath the earth. On the first step of this staircase Franz found a package from which he produced two loose robes and two masks. Addressing his companion, he said:

"Put this robe on over your garments, and hide your countenance behind this mask."

They descended the stairs, and arrived in a corridor, lighted by the hanging lamp whose rays had guided them from above. At the extremity of the passage stood a man cloaked in red and with a black mask over his visage. He held a naked sword in his hand, and advanced two steps to meet the newcomers.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"We are of the *disinherited*," replied Franz. "For father we had *enslavement*, for mother *ignorance*; our condition is *misery*. We are of the poor, the oppressed, the damned here below."

"What do you wish, my brother?"

"*Liberty*, *knowledge*, *happiness*."

"Knock at that door," commanded the masked figure in red, stepping aside to make way for Franz and his

companion. "Knock and it shall be opened unto you; seek, and ye shall find."

The door opened, and as soon closed behind the two initiates. For a moment they were blinded by the brilliance which flooded the subterraneous chamber to which they had now penetrated. It was lighted by seventy candelabra, each bearing seven candles—again the mystic number. The walls were covered with red drapery; at the further end a raised platform formed a dais with closed curtains; on the front of the dais was the picture of a carpenter's level. Several steps from the platform, on a draped table, were thrown in confusion a royal crown, a scepter, a pontifical tiara, a bishop's crosier, several collars of chivalric orders, and a few ducal or princely coronets; besides these there lay in the heap some pouches, half open, and full of gold and silver pieces.

Directly behind the table on which thus lay cluttered the emblems of religion, royalty, aristocracy and wealth, stood seven masked men, garbed in long robes, silent and erect, their arms crossed on their chests, seven specters, seven fantastic apparitions. The one whose duty it was to officiate at the reception of initiates stood in the center. Three Voyants were ranged to his right, three to his left. He addressed Victoria, who keenly felt the impression produced on her by the strange spectacle:

"Woman, your age?"

"Fifteen centuries, and more. I was born the first day of the enslavement and misery of my brothers."

"What would you?"

"The end of oppression. I wish to beat down thrones and altars, privileges of birth and of fortune, all the hoary monuments of ignorance, of slavery, and of iniquity, all the monopolies, all the privileges which flourish upon the people."

"What will happen when the level shall have passed over the old world, and when the exploiters of the people shall have disappeared?"

"The darkness of ages shall be superseded by the revivifying warmth and the fruitful light of the sun; harvests of abundance will cover with their sheaves the soil tilled by a fecund revolution."

"Is your severance from the old world complete?"

"I have broken with the old world, and rallied to the new."

"Behold this pontifical tiara, this kingly crown; gaze on these symbols of nobility, these sacks of gold and silver. You may demand of kings, of priests, of nobles, of the rich, the enjoyments of life, all by devoting yourself body and soul to these idols and to tyranny."

"It is my wish to overthrow those idols. I vow an implacable hatred to the enemies of the people."

"From this hour," responded the cloaked president, apparently satisfied with the interrogatory, "you shall be ours as we will be yours. Our device so has it—*All for each; each for all.* By this device, co-operation will replace in the future the selfishness of the masters of the old world. Who caused all the evils of which selfishness has been the source? He who first dug a ditch about a piece of common land and said 'This is mine.' The usurpation was consecrated by men simple-minded enough to respect these arbitrary boundaries; the spoliation of several by one gradually became a right; the deed became the law, the exception the rule. The tyranny growing out of this principle, initiated by violence and perpetuated by custom, became rooted in the peoples' mind, till at length they came to own an infant mewling in the cradle for their King, and to kiss the boot of the Pope. What consequences have not come out of these aberrations! Peoples have throttled each other. The earth has its damned ones, more to be pitied than those with whom superstition peoples hell. The damned on earth call themselves vassals, serfs, proletarians, artisans, laborers! It is of these damned ones that we seek the redemption. Think you the overturning of thrones and altars will suffice for the deliverance of these victims? No, alas, no. To the tyranny of King and Church will succeed an exploitation still more tyrannical, that of the tribe of Business. Then the dispenser of work and of wages will exert an empire absolute over his wage-earning workingmen. On the ruins of the thrones and altars will soon grow up the oligarchy of merchants and bourgeois.

"That oligarchy must also in its end be overthrown," continued the initiator. "That is our final aim.[3] Our design is to unite by the bond of a common faith, thousands of initiates in every country of Europe—first in Germany, then in France, in England, and elsewhere; to bring them gradually, by initiation, into the knowledge of the object of our association; to have them swear obedience to its chiefs, visible and invisible, and chosen from all ranks of society, from the highest to the lowest; to recruit our partisans and co-workers in the very councils of the Kings themselves, in the heart of the palace of the Popes. Our enemies will find themselves, without their knowing it, perpetually under our eyes; their plots will be revealed to us; their own creatures, to all appearances the most devoted to them, will obey our orders, and undermine the foundations of their social edifice. Then in the hour of redemption the old world shall crumble and go down under its debris of priests, nobles, and Kings.

"Woman," continued the master of ceremonies, outstretching his hand toward Victoria, "you now know our purposes. Here are our sinews of action. An annual assessment levied on all our brothers, who number themselves by millions, makes us masters of a mighty treasure. That is the source of the wealth in which revel those of our number whose duty it is to mix with the mighty ones of the day, sharing in their dalliances and dissipations—foxes to deceive, wolves to devour our enemies. Victoria Lebrenn, it is for you, thanks to your remarkable gifts of nature, to become one of our most active auxiliaries. But to serve well our cause, it will be necessary that you abdicate your own will, and that you stand ready, at any hour of the day or night, to follow our orders."

"Command; I obey."

"I must first acquaint our brothers with the particulars of your life, as you have set them down in your own hand, and confided them to your converter."

Picking up a roll of manuscript, the presiding officer proceeded to read the story of Victoria Lebrenn, as follows:

"In the year 1772, being then eleven years and a half old, I was one day crossing the garden of the Tuileries, carrying dinner to my father, a workman in a printing shop in Bac Street. I paused a moment to watch some little children at play. A woman well dressed and with decent features drew close to me, examined me attentively, and made me some compliments on my good looks. Then noting the porringer with my father's dinner, and learning from me that I was on my way to him, she proposed that I go with her in her carriage. Delighted to have a carriage-ride for the first time in my life, I readily agreed. Near the Draw Bridge a coach was waiting, into which I got with my conductress. She offered me some lozenges from a box, which I accepted. The lozenges contained some species of narcotic, for in a few minutes I had fallen into a deep sleep.

"When I awoke, it was night. I was lying in a great bed with damask curtains. The ceiling of my chamber was of gold, and the room itself was richly furnished. Beside my pillow was seated the woman by whose agency I had been taken to the place. I asked her where I was. I wept at the anxiety of my parents; she calmed me, promising that they should soon be with me. She added that I was in the house of a person of great quality, who was interested in my youth, wished me much good, and would enrich my family. I knew I was not dreaming, but thought myself the heroine of a fairy tale. Two women entered. They made me rise, and put me in a perfumed bath. Then they dressed my hair, one of them winding a string of pearls through it. They dressed me in silk and lace, and served me with supper on plates of vermilion and gold. I experienced a sort of vertigo; I obeyed mechanically. Still, I kept asking for my father and mother. The woman of the carriage assured me that they would soon arrive, and be overjoyed to see me so beautiful. A hard-visaged man entered the chamber. I heard the old woman call him Monsieur Lebel, and speak to him with great respect. The man scrutinized me carefully. 'Little one,' he said to me, 'you must go to bed now.' Then he went out.

"Doubtless, in the course of the repast, they had served me with several glasses of heady wine, for I felt my reason clouding. I allowed myself to be put to bed, though not without again inquiring for my parents. They promised to take me back to them the next day. The woman and her two companions bade me good night, snuffed the candles in the candelabrum, and left me for light a single alabaster lamp, which threw a pale illumination over the spacious room. I was about to succumb less to sleep than to the leaden lethargy into which I had been plunged, when a start of fright restored to me, for a few moments, all my senses. My bed was set in an alcove. Two of the gilded panels which formed the alcove slid back in their grooves, and I beheld an old man in a dressing gown. I uttered a cry of astonishment—it was the King, Louis XV. I had seen him but a short time before at a public ceremony in Paris. I was stupefied into immobility. Close behind the King, in the secret passageway leading into the alcove, stood a beautiful young woman half-clad in a night robe, and holding a candle-stick. She laughed aloud, and said to the King, pushing him by the shoulder—'Go on, France, it is the loving hour!'

"That woman, I afterwards learned, was Countess Du Barry. I fainted with fear. I was the victim of an odious assault. Five days afterward, another poor child, aged like me, hardly twelve, the daughter of a miller of Trianon, was delivered after the same manner to the lust of Louis XV, and gave him the small-pox of which he died. Two days before his death, the woman of whom I have spoken, one of the royal procuresses, made me leave by night the little apartment in the palace of Versailles, and get with her into a carriage, assuring me she was about to restore me to my father, whom I continually called for, in tears. I still was not fully aware of my dishonor. Instead of returning me to my home, the procuress left me in an isolated dwelling not far from Versailles. High walls surrounded the garden; the only entry was by a gate which was kept under careful guard. Flight was impossible.

"In that house I found several young girls, of whom the youngest was barely my age, and the oldest, twenty. The place was the habitual haunt of great lords, prelates, and financiers. They came to sup with us—suppers that ended in shameful orgies. My companions, the immature victims, like myself, of kingly debauchery, gradually made known to me the extent of my disgrace. At first I was overcome by shame; then familiarity with vice, the contagion of example, the influence of the corrupt atmosphere in which I dwelt, stifled my better sentiments and my early training. I would never have dared at this time to return to my family. I reached my sixteenth year without having left that house of ill fame. By that time reflection and chagrin had matured my reason; then there began to grow up beside the sense of my degradation, the implacable hatred of the King and of those who, after him, had plunged me still deeper into the mire of infamy. I assisted daily in the orgies of the seigneurs of the Court, of the Church and of the Bourse. They never supposed creatures of our sort capable of attaching any importance to what they said in our presence; they expressed without hesitation their disdain and aversion for the people. Just about that time, several disturbances brought on by the dearness of provisions had been quelled at the musket's mouth; our guests regretted that the acts of repression had not been still more pitiless, saying, 'These flames can never be quenched save by rivers of blood.'

"Thus there was created in me, a daughter of the people, a blind thirst for vengeance. Louis XV was dead, but I followed with my hatred both royalty and nobility, clergy and financiers. Our relations with the men of this class taught me to see in them our merciless enemies. Still my material comfort and my early degradation engendered in me a cowardly inertia. I felt neither the courage nor the desire to flee the domicile where I was held. I was seized with mortal terror at the bare thought of encountering my father, my mother, my young brother; of soiling our hearth with my presence. And, finally, knowing that their life was poor and laborious, it seemed impossible to me to summon the will to work and to share their privations. Ease and luxury were enervating, were depraving me. Thus passed several years. I reached the age of twenty. The woman who kept the place died, and my companions and I were turned adrift. I was without resources and unable to earn my daily bread, my apprenticeship as a sempstress having been cut short by my kidnapping. The fear of misery, my determination not to continue in that abject life, the uncertainty of the future, and lastly my attachment to my family, overcame my shame and gave me the courage to return home. My parents believed me dead; my appearance overwhelmed them with joy and rendered them merciful. I confessed to them my past. They both covered me with tears and caresses, and withheld every reproach. My father gave me to read the plebeian legends of our family. Then my poor father, exasperated by the deed that marred my childhood, printed and distributed to the public with his own hand an account which he wrote and entitled *A Night of Louis XV*. A few days after the publication of this article, my father failed to come home at night. Since then we have had no trace of him. Doubtless he now is dead, or languishes in the cell of some State prison.

"For a year I remained with my mother and brother. I forced myself to live down my past. I took up again my sempstress's apprenticeship, and soon ceased to be a care to my mother. While my body had been stained, my heart remained pure. I had never felt the pangs of love. I now conceived a violent affection for a young sergeant in the French Guards named Maurice, the son of one of our neighbors. The young fellow did not know through what a slough my youth had been dragged, and thought me entirely worthy of him; so much did I dread his scorn that I had not the heart to disabuse him. He asked my hand of my mother. I begged her to hide from him my past shame; moved by my tears she consented to silence. We were affianced, Maurice and I. I had attained the summit of my prayers. I felt a secret remorse in deceiving the man who loyally offered me his hand, but I consoled myself with the thought of fulfilling scrupulously my marriage vows and making my husband as happy as possible. Cruelly was my dissimulation punished. One day, while walking between my mother and my betrothed, we met one of my old companions in misery. She knew me and addressed me in terms of a terrible meaning. Terrified at the expression of Maurice's face at this revelation, my heart broke—I collapsed. When I came to myself my mother stood at my side in tears. Commanded by my beloved to tell him all, for he still could not believe in my past indignity, my mother dared no longer hide the truth. Maurice was stricken dumb with grief, for he loved me with all his heart. He returned to the barracks in bewilderment, and chancing to come into the presence of his colonel, the Count of Plouernel, did not think to salute him. The Count, angered at this want of respect, knocked off Maurice's hat with a blow of his cane. He, half crazed with despair, raised his hand against his colonel. The crime was punishable by death under the scourge. The next day the young sergeant expired under that inhuman torture. The death of the man I loved threw me into a sort of frenzy. Often before, as the record of our family tells, had our fathers, as serfs or vassals, found themselves in arms face to face with the race of Plouernel. This memory redoubled my hatred for the colonel. Disgusted with life by the death of my only love, I resolved to avenge on the Count of Plouernel the decease of Maurice. I repaired to the quarters of the Guards at the hour when I knew I could find the colonel in his rooms. My hope was dashed. My paleness and agitation aroused the suspicions of the two under-officers to whom I addressed myself. They demanded the reason of my desire to see their chief. The brusqueness of my replies, my sinister and wild appearance strengthened their mistrust. They fell upon me, searched me, and found in my pocket—a dagger. Then I told them why I came. They arrested me; they haled me to the Repentant Women. I was subjected in that prison to the most barbarous treatment. One day a stranger visited the place. He questioned me. My answers impressed him. A few days later I was set at liberty, thanks to the efforts of this stranger, Franz, who came in person to fetch me from the Repentant Women."

The chief initiator concluded the reading of the melancholy recital, and replaced the pages of manuscript on the table before him. "The account of our sister is authenticated throughout," he said.

"To this story of my sad life," declared Victoria, "there is nothing to add. Only to-day did I learn the name of the generous stranger to whom I owe my release from prison; and again I declare myself ready to pledge my devotion and service to the cause of humanity. Let the war upon the oppressors be implacable!"

"From the most obscure to the most illustrious, all devotion is equal in the eyes of our great cause, and in the eyes of its most noble martyr, the immortal crucified master of Nazareth," added the initiator, drawing aside the curtains of the dais and disclosing a Christ on a crucifix, surmounted with the level of equality. Then he continued, speaking to Victoria, "Woman, in the name of the poor carpenter of Nazareth, the friend of the sorrowing and the disinherited, the enemy of the priests and the rulers of his day—woman, do you swear faith, love, and obedience to our cause?"

"I swear!" answered Victoria in a ringing voice, raising her hands toward the crucifix. "I swear faith and obedience to our cause!"

"You are now ours as we are yours," replied the officiant, dropping the curtains. "From to-morrow on you will receive our instructions from our brother Franz. To work! The opening of the States General shall be the signal for the enfranchisement of the people. The thrones shall disappear beneath the scourge of the revolution!"[4]

At that moment the watch posted in the corridor of the Voyant temple of liberty struck thrice precipitately on the door, giving the alarm. The lights which had cast their radiance over the meeting went out as if by magic, and a profound darkness took possession of the underground chamber.

From the obscurity was heard the voice of Anacharsis Clootz, the masked officiant, saying to the other Voyants who had been present at the initiation of Victoria Lebrenn:

"Baboeuf, go with Buonarotti, Danton and Condorcet by the right exit. I shall take the left, together with Franz, Loustalot, and our neophyte."

CHAPTER IV.

LITTLE RODIN.

While Anacharsis Clootz, the rich Dutch banker, later to be known as the "Orator of the Human Race," was thus presiding at the initiation of Victoria Lebrenn into the sect of the Voyants, Samuel, left alone with his wife by the departure of Franz of Gerolstein and his companion, had been just preparing to continue his dictation to Bathsheba, when he heard the street-outlook rapping discreetly at the gate. Samuel, hastening at the call, found the watcher holding by the hand a young boy who cried bitterly.

"The poor little fellow has lost his way," said the lookout, passing the boy in to Samuel. "I found him sitting down there by the buttress of the gate, sobbing. You would better keep him with you for the night, and to-morrow, in the daylight, he can be taken back to his folks—if you can find out from him where he lives."

Touched by the child's grief, Samuel took him into the lower room and both he and Bathsheba bent all their energies toward quieting him. The boy seemed to be about nine or ten years old. He was poorly clad, and of a wan and ailing appearance. His face presented none of the smiling prettiness usual with children of his age. His peaked features, his sickly and cadaverous pallor, his thin, pale lips, his sly and shifty, yet keen and observing glance—revealing a precocious cleverness—in fine, something low, mean and crafty in the look of the boy would, no doubt, have inspired aversion rather than sympathy in the breasts of the couple were it not for the cruel desertion of which he seemed the victim. Hardly had he entered the room when he dropped to his knees, crossed himself, and clasping his hands exclaimed through his tears:

"Blessed be You, Lord God, for having pitied Your little servant and led him to this good sir and this good lady. Save them a place in Your paradise!"

Dragging himself on his knees toward the Jew and his wife, the urchin kissed their hands effusively and with far too great a flood of gratitude for sincerity. Bathsheba took him on her knees, and said to him as she wiped his tear-stained face, "Don't cry, poor little one. We'll take care of you to-night, and to-morrow we'll take you home. But where do you live, and what is your name?"

"My name is Claude Rodin," answered the child; and he added, with a monstrous sigh, "The good God has been merciful to my parents, and took them to His holy paradise."

"Poor dear creature," answered Samuel, "you are, then, an orphan?"

"Alas, yes, good sir! My dear dead father used to be holy water dispenser at the Church of St. Medard. My dear dead mother used to rent out chairs in the same parish. They are now both with the angels; they are walking with the blessed saints."

"And where do you live, my poor child?"

"With Monsieur the Abbot Morlet, my good lady; a holy man of God, and my kind god-father."

"But how did it happen, my child, that you went astray at this late hour of the night?" asked Samuel. "You must have left home all alone?"

"Just after benediction," answered little Rodin, crossing himself devoutly, "Monsieur the Abbot, my good god-father, took me to walk with him in the Place Royale. There were a lot of people gathered around some mountebanks. I sinned!" cried the boy, beating his chest in contrition, "the Lord God punished me. It is my fault—my fault—my very great fault! Will God ever forgive me my sin?"

"But what great sin did you commit?" questioned Bathsheba.

"Mountebanks are heretics, fallen, and destined for hell," answered little Rodin, pressing his lips together with a wicked air, and striking his breast again. "I sinned, hideously sinned, in watching the games of those reprobates. The Lord God punished me by separating me from my good god-father. The swaying of the crowd carried him away from me. No use to look for him! No use to call him! It was impossible to find him. It was my very great fault!"

"And how did you get here from the Place Royale? The two points are far apart."

"Having said my prayers, both mental and oral, several times, in order to call to my aid the divine pity," replied Rodin emphatically and with an air of beatitude, "I started out to find my way home, away down at the end of the Roule suburb, near the Folie-Beaujon."

"Poor child," interrupted Bathsheba. "More than a league to travel! How I pity the dear child. Go on with your story," she said to him.

"It is a long way, true enough," added Samuel, "but all he had to do was to follow the boulevards. How did you come to lose the road?"

"A worthy gentleman, of whom I inquired the way, told me I would reach home quicker by taking another street. I walked all evening, but all I did was to get lost. The wrath of the Lord pursued me!" After sighing and beating his breast again, little Rodin continued: "Then, at last, passing your house, I felt so tired, so tired, that I fell on your door-step from weariness, and prayed the good God to come to my help. He deigned to hear the prayer of His little servant, and so you came to pity me, my good sir and lady. May God receive you in heaven!"

"You shall spend the night here, dear child, and to-morrow we will take you back to your god-father—so don't weep any more."

"Alas, good sir, the holy man will be so anxious! He will think me lost!"

"It is impossible now to calm his anxiety. But are you hungry or thirsty? Will you have something to eat or drink?"

"No, good mistress; only I'm terribly sleepy, and wish I could lie down."

"I can well believe it," said Bathsheba, addressing her spouse; "after such fatigue and worry, the little fellow must be worn out. It is only natural that he should be dying to go to sleep."

"But where shall we put him? We are in a tight fix. We have but one bed."

"Oh, good sir," eagerly broke in little Rodin, "don't put yourself out for me. I shall sleep very well right there, if you will let me;" and the boy indicated a re-enforced and brass-bound chest which his keen eye had spied, and which

formed a seat at the further end of the room. "That will do me, very well."

"I never thought of the chest," remarked Samuel. "The boy is right. At his age one sleeps anywhere. With plenty of warm covering he will pass the night there almost as comfortably as in his own bed. It all comes out for the best."

"I'll go fetch a cushion and a cloak, and fix him up as well as possible," added Bathsheba, leaving the room.

The boy sat down and huddled himself together as if unable to resist the lassitude and sleep which weighed upon him. His head sank upon his chest, and his eyes closed. But immediately peeping under his lids he saw on the table close beside him pens, ink, and several sheets of freshly written paper. It was Samuel's unfinished letter to Levi.

"I surely was inspired in asking to sleep here," murmured the boy, aside; "let me recall without forgetting anything the orders of my good god-father," he thought, as the Jew's wife returned with the makeshift bedding she had gone in search of.

"Here, dear boy," she said, "I'll put you to bed and tuck you in well from the cold."

Simulating a heavy sleep, the urchin did not stir.

"Poor creature—asleep already," said Bathsheba. "I'll have to carry him." Lifting little Rodin in her arms she placed him on the chest, while Samuel arranged the cushion under his head and covered him up with the cloak. These cares completed, Samuel and his wife turned again to the completion of the note to their cousin Levi; but his thoughts having been disarranged by the frequent interruptions, Samuel asked his wife to re-read the letter from the beginning, after which he finished it, while the young boy was seemingly sound asleep.

Bathsheba had just taken down the last of her husband's dictation when suddenly another rap resounded at the gate.

"Samuel," cried the Jewess, pale and trembling, "that time the watcher gave the alarm signal."

Samuel went to the gate, opened the wicket and asked the lookout:

"What is up?"

"For nearly quarter of an hour I have remarked two men, closely wrapped in their cloaks, who came in from St. Gervais Street, and halted at the corner of the garden wall. They examined the house minutely. Immediately I fell on one of the stone benches in the dark passageway and pretended to be asleep. Two or three times they passed by without noticing me; they kept walking up and down, now examining the exterior of the building, now conversing in low tones. Finally they saw me, and said aloud—'There is a wine-bibber sleeping himself sober.' They walked once more to some distance; then returning towards me, I heard them utter these words: 'And now, let us report to the sergeant.' They quickened their steps and vanished around the corner of St. Francois Street. Now you are warned, Master Samuel."

"When you first observed them, was anyone within?" asked Samuel. "Are you sure of that, lookout?"

"No one—except the child I brought to you, and whom you took in yourself."

"These two men must be attached to the police, since they intended to go straight to the sergeant; could their suspicions as to what went on here have been awakened by their observations to-night?"

"There was no one in the street while our brothers were arriving. I am sure of it; I kept good and sure guard."

"The suspicions of these fellows must, then, date from further back than this evening. But, in that case, at the first suspicion of one of his agents, the Lieutenant of Police would have had the house turned topsy-turvy by his searchers. There is something inexplicable in the conduct of these men. However, if they guessed that you were not really asleep, but could hear, I believe they would have enjoyed giving you a false scare. But then, to what purpose? No matter, forewarned is forearmed. Maintain your watch, and the instant you get sight or sound of the police sergeant, notify me with the usual signal."

Samuel thereupon ran to the green-house and gave the alarm, which, repeated by the Voyant on guard at the door of the temple, was the signal for the dispersal of the meeting. Then the Jew returned to the room where his wife awaited him.

"Well, my friend," asked Bathsheba hurriedly in an undertone, and unable to control her anxiety, "what is going on?"

"The danger is not imminent. Nevertheless, I have just warned our brothers to leave the temple by the two secret issues. The flag-stone which masks the descent under the hot-house will be replaced, for the police spies were watching the house. They will cause it to be searched, they must be able to discover nothing, and our friends must have time to escape. Reassure yourself, my dear wife; we run not the slightest danger."

"Lower, my friend, lower, lest you wake the child," cautioned Bathsheba, indicating little Rodin, who seemed to be still sound asleep, although his eyelids were imperceptibly winking. "Oh, may the alarms of this night be vain, and may all danger escape you!"

"Dear wife, let us trust to Providence. It inspired me to write that letter to our cousin Levi, and now, whatever may come, I am prepared. The sacred mission bequeathed to us by my grandfather will be fulfilled, and I shall have saved the heritage of Monsieur Marius Rennepont."

"First—a movable flag conceals the descent under the green-house. Second—this renegade of a Jew is going to safeguard the fortune of a certain Marius Rennepont," recited little Rodin to himself, not having lost a word of the conversation between Samuel and his wife. "Oh, now, I mustn't forget that name, nor the two secret exits of the *temple*, nor the movable flag-stone of the green-house—nor a lot of other things!"

The alarm given by the lookout proved premature, for neither the sergeant of police nor his men appeared on the scene that night to ransack the house in St. Francois Street.

CHAPTER V.

COUNT AND JESUIT.

More than four months had elapsed since the night on which Victoria Lebrenn was received into the society of the Illuminati, and on which little Rodin, with froward slyness, had penetrated the secrets of the Jew Samuel, the guardian of the Rennepont fortune. In short, it was the night of July 13, 1789.

The Plouernel mansion, in the suburb of St. Germain, had been built, in the beginning of the Seventeenth Century, by the order of Raoul of Plouernel, peer and Marshal of France, and ambassador to Spain. This seigneur, residing habitually at Versailles or at Paris, left to his stewards and bailiffs the administration of his domains in Auvergne, Beauvoisis, and Brittany. He never visited his country seat of Plouernel, devastated at the time of the Breton uprising.[5] Marshal Plouernel had had transported to his establishment in Paris all his family portraits, the oldest of which represented Neroweg, the leude of Clovis and count of the country of Auvergne. These portraits now adorned one of the halls of the Plouernel mansion; among them was one draped in black crepe, in token of mourning. The effigy hidden beneath the veil of black was that of Colonel Plouernel, traitor, according to the traditions of the monarchy, to his faith and to his King.

The first lackey of the Count of Plouernel, named Lorrain, the same who some months previously had carried the missive to Samuel the Jew, was showing into the Hall of the Portraits Abbot Morlet, of the Society of Jesus, a holy man of God and god-father to little Rodin, who, in fact, resembled him so closely as to be taken with reason for his son rather than his god-son. The Abbot was about forty years of age, clad in black, of middle height, weazened and nervous, with a fleshless, almost bald forehead over which fell a few straggling hairs of tawny yellow. His physiognomy, evil, insidious or beaming in turn, was above all remarkable for its caustic smile and its half-veiled glance, resembling that of a serpent. The Abbot was agitated, uneasy; he said to the lackey who introduced him:

"Announce me to your master without delay."

"Monsieur Abbot," respectfully answered Lorrain, "my lord will not keep you waiting an instant. His valets are just completing his toilet."

"His toilet!" exploded the Abbot. "To be thinking of such trifles—he must be out of his head!"

Then pausing a moment and recalling the air of preparation and the brilliant lighting of the parlors he had passed through on the ground floor, he added:

"The Count seems to be expecting a large company?"

"My lord is giving a grand supper."

"How is it that the agitation prevailing in Paris since day before yesterday and up to this very night does not compel the Count to be at the head of his regiment of the Guards?"

"Monsieur the Abbot is unaware that my lord journeyed this morning to Versailles to hand in his resignation, and to surrender the command of his regiment."

"To surrender the command of his regiment!" echoed the Jesuit, stupefied, and as if he could not believe what he heard. "What—"

At that moment Lorrain left the hall, walking backward as his master entered.

Count Gaston of Plouernel had reached at this time his thirtieth year. The facial traits of his Germanic ancestry were reproduced in him. The whole effect of his person was one of audacity, haughtiness and arrogance. He presented the accepted type of the great seigneur of his time, and wore with grace his costume of plain blue cloth of Tours, spangled with silver and embroidered in gold. His taffeta vest was half lost to view under the billows of Alençon point lace which formed his shirt frill and rivalled for costly workmanship the flowing ruffles of his cuffs. His red-heeled shoes were fastened with diamond buckles. Diamonds also glittered in the hilt of his small-sword, which he wore ostentatiously slung under one of the tails of his coat.

At the sight of Abbot Morlet the Count seemed greatly surprised. He cordially extended to him his hand, however, saying:

"Well! good day, holy Father. What good wind blows you to us? I thought you at this time still a hundred leagues from Paris!"

"I just got in, and after attending to some indispensable duties, hurried over to you, to communicate to you, my dear Count—to you, one of the leaders of the court party—important information I had picked up during my trip through several of our provinces. Judge of my surprise! When I arrived here, I learned from your first lackey—that you had this very day given up the command of your regiment. That's the way of it. The monarchy, the nobility, the clergy, are attacked as they never have been through the worst days of our history. And it is at such an hour that

you, one of the greatest lords of France, you, a man of spirit and of courage, sheath your sword—at this hour when the battle is engaged with the Third Estate! Ah, Count, if you did not belong to the house of Plouernel, I would say that you were a coward and a traitor. But, as you are neither coward nor traitor, I shall make bold to say that you are a madman."

"On the contrary, my dear Abbot, never have I acted more wisely. Never have I more studiously served our cause, or proven better my signal devotion, not to the King—his weakness revolts me—but to the Queen, to royalty!"

"So, you have judged it wise and politic to abandon the command of your regiment in our present circumstances? Is it for me, only to-day arrived, to have to inform you that Paris is laboring under the greatest excitement, and perhaps on the verge of a formidable insurrection? Didn't I see them, on the other side of the Seine, beginning to throw up their barricades? Didn't I meet on every street corner groups of malcontents, harangued by caballers of the Third Estate?"

"That is all true, Abbot. We are drawing near the moment of a decisive crisis. The fever of revolution has lasted since day before yesterday, since Saturday, the 11th of July. The first act took place in the Palais Royal,[6] when the recall of Necker became known to the public. A young man named Camille Desmoulins stirred up the gullible clowns in the gardens by crying out that the King was centering his troops on Paris, with the purpose of dissolving the National Assembly, arresting the leaders, and massacring the people of Paris. The most resolute of his hearers cried *To arms! To the barricades!* and suited the action to the word. Bezenval, the military commander of Paris, informed of the tumult, ordered the dragoons of the Marquis of Crussol to horse. The dragoons sabered the rabble. But that only angered the populace, and the agitation spread to the suburbs. A soldier of my command told the people that several French Guards had been sent to the Abbey Prison; for you must know, good Father, that insubordination had crept into my regiment. I had sent the mutineers in irons to the Abbey to await the time to administer to them the scourging they deserved, when the populace hurled themselves against the prison, put to rout the sentries, and liberated the mutinous Guards. The latter received as great an ovation as if they had had the honor of being Monsieur Necker, or Monsieur Mirabeau!"

"This detestable spirit of rebellion is only too like that which infests many of our provinces. But these saturnalia were, I hope, put down with the greatest severity?"

"Not a whit, my dear Father. A King who pretends to the title of 'Father of the people' does not punish them—or very little. What was the result? The mildness of the reproof redoubled the rabble's audacity. The success of the expedition against the Abbey whetted their appetite, and they turned their attention to the prison of La Force, where they delivered all the debtors. The insurrection growing more and more serious, the Prince of Lambesc at length received orders from Marshal Broglie, the new Minister of War, to mount his regiment, the Royal Germans, and charge upon this impious populace, then excitedly huddled in the garden of the Tuileries. At the same time I was ordered to bring up my regiment, to support, if necessary, the cavalry of Lambesc."

"The French Guards commanded by a colonel like you, Count, should easily mow down these rebels. And yet you abandon your command. Your conduct is an enigma."

"On the contrary, nothing is more clear. Do you know the difference between a German and a Frenchman?"

"What do you mean?"

"Picture to yourself a tribune of the cross-roads, an insolent droll named Gonchon,[7] who never spoke of himself but in the third person, come to harangue the German soldiers in the name of the brotherhood of man. The German soldier, understanding nothing of that demagogic trash, draws at the command of his colonel, and sabers both Gonchon and the mob! That is what the dragoons of Lambesc did; that is what the cavalry of Berchiny would have done gladly, and the cavalry of Esterhazy and of Roëmer, or the regiments of Desbach, of Salis, or the Royal Swiss."

"Good! That is the medicine for this canaille."

"But hardly had Lambesc and his horse sabered the rabble in the garden of the Tuileries, when that very mob poured back into Louis XV Place, where I had stationed myself at the head of my regiment in battle array. I gave the order to fire on the ructious rabble. Murmurs broke out among the soldiers in the ranks; some made answer, *We will not fire on the people!* I ordered the mutinous men to be seized and shot on the spot. The murmurs grew louder. I repeated the order. Bang! Several soldiers struck me in the face! Whole companies broke ranks, waving the butts of their muskets in the air."

"Everything is lost if we cannot count on the army!" cried the Abbot in dismay.

"You have said it, Abbot—unless the court party is resolved to serve royalty to the exclusion of the King. In the face of the stand taken by my men, there was nothing to do but march them back to their quarters. This morning I repaired to Versailles, and on gaining an audience with the King I pleaded with his Majesty to authorize me to call a court-martial to judge and condemn to death within the hour about a hundred soldiers and under-officers of my regiment, the ringleaders of the revolt. After long consideration, his Majesty answered with a sour air that 'if it was a matter of shooting a half dozen or so insubordinates, he saw no great obstacle in the way, but that he would not listen at all to any mass slaughters.' Thereupon the King crabbedly turned his back on me, shrugged his shoulders, and took himself off to his private apartments. That is why, my good Father, I have renounced my command in the French Guards. But reassure yourself," he added, in response to the dumbfounded look the Abbot wore. "I shall remain neither passive nor idle. I hope to serve our cause more actively, and, without contradiction, more usefully, now, than if I still were at the head of my regiment."

"That assurance overwhelms me with joy, dear Count," cried the Abbot "What are your plans?"

"First, I give to-night a supper, a convivial repast in which I bring together the influential heads of the court party, for the purpose of deciding on our final measures—presided over by the most remarkable and adorable woman I have ever met."

The Jesuit gazed at Monsieur Plouernel in amaze, and answered: "Are you speaking seriously? Are you really dreaming of having a political meeting of such importance presided over by—a woman?"

"Your astonishment will cease, my dear Abbot, when you make the acquaintance of Madam the Marchioness Aldini, a Venetian by birth, the widow of Marquis Aldini, a great Florentine lord who left his wife an immense fortune. The Marchioness has resided in Paris for now nearly a month."

"You know the lady for only a month, and you dare initiate her into the secrets of our party!"

"Oh, Abbot, the Marchioness is more of our party than we ourselves! A patrician and a Catholic, she nurses an invincible horror for the populace and for revolutions. We shall never have a more ardent auxiliary than she. And then, she is beautiful—seductive—irresistible!"

"And where did you meet this beautiful personage?"

"One day last month I received a note stamped with outraged pride. The writer, Marchioness Aldini, addressed to me, as colonel of the Guards, a complaint against the insolence of several of my soldiers, who had beaten her lackeys. Struck with the lofty tone of the missive, I called on the Marchioness, who was occupying the establishment of the Countess of St. Megrin, now in England, and maintained there a house on the grandest scale. One of the Marchioness's private valets introduced me to her in her parlor. Ah, Abbot! at the sight of her I stood spellbound, enchanted! The extreme beauty of the foreign dame, the fire of her glance, the expression of her face, the perfection of her stature, the complete admirableness of her person—all threw me into transports of admiration." Abbot Morlet puckered his brow dubiously, and the colonel continued: "In short, the Marchioness realized, she surpassed, an ideal a hundred times dreamt of by me, wearied as I am of the flirtatious beauties of the city and the court. What a difference, or rather what a distance, separates them from the Marchioness! Pride of patrician blood, resoluteness of character, ardor, impetuosity of passion, all were legible in her countenance of a masculine paleness, in her look of flame. Something imperious in her posture, something virile in the accents of her tongue, gave to this extraordinary woman—none other like her!—an irresistible charm;—for, before she had spoken a word, I felt myself captured, enchained, bewitched."

"And the fascination grew and grew, if that is possible," put in the Jesuit sardonically, "when this beautiful lady opened her mouth? The siren took you by the eyes and by the ears. She greeted you, I presume, in the most charming and gallant manner?"

"Not a bit of it! On the contrary, she greeted me with an air of arrogance and irritation. She taxed me severely for the insolence of my soldiers."

"But the tigress finished by turning sweet?"

"Yes, after the greatest protestations on my part, and my assurance that I would chastise the guilty soldiers."

"The anger of the Marchioness being calmed, the interview, no doubt, took a most tender turn?"

"We spoke of the affairs of the day."

"Strange, out of all whooping! A colonel of thirty, a man of the court, besides, to speak decorously of the events of the day—with a beautiful lady—and he so lusty elsewhere!"

"So it was, nevertheless, reverend Father. I never even thought, at that first interview, of venturing upon the slightest word of gallantry, so struck was I with the spirit of the Marchioness. Blue death! I was pale with rage at hearing the Marchioness's bitter sarcasms. I should have been glad—may God blast me!—to put myself at the head of my regiment and shoot down all the bourgeois in the States General."

"This retrospective zeal flows from an excellent sentiment; and I know not how sufficiently to applaud the beautiful Venetian for having aroused that sentiment in you. Strongly do I approve the belle's sarcasms, her scorn for the ranters of the Third Estate, and the populace which supports them. Still, methinks it is very surprising that a stranger should interest herself so warmly in our affairs," added the Jesuit thoughtfully.

Without a pause, the priest continued: "Tell me, Count—Have you dealt out the punishment to the insolent soldiers who beat the lackeys of Madam the Marchioness?"

"It was impossible to discover them."

"And she hasn't asked you for an account of their punishment? Strange! Do you know what I think, Count? The outrage was an imaginary one. It was the Marchioness's pretext to secure a first interview with you."

"Come, Abbot, you are insane! For what reason should she have sought to inveigle me into an interview?"

"I'll tell you, Count, for I foresee the end of this adventure. You returned often to visit the Marchioness? You became enamored of her? And soon the beautiful Venetian, answering your passion, granted you the boon of love for thanks—after having wheedled out of you all our party's closest secrets."

"You are mistaken, holy Father. On the faith of a gentleman, the Marchioness loves me as passionately as I love her; but she has placed certain conditions on her favors."

"And what may the conditions be with which she has hedged about her bounty?"

"A struggle to the death against the revolution; the exaltation of royalty, of the privileges of the nobility and the Church; the extermination of our enemies. Only on these conditions, Abbot, shall my love receive its sweetest recompense."

"Count," cried the Jesuit after a moment's silence, "you are only twenty years old! What am I saying? You are barely sixteen—you are still at the age of innocence and childlike credulity. You have been blindfolded, duped, made

game of, tossed in a blanket, like the most artless of young fellows! Oh, the women! And you think yourself a Lovelace, a lady-killer, my poor Count! And you presume to play a role in the politics of the court!"

"Monsieur Abbot Morlet, familiarity has its limits—do not oblige me to recall the fact to you any more forcibly!" exclaimed Monsieur Plouernel, flaring into a rage. Then, calming himself with an effort, he continued, sarcastically: "It suits you ill indeed, my reverend sir, to twit me on the empire exercised over me by women. Has no woman ever reigned over you? Could not the record of the vestry tell of a fertile gossip, the hirer-out of chairs at the Church of St. Medard, and widow of Goodman Rodin, the dispenser of holy water in the same parish? Your mistress is the mother of that little Rodin whom you brought here one day last year!"

Unmoved by the raillery of Monsieur Plouernel, the Jesuit replied:

"Your sarcasm is in the last degree pleasant, and moreover, well to the point, in that it furnishes me the occasion, Count, to give you an excellent lesson. You need the bit, the bridle, and also the whip, my fine gentleman."

"I am listening, reverend sir."

"Your love for fine ladies of irresistible beauty is capable of leading you into the most mournful follies; while I, by reason of my love for my gossip Rodin, shall be, I hope, able to prevent, and what is more, to repair your insanities."

"This is getting curious, Abbot. Continue."

"About four months ago, about the beginning of April, at a late hour of the night, a child, overcome with fatigue, fell on the doorstep of a house in St. Francois Street, in the Swamp."

"St. Francois Street, in the Swamp! A rascal of a Jew, a skin-flint of a usurer, lives there. You know him, Abbot? He does business with the clergy too?"

"It was at the door of that very house that the child sank down with weariness, crying and shivering. The Jew, out of the pity of his heart, took in the little fellow, who, he supposed, had lost his way. Then, succumbing to fatigue and drowsiness, the lad fell asleep on a bench in the room in which the Jew and his wife were conversing."

"Bless my heart, holy Father! Your voice is trembling, your nose is growing red, your look is softening, and your eye grows moist! That infant gifted with so precocious an intelligence, that prodigy, surely can be no other than little Rodin, your god-son! Honor to you, Abbot, and to your gossip! You have performed a prodigy, like the Virgin Mary with the Holy Ghost!"

"Throughout, the little fellow lost not a word of the conversation between the Jew and his wife; and thanks to a false alarm, adroitly given without by one of our brothers and myself, my god-son, in the course of his feigned sleep, surprised two secrets of inestimable import for the welfare of religion and the nobility. You shall judge—"

"You are deceiving yourself, Abbot, in trying to make me believe that from the chatter of a miserable Jew and his wife, a chatter surprised by an urchin, secrets of such importance can be won."

"Count—what do you think of a fortune of nearly 220 millions of francs? Isn't it a magnificent sum? If these 220 millions should pass into the possession of a party religious, able, tireless, blessed with cleverness and boldness, would they not become a lever of immense power? Again, suppose there were a mysterious sect, the object of which was the annihilation of the Catholic Church, the overthrow of thrones, the abolition of the privileges of birth and of fortune; suppose that sect extended its ramifications throughout all Europe, that it counted in its ranks classes the most diversified in society, from the lowest to the highest, and that some of them were even of kingly rank; suppose that association had at its disposal a considerable treasure; suppose its masters, men and women, to be capable of assuming, at need, any mask, any role; that, thanks to their specious masquerade, they introduced themselves among the royalists, and fathomed the secrets of our party;—then, Count, what would you think of the discovery of that sect? Would it not be of the primest importance? What say you?"

"Surely; but only if the pretended sect existed. Come, holy Father, it is with surprise and regret that I see a man of your good sense fall into the net of these absurd fables about the Voyants of France, the Illuminati of Germany, and other fish-yarns, veritable Mother Goose tales!"

"If I prove to you the existence of this society—if I show you the place where their leaders meet, will you admit that the revealer of the secret has rendered a signal service to the throne and the altar? Well, Count, compare now the results of your mad-cap passion for the beautiful foreign Marchioness, with the consequences of what you term my love for my gossip Rodin. According to you, my god-son is one of the visible and carnal outcomes of that love; if so I owe to the wily youngster first—the discovery of a treasure which should some day reach more than 200 millions, on the trail of which our Society of Jesus has been for over a century; and, second—the unearthing of a den of Voyants."

CHAPTER VI.

ROYALISTS AT BANQUET.

The answer which the Count of Plouernel was about to make to his friend the Jesuit was interrupted by the arrival of several of his convivial friends of the court party—dukes, marquises, canons, and archbishops. Among them was

the Viscount of Mirabeau, nicknamed, by reason of his portly front and the quantity of liquor he could contain, "Barrel Mirabeau." He was an infantry colonel, and younger brother to the famous orator of the Third Estate. He seemed to be in great heat, and cried in a loud voice to Monsieur Plouernel:

"Good evening, my dear Count. Devil take this infamous town of Paris and its Parisians! Long live Versailles, the true capital of France."

"Whence all this anger, Viscount?"

"Anger! Allow me to inform you that just now this vile populace, which to-night overflows in all the streets, had the impudence to stop my carriage on the Louis XV Bridge. By God's death, I shall punish these people!"

"What did you say to the insolent creatures?"

"I was treating this fraction of the 'sovereign people' like the abject rabble that they are, when my lackey, trembling like a hare, and hoping to secure our release, conceived the infernal idea of calling out to the beggars 'Make way, there, if you please, for the carriage of Monsieur Mirabeau!' Immediately the tempest turned to a zephyr, and the stupid people made way for me, to cries of 'Long live Mirabeau!'"

"They must have taken you for your brother!"

"Death and fury! It is but too true! I shall never forgive my brother that insult!"

"Calm yourself, Viscount; but yet a few days and that filthy populace will be clouted back into the mire where it belongs."

"Her Excellency, Marchioness Aldini," loudly announced one of Plouernel's valets at that moment, swinging back both sides of the great door of the parlor, into which he introduced—Victoria Lebrenn under her borrowed name and title.

The friends of Monsieur Plouernel thus beheld Marchioness Aldini for the first time. All were struck with astonishment at her beauty, heightened as it was by the splendor of her toilet. For Victoria now wore a trailing robe of poppy-colored cloth of Tours, trimmed with black lace. The cut of her corsage left bare her arms, shoulders and the rise of her breast, which seemed sculptured in the purest marble. Her black hair was not buried, as was the custom of the time, under a layer of white powder, but, glowing with the luster of ebony, and rolled in thick and numerous ringlets around her head, majestically crowned her brow. A triple string of Venetian sequins served both as diadem and collar. Nothing can give an adequate idea of the effect of this original mode, at once elegant and severe, which was still more remarkable in that it differed completely from the pomponned attires of the period, and harmonized marvellously with Victoria's own cast of beauty.

Plouernel's friends, seized with admiration, were for a moment speechless. Every look was fastened on the foreign dame;—even Abbot Morlet experienced the fascination, and said to himself as he gazed at her:

"I can understand how the Count is mad over her. The danger is greater than I suspected. She is a very siren."

Of all Plouernel's assembled friends, the Abbot was the only one to penetrate the true nature of Victoria's beauty. Her pallor, her flashing black eyes, her bitter and sardonic smile, gave to her face an indefinable somberness, which was in accord with the severity of her costume of red, black and gold.

Soon the voice of Monsieur Plouernel's chief butler was heard, announcing that supper was served. The Count offered his arm to Victoria, to lead her into the capacious dining room. Walls of white plaster were relieved by gilded moldings which framed large panels frescoed with birds, fruits and flowers. A splendid silver service was laid out on the table, along with a brilliantly colored set of Sevres china. On the burnished surface of the silver glittered the glow of rose-colored candles, held in candelabra of vermilion. The banqueters took their seats about the table. The Count, who had escorted Victoria to a place beside himself, opened the feast.

"Permit me, my friends," he said, "to follow a custom recently introduced from England into France, and to propose a first toast to Madam the Marchioness Aldini, who has deigned to accept my invitation to supper." The Count rose, glass in hand—"To Madam the Marchioness Aldini!"

The whole company, following the Count's example, rose in their places; holding their glasses in their out-stretched hands, they repeated:

"To Madam the Marchioness Aldini!"

Draining their glasses, they resumed their seats.

Victoria in her turn rose. After a moment's pause she replied:

"In response to the courtesy of Monsieur the Count of Plouernel, and of yourselves, my lords prelates, and gentlemen, I propose with my heart and with my lips a toast to the Church, to the monarchy, and to the nobility,—and to the extermination of revolutionists, of whatever rank."

With these words Victoria moistened her lips in the wine which filled her glass, while Plouernel's friends, transported by the words of the young woman, repeated in ecstasy, to the music of their clinking glasses—

"To the Church! To the King! To the nobility! To the extermination of the revolutionists!"

The roisterers sat down; even Abbot Morlet muttered to himself, "Ah, if the Marchioness is sincere, what an ally we should have in her! What a magic effect the energy of her words produced on these foppish gentlemen, and on these brainless and imprudent prelates, imbeciles who don't even know how to cloak their vices under their sacred robes!"

Victoria, who had been cautiously watching the Jesuit, replied to his thought in her own mind: "That priest with the cadaverous mask keeps his snaky looks ever fastened on me. He alone, of all this company, seems to mistrust me. We must redouble our care and boldness—the game is on."

Meanwhile a Cardinal was puzzling over something, and thinking to himself: "Where did I meet that beautiful Marchioness, or at least a girl who much resembled her? Ah! I remember! It was in the little house where the Dubois woman kept her nymphs, in the King's 'Doe Park,' as he called it, near Versailles. Come, come, that must be an illusion—although, that Italian lord, Aldini, not knowing the antecedents of the old inmate of the Dubois house, might well have left her his name, his title, and all. But let us look into things a bit before we pass a rash judgment."

The Viscount of Mirabeau was the first to speak aloud. "Madam the Marchioness," he said, "has pledged us a toast to the death of the revolutionists of all ranks and conditions. I understand how a bourgeois, or a peasant, can be a revolutionary; but I can not admit that princes, nobles, or clericals would train with that breed."

"All revolutionists are fit for the noose," retorted a Duke. "But the opinions of the groundlings may be explained by their desire to shake off the yoke. The people is at the end of its patience; it is kicking the traces; it rebels."

"You speak words of gold, my dear Duke," answered young Mirabeau. "We shall hang them all, and we shall show ourselves without pity for those pretended revolutionists, Orleans, Talleyrand, Lafayette, and my unworthy brother Mirabeau, who has brought dishonor upon our house."

"No, no pity for traitors, to whatever class they belong—nobles, clergy, or bourgeoisie," cried the Count of Plouernel.

"On the day of reckoning," echoed the Cardinal, "these felons shall all be hanged, high and low alike."

"They shall all be hanged at the same height—on their own principle of equality!" added a young Marquis, laughing.

Victoria cut short his laugh. "By the blood of Christ," she cried, "is there not in France a revolutionist a hundred times more damnable than the gentlemen, the bishops, and even than the princes of the blood who league themselves with the revolution—I would say, the most guilty?"

Surprise fell upon the company. Finally the Count of Plouernel stammered out: "What! Who is that revolutionist—more highly situated, according to you, than gentlemen or bishops—or even princes of the blood?"

"The King, Louis XVI!"

Again silence and stupefaction fell upon the thunder-struck banqueters. Some exchanged frightened glances. Others, deep in thought, sought for the key to the enigma. The rest stared at Victoria with anxious curiosity. Abbot Morlet alone said to himself: "Aha! I catch the woman's trend."

"How, Marchioness," fumbled Plouernel, "according to you—the King—would be—a revolutionist—and so cut out for the gibbet?"

"What was your motive, Count, for giving up your commission as colonel in the French Guards?" returned Victoria, unmoved.

"As I wrote you, Marchioness, I surrendered the command of my regiment because the King refused to authorize the severity which alone, to me, seems capable of re-establishing discipline among my soldiers and preventing them from becoming the allies of the revolution."

"And yet you are astonished when I pronounce the name of the accomplice of the revolutionists! I denounce the King, Louis XVI."

"You are a woman of genius, madam," acclaimed the Viscount of Mirabeau warmly. "You justly signalize one of the causes of the revolution. Honor to you, madam."

"I have no right to these praises, Viscount. I am a woman whom God has dowered with some little good sense, that is all. I am a patrician and a Catholic."

"Nevertheless, Madam Marchioness," interposed the Duke who had spoken before, "it seems to me hazardous to pretend that the King, our Sire, is a revolutionist. In truth, it is pursuing the metaphor to its extreme limits. I should hesitate to follow you upon that ground."

Here the Marquis broke in again with his irrepressible laugh, saying: "On one side the revolutionary King—on the other the 'sovereign people.' What a comicality! What a mess!"

Victoria continued: "King Louis XVI is the first, the most damnable of revolutionists. Neither grace nor pity for the guilty! What I say, I maintain; I shall prove it. I shall essay to rouse in you all remorse—for you represent here the nobility, the clergy, and the world of money, and you are nearly as responsible as the King. I shall soon make it clear to you."

"By the life of God, Marchioness, I am of your opinion," echoed the Viscount of Mirabeau. "Six months ago the nobility should have saddled its horses, and, whether the King consented or no, ridden against the revolution and put every peasant to the saber."

"Six months ago the curates should have stirred themselves, roused their parishes to the sound of the tocsin, and put arms into their hands. They also will have to enter the fight," quoth Abbot Morlet, speaking aloud for the first time since the beginning of the banquet.

"We understand each other, Monsieur Abbot," answered Victoria; and then to Mirabeau: "We judge the situation alike, Monsieur Viscount—the moment calls for a general and armed uprising."

"But we who are less keen-sighted," objected the Duke, "we confess the weakness of our prevision; we reject your conclusions."

"We are the three ninnies—the Duke, the Cardinal and I," put in the Marquis, cracking another joke.

"Decidedly," observed the Cardinal aside to himself. "I was the dupe of an accidental resemblance. This patrician Marchioness has nothing in common with the lovely nymph of the Dubois woman's lupanar."

Victoria began her proof: "Is not Louis XVI the worst of the revolutionists? Judge! On May 5th of this year, 1789, did he not convene the States General, instead of summoning to Versailles 25,000 men whom he had under his hand, led by resolute heads? At that time the revolution, hardly hatched, could have been stamped into oblivion. I am willing to excuse him for that mistake, but here is one more serious: The States General convened the 5th of May. The majority of the nobility and the clergy attempted to hold their deliberations by Order, and refused to mingle with the bourgeois for the examination of credentials. The Third Estate insisted, and upon a new refusal of the nobles and clergy, left the hall. At length the deputies of the communes had the insolence to declare themselves, on the 17th of June, the National Assembly, in the name of the pretended sovereignty of the people. They arrogated to themselves the right to vote the taxes, and declared that if the royal authority should order them to dissolve, they would not be responsible for the outcome. Did not the King tolerate all these audacities?"

"'Tis true," acquiesced the Viscount of Mirabeau. "It all passed before our eyes, at Versailles."

"That is the second crime I impute to the King," Victoria continued. "Louis XVI could still have crushed out in its cradle this rising rebellion, scattered by force this handful of malcontents—"

"That has been tried, madam, by us of the court party," interposed the Duke. "We induced his Majesty to allow the seats of the Assembly to be occupied by troops. On the morning of the 19th of June these so-called Representatives of the people found the corridors of their chamber occupied by two companies of grenadiers, with loaded muskets."

"Yes," put in the Marquis bitterly, "the King had the cleverness on that occasion to commit what was, from the point of view of the revolutionists, an assault upon the National Assembly, by allowing their meeting place to be invaded by the troops; and at the same time to perpetrate a new assault against royalty by not preventing the rebels from reuniting in the Tennis Court at Versailles; mistakes, mistakes, ever more mistakes."

"All this is conclusive evidence," chimed in Barrel Mirabeau. "This unfortunate King seems to be infatuated with folly."

"Either brace up foolish Kings or suppress them—else look out for the safety of the monarchy, Monsieur Viscount," replied Victoria.

"Thanks to God," went on a cavalry officer at the other end of the table, "thanks to God the King's brother, Monseigneur the Count of Provence, rose to the emergency. At this vexatious juncture the prince took an energetic step. Without even asking the King, he hired the Tennis Court for a whole month!"

Victoria broke out into a peal of grim and mocking laughter. "There is a party leader," she said, "of great bravery and great wisdom! One need go into no ecstasies over his courage!"

"Madam the Marchioness is right," chimed in the Viscount of Mirabeau again. "This measure had no other effect upon the rebels than to cause them, the next day, to instal themselves in the Church of St. Louis."

"And then the clergy, or at least a part of the clergy, committed another imbecility—they rallied to the Third Estate. The shaven-heads have their share of responsibility in all this," said the Count of Plouernel.

"The high clergy protested, against this treason, the blame of which should be thrown on the curates of the country districts," declared the Cardinal in self-defense.

"Monsieur the Cardinal is in error!" it was the harsh voice of Abbot Morlet that broke in. "That fraction of the clergy which went over to the Third Estate displayed great political sense. The low clergy did just what they should have done."

"Peace, Abbot, peace there!" cried the Cardinal in accents of sovereign scorn. "You are talking nonsense, my dear sir!"

"I maintain what I stated—'tis but little I care for the approbation of Monsieur the Cardinal," snapped Morlet.

"What's that you say, Abbot?" flashed back the Cardinal in great irritation. "Measure your words!"

"I wish to talk with reasonable men," returned Morlet, impassibly. "This is addressed to you, gentlemen. The royal power having tolerated the existence of this Assembly of malcontents, the clergy, both high and low, should have seized upon the fact, and turned it to its own advantage. By the simple means of choosing its best men, and joining them to the Third Estate, it would then have been able at need to stand in with revolutionary motions, in order to drive the dissatisfied element to the last extremes in the paroxysms of their rage."

"Monsieur the Abbot is a profound politician; he is in the right of the matter," assented Victoria.

"At the risk of contradicting you, Madam the Marchioness," objected the Cardinal passionately, "I must declare that the Abbot has only once more exhibited the evil spirit of the Society of Jesus, which has always been a veritable pest to the Church. Our holy mother were well rid of that abominable, execrable society!"

"So the priest is a Jesuit!" thought Victoria to herself, a light dawning upon her.

"The true pest of the Church," retorted Abbot Morlet, "has always been clad in the purple—cardinals and prelates, nearly all sots, imbeciles and peacocks!"

"The impudence of this priestlet, this scoundrel, this hypocrite!" the Cardinal cried in a fury. "Out of here with the insolent fellow!"

"By the blood of Christ," interjected Victoria quickly, addressing the two churchmen, "is this the hour for discord and recrimination? Do you forget, your Eminence, and you, Monsieur Abbot, that at this moment the safety of the Church depends upon the unity of her defenders?"

All the company, with the sole exceptions of the Cardinal and the Abbot, took up the word: "'Tis true—'tis evident! Let us not forget. Let us remain united for the conflict!"

When the tumult had subsided, Victoria took up again her interrupted discourse: "In casting a rapid glance over the past, I did not intend to arouse suspicion among you or raise dissension. In pointing out the faults committed, I wished only to forewarn you against similar errors, and to show you how to escape new mistakes. Please, then, to give me your attention a few minutes longer: The session in the Tennis Court was a brutal challenge hurled in the teeth of royalty. The Queen, who is a woman of valor, understood it; she pressed the King to take energetic measures, and pledged him to have the National Assembly dissolved by force. Louis XVI submitted to the influence of the Queen; on the 28th of June he went into the heart of the Assembly, surrounded by his guards, and through his chancellor ordered the deputies to disperse, abolished their decrees, and annulled their deliberations. He acted the part of a sovereign."

"His Majesty indeed displayed great courage that day, and many of the deputies of the nobility and the clergy applauded the act of dissolution and immediately left the chamber," declared the Duke.

"The King," assented Victoria sardonically, "his faithful nobles and his faithful clergy left the hall. But they left the rebels behind them. Then Abbot Sieyès sprang to the tribunal and cried 'Continue in session, Representatives of the people! We are to-day what we were yesterday!'"

"But the King did not falter, thank God!" continued the Duke. "His Majesty commanded the Marquis of Brezé to convey to the malcontents his orders to disperse."

"Shame and misfortune!" exclaimed the Viscount of Mirabeau. "It was my own brother who then answered Brezé, 'Go and say to your master who sent you, that we are here by the will of the people, and that we shall never quit this hall save by force of bayonets!'"

"Very well, Monsieur Viscount! Your brother pointed out to the royal power its means of safety—*force of bayonets*," answered Victoria. "By the blood of Christ, what did Louis XVI do to restore the rebels to their senses? Absolutely nothing. Then the latter, encouraged by their immunity from punishment, declared, in their next session, the inviolability of the National Assembly."

"Alas, it was upon the motion of my abominable brother that that declaration was carried! God's blood, I think I could have turned fratricide at the moment," declared Barrel Mirabeau.

"Your house was not the only one to tremble at such felony," Victoria replied. "Did not nearly all the deputies of the nobility, even the most hostile to the revolution, rally around the Third Estate, dragging with them all the clericals?"

"Should the members of the nobility, then, Madam Marchioness," objected the Duke, "because the monarchy showed weakness, have abandoned it without attempting to defend it from within the Assembly? No, certainly not."

"Sir Duke," replied Victoria, "the members of the nobility and of the clergy who remained faithful to the throne were in the minority. What could they do for the monarchy? Nothing. Their presence among the ranks of the rebels served only to excuse the slips of the King, for then he could respond with a show of reason, 'I can not dissolve an Assembly which contains so great a number of my servants.'"

"Such was, in fact, the response made by his Majesty to the Queen when she secured the recall of Necker and the appointment of a new minister chosen by Monsieur Broglie. Nevertheless, with the assistance of the Marshal, the monarchy will still prove able to overcome the revolution. At least, that is my opinion," vouchsafed the Count of Plouernel.

"May God so will it," rejoined Victoria again. "But up till now the new minister has done nothing but make mistakes—"

Victoria was interrupted by the entrance of one of the lackeys, whom Plouernel had dismissed from the banquet hall in order that his guests might discuss political affairs confidentially and in safety, who said:

"The steward, my lord, asks to see you immediately."

"Let him enter," said the Count; and as the lackey went to fetch him, the host explained to his guests: "I charged my steward to send out several of my men in disguise, in order to learn through them what was going on in the several quarters of Paris."

"It is indeed very useful, in these days of effervescence," nodded Victoria, "to keep closely informed on the state of affairs."

The steward entered, bowed humbly to the company, and took up his post close by the door, like a servant awaiting orders.

"Well, Master Robert, what news?" demanded the Count. The company turned around in their chairs and fixed their attention upon the new arrival.

CHAPTER VII.

NEWS FROM THE BARRICADES.

Pursuant to the Count's order, the steward, bowing again, proceeded with his account of what he had learned.

"The news, alas, is very bad, my lord," he began. "One of our men has just arrived from the suburb of St. Antoine. The streets are blocked with barricades; they are forging pikes in the iron-mongers' and blacksmiths' shops; the houses are all illuminated. People are carrying up to the roofs of their dwellings beams and paving stones, to hurl down upon the troops of his Majesty Louis XVI, whom may God protect! Women and children are pouring musket balls and making cartridges. They have pillaged the armorers' shops in the district. In short, the whole of that impious plebs is swarming in the streets, screeching like the damned, especially against her Majesty our good Queen, his Royal Highness the Count of Artois, and their Holinesses our lords the Princes of Conti and Condé."

"And what are the pretexts for these insolent cries and rebellious preparations?" asked the Count.

"My lord, it is the word among this blasphemous people that the court is plotting evil against the deputies of the Third Estate, and that his Majesty our Sire—may God protect him—is preparing to march on Paris at the head of fifty thousand troops, to deliver the suburbs to the flames, blood, sack and pillage, and the girls and women to infamy!"

"The rabblement is at least aware of the punishment it deserves—and will receive!" cried the younger Mirabeau.

"What is the feeling in the other quarters," queried the Count of Plouernel. "Are they also, perchance, boiling over?"

"In the neighborhood of the St. Honoré Gate the mob has invaded the Garde-Meuble, or King's Storage-House, and seized the old arms they found collected there. It is a pity, my lord; you can see tattered brigands, in their bare feet, yet casqued and cuirassed, and with lances in their fists. Such magnificent arms in such hands! What a desecration!"

"Oh, the gallant cavaliers—armed cap-a-pie for the tourney!" cried the Marquis, affecting laughter.

"Those among this awful horde who have bonnets on," continued the steward, "have fastened in them cockades of green cloth or paper, as a sign of hope. My lord, it is like a frenzy. Out in the open street the scoundrels hug without knowing each other, and with tears in their eyes, cry, like henhawks 'To arms, citizens! Down with tyranny! Long live liberty! Long live the nation!'"

"But the other suburbs," pursued the Count. "Are they also wrought up like this cursed suburb of St. Antoine?"

"Aye, my lord—unless it be the suburb of St. Marcel, which is almost deserted. The evil creatures of that district, to the number of twenty thousand, flocked to the City Hall during the day to demand arms. The Provost of the merchants, Monsieur Flesselles, sent them to the Lazarist monks. When the great band of beggars arrived at the holy convent, the good and religious men made answer to them that Monsieur Flesselles was making game of them, for never had a grain of powder or a firearm found its way into the Convent of St. Lazare. Then these bandits from St. Marcel broke out into threats of death against Monsieur Flesselles, and being presently joined by another mob of rascals from the suburb of St. Victor, they went off all together to the Hospital of the Invalids in search of weapons."

"And were received, no doubt, with the gun-fire of the brave veterans sheltered there?" said the Count.

"Alas, no! my lord. The pensioners made not the slightest resistance, and the scoundrelly people fell into possession of more than thirty thousand guns and several cannon."

"The veterans!" gasped the Viscount of Mirabeau. "They, old soldiers, to give up their arms! Do we then face defection and treason on every side! Very well! we shall hang and shoot the invalids, men and officers, to the last one."

"Oh, the idea!" shouted the Marquis, with another burst of forced laughter, "So now our bare-feet have thirty thousand guns—and some cannon—which they don't know how to use!"

"You have nothing else to tell us?" said Plouernel to the steward.

"No, my lord."

"Then send our men out again for information. The instant they return, come to me with what they have learned."

The steward bowed for the third time and withdrew. Upon the faces of the convivial friends blank consternation reigned at the news he had brought. They gazed at one another speechless.

"Do you know, gentlemen," at last spoke up the Cardinal, "that all this is getting frightful? The very marrow in my bones is chilled."

"It is my opinion," the Duke answered, "that France will soon be no longer habitable. We shall have to flee abroad."

"Come, come, my dear Duke," said the Count of Plouernel, "a few regiments of infantry, supported by a piece of artillery or two, will suffice to exterminate these upstarts. The French nobility will whip them down. We shall unsheath our swords."

"I think the rabble will whip better troops than those, once they have got the smell of gunpowder," said Abbot Morlet.

"You are talking nonsense, Abbot," replied Mirabeau. "It is impossible that bare-footed ragamuffins, poorly armed, and without discipline, should be victorious over seasoned troops. If it ever came to that pass, I should snap my

sword."

For the first time since the arrival of the momentous news, Victoria spoke: "A traitorous King would prevent you from breaking it; he would order you to return it to its scabbard."

"It is for us to have the courage to sacrifice the King to the safety of the monarchy. We shall have all the brave ones—" Mirabeau began.

"By heaven!" interrupted the Duke, "this is serious, and requires thought. Sacrifice the King!"

"What shall we do with the King?" questioned the Cardinal.

"In other times," replied Victoria, "they shut up do-nothing Kings in, the depths of a cloister. Force Louis XVI to abdicate. The Dauphin is an infant, you will constitute a council of regents, composed of men of inflexibility. The shameless plebeians have too much blood; it will rise to their heads and give them a false energy. Bleed them, bleed them white, by repression and defeat. You have cannons and muskets; bombard them—blow them back into the depths they sprung from!"

"Ah, Marchioness," answered Plouernel, "you are the terrible archangel who with her flaming sword will defend the monarchy and nobility. You are right. Safety lies in the abdication of the King and the formation of an inflexible council of regents. The monarch must be eliminated."

"Your most dangerous enemy, Count of Plouernel," replied she, "is the Third Estate! Has this bourgeoisie not told you, through Sieyès's organ, that up till now it has been nothing, it *which ought to be everything*! There is the enemy. The people, its intoxication once passed, will fall back into its misery and abject submissiveness. Having cried its cry in the public place, hunger will again seize it by the throat. 'The people, always ridden by want, has never the time to carry out the revolutions which it essays.' It is against the bourgeoisie that war to the knife must be carried on."

"For one proof out of a thousand of the truth of that statement," assented the Count, "is not Desmarais the lawyer one of the firiest tribunes in the National Assembly?"

"My dear Count," said the cavalry officer to Plouernel, "did you not once treat a fellow of that name to a good cudgeling?"

"This Desmarais is himself the hero of that episode you refer to—the very same whippersnapper," answered the Count.

Aside Victoria said to herself: "And my brother John is the sweetheart of Mademoiselle Desmarais. A singular coincidence!"

"How did you come to give him his cudgel sauce, Count?" inquired the Cardinal.

"My counsel were arguing before the court a case involving an estate left to my brother, Abbot Plouernel, at present in Rome. Desmarais, forgetting the respect due to a man of my station, had the insolence to speak of me in terms hardly reverent. Informed of the fact by my attorneys, I had Desmarais seized by three of my servants one night as he was leaving his lodgings. They administered to him a sound drubbing with green sticks, after which my first lackey said to him: 'Sir, the thrashing which we have just had the honor of presenting to you, is from Monseigneur Plouernel, our master. Let the lesson be a profitable one.'"

"That," said the Viscount of Mirabeau, "was as good as the exquisite bastinado given to Arouet 'Voltaire' by the orders of the Prince of Rohan. That's the way to treat the bourgeoisie."

"Voltaire perhaps owes his fame to that little chastisement," suggested the Duke.

Coming back to the subject which was on everyone's mind, Abbot Morlet was the next to speak. "Madam the Marchioness has just uttered a great truth," said he. "The Church, the nobility and royalty have no more terrible enemy than the bourgeoisie. In a state, three elements are necessary for a good organization—a God, a King, and a people. In order to carry on production and nourish the representatives of God and the King, the bourgeoisie should be suppressed."

"You are stingy in your allotments, Abbot," put in the Duke. "Would you, then, suppress the nobility?"

"Who says *King* says *nobility*, and who says God says clergy," replied the Abbot. "In other words, if we wish to enjoy our privileges in peace, we must either extirpate or annul the bourgeoisie. Now, if we know how to use the people skilfully, they will come to our aid in this task of extirpation, for the plebeian hates a bourgeois more than he does a noble."

"Still, we see the populace gone mad over the deputies of the Third Estate. Several of them have already grown to the bulk of idols," said the Count.

"The bourgeoisie is, and will for still a long time remain, as hostile toward the people as it is toward the nobles. The people know this, and that is what renders them hostile to the bourgeoisie," Victoria declared.

"It is marvellous how the thoughts of Madam the Marchioness accord with mine," exclaimed Abbot Morlet. "This antagonism which she has just mentioned will some day, perhaps, be our salvation; for I have no faith in the party of the court, composed in part, as it is, of young mad-caps."

"By heaven, Abbot," the whole company cried with one voice, "but you are impertinent!"

The Abbot shrugged his shoulders and continued impassively. "The revolution will plunge on in its course. First the royalty and the nobility will fall beneath the blows of the tribunes of the Third Estate. Then will fall the Church—but only to rerise more powerful than before, to rear again the scaffolds and relight the pyres of the Inquisition."

"You are talking nonsense, Abbot," again put in Barrel Mirabeau. "Your prophecies partake of desperation."

"Nobility and royalty will disappear in the tempest," pursued the Abbot, "but it remains with us to make that disappearance one of the phases of a rebirth that will establish theocracy more powerful than ever. The instant will be decisive, momentous. It may one day come about that the bourgeoisie will merge its cause with that of the populace; that it will establish education free, unified, common, and uncontrolled by the Church; that it will abolish private property, making common to each and all the tools of production. Should the bourgeoisie decide thus to emancipate the proletariat, Throne and Altar are done for forever. It is for us, then, to nurse the antagonism already existent between the two, to envenom their mutual mistrust and reproaches. We must inflame the fear of the bourgeoisie for the populace; we must kindle the mistrust of the laborers toward the bourgeois; we must prick the people on to excess; above all we must invoke to pillage and massacre that furious beast which is not the people, but which in times of revolution is confounded with it—it is the *red specter* which we must make use of to terrify the bourgeoisie and drive it to sunder its cause from that of the people. That is how we can countermine the revolution, and force the sovereigns of Europe to unite, to invade France, and to exterminate our enemies. Let us mingle, in disguise, with the people; let us provoke and irritate their appetite for blood. Let us and our agents strike the first blows—pillage—burn—mow off heads—those of our friends, too, for we must above all avert suspicion; make the blood pour, to rouse the beast and put it in appetite for sack and massacre!"

Even Barrel Mirabeau was taken aback at this diatribe. "God's death, Sir Abbot," he cried with horror, "do you take us for gallows-tenders?"

"To make of us mowers of heads!" cried the Count of Plouernel. "'Tis insanity!"

"What exquisite fastidiousness!" retorted Morlet.

"You must have clean lost your senses, Abbot," returned Plouernel. "To dare to propose such a role to us—to make hyenas out of us!"

"We sons of the Church," answered the Abbot, "shall then assume the role ourselves, if it is so repugnant to you, gentlemen of the nobility.[8] You fear to soil your lace cuffs and silk stockings with mire and blood; we of the clergy, less dainty, and arrayed in coarser garb, are free from any such false delicacy. We shall roll up our cuffs to the elbow, and perform our duty. We shall save you, then, my worthy gentlemen, with or without your aid; that will be an account to be settled afterwards between us."

"The priest has been vomited forth from hell," thought Victoria, to herself. "He is a demon incarnate."

"We shall know how to save the monarchy, Sir Abbot," replied the Count of Plouernel to his friend Morlet, "even without the need of you folks of the Church; have no worry on that score. You forget that it was our sword which established the monarchy in Gaul and revived the Catholic Church, fourteen centuries ago, without the aid of the cassocks of that time."

"Fine words—but empty," answered the Abbot. "If you are indeed so determined to draw the sword, Monsieur Count, will you then please tell me why, this very day, you resigned into the hands of the King the command of your regiment? Your boast comes at a poor season."

"You well know why, Monsieur Abbot," the Count retorted. "My regiment grew uncontrollable. The evil, however, dates far back. The first symptoms of insubordination in the French Guards showed themselves two years ago. A sergeant named Maurice"—Victoria shuddered—"had the insolence to pass me without saluting; and after I took off his cap with a stroke of my cane, he had the audacity to raise his hand against his colonel. I handed the mutineer over to the scourges till he dropped dead. That is how I avenge my honor."

As Monsieur Plouernel thus told the story of Sergeant Maurice, Victoria was unable to control herself. Her features contracted, and she fixed on Plouernel a look of menace. Then a sudden flush overspread her features. None of this was lost upon the Abbot. "What is this mystery?" he pondered. "The Marchioness casts an implacable look at the Count, then she blushes—she who till now has been as pale as marble. What can there have been between this Italian Marchioness and this sergeant in the French Guards, now two years dead?"

At that moment the steward again entered the banquet hall and approached the Count of Plouernel.

"What news, Robert?" asked the latter.

"Terrible, my lord!"

"My Robert is not an optimist," explained Plouernel to the company. "In what does this terrible news consist?"

"The barriers of the Throne and St. Marcel are on fire. Everywhere the tocsin is clanging. The people of the districts are gathering in the churches."

"Behold the sway of our holy religion over the populace—they pray before the altars," cried the Cardinal briskly.

"Alas, my lord, it is not to pray, at all, that the rebels are swarming into the churches, but to listen to haranguers, and among others a comedian by the name of Collot D'Herbois, who preaches insurrection. They trample the sacred vessels under foot, spit on the host, and tear down the priestly ornaments."

"Profanation! Sacrilege!" exclaimed the Cardinal, suddenly modifying his ideas on the sway of his faith over the people.

"One of our men," continued the steward, "saw them putting up bills which the rabble read by the light of their torches. One of the placards read: 'For sale, because of death, the business of Grand Master of Ceremonies. Inquire of the widow Brezé.'"

"Ah, poor Baked one," sang out the Marquis, making a hideous pun on the unfortunate officer's name, "you are

cooked! All they have to do now is to eat you!"

"On other placards were written in large letters, 'Names of the Traitors to the Nation: Louis Capet—Marie Antoinette—Provence—Artois—Conti—Bourbon—Polignac—Breteuil—Foulon'—and others."

"That is intended to point out these names to the fury of the populace!" gasped the Viscount of Mirabeau.

"The rumor runs through Paris that to-morrow the people will rise in arms and march on Versailles."

"So much the better," exclaimed the Viscount. "They will be cut to pieces, this rabble. Cannoniers—to your pieces—fire!"

"Go on, tell us what you know," said Plouernel to his steward Robert. "Is that all?"

"Alas no, my lord. This miserable populace in arms surrounds and threatens the City Hall. The old Board of Aldermen is dissolved, and is replaced by a new revolutionary committee, which has taken the power into its own hands."

"Are the names of this committee known?" asked the Count.

"Yes, my lord. From the City Hall windows they threw to the rioting people lists with the names. Here is one which our emissary got hold of:—'President of the permanent committee, Monsieur Flesselles, ex-Provost of the merchants'—"

"Oh, well," laughed the Duke, "if the other members of the committee are revolutionists of that stamp, we can sleep in peace. Flesselles is in our employ."

"Finish reading your paper," ordered the Count.

"'The said committee, in session assembled, decrees: Article I—A city militia shall immediately be organized in each district, composed of licensed business men. Article II—The cockade of this militia shall be blue and red, the city colors.'"

"Is that all? Finish reporting," said Plouernel, seeing the steward pause.

"One of our spies, on entering the neighborhood of the Palais Royal, heard threats hurled against his Majesty Louis XVI, and especially against her Majesty, the Queen. Everyone looks for terrible events to-morrow, my lord."

Seeing he had nothing more to report, Plouernel allowed the steward to depart, first ordering him to come back with any fresher information.

"Now gentlemen," Victoria began when the steward had withdrawn from the room, "the gravity of the situation takes foremost place. There is no longer room for deliberation—there must be action. Time is pressing. Count, has the court foreseen that the agitation in Paris would drive the malcontents to open revolt? Is it prepared to combat the uprising?"

"Everything has been anticipated, madam," answered Plouernel. "Measures are on foot to repulse the rebels. This very morning I received word as to the plans of the court."

"Why then do you allow us to wander into objectless suppositions and discussions?" asked the Cardinal.

"I was commanded to exercise the utmost discretion in the matter of the court's projects. But in view of the information which my steward has just brought in on the popular frenzy in Paris, and on the assaults which the discontented element is meditating, I hold it my duty to inform you of the plans laid down."

Drawing a note from his pocket, the Count continued, reading:

> "Monsieur the Marshal Broglie is appointed commander-in-chief. He said this morning to the Queen: 'Madam, with the fifty thousand men at my command I pledge myself to bring to their senses both the luminaries of the National Assembly and the mob of imbeciles which hearkens to them. The gun and the cannon will drive back under earth these insolent tribunes, and absolute power will again assume the place which the spirit of republicanism now disputes with it.'
>
> "Monsieur the Marshal Broglie is invested with full military powers. Bezenval is placed in command of Paris, De Launay holds the Bastille and threatens with his artillery the suburb of St. Antoine; the garrison of that fortress has for several days been secretly increased, and ammunition worked in. The Bastille is the key to Paris, inasmuch as it commands the respect of the most dangerous suburbs, and can annihilate them with its guns.
>
> "The last regiments recalled from the provinces by the Marshal will arrive to-night on the outskirts of Versailles and will powerfully re-enforce the Swiss and the foreign regiments. An imposing array of artillery and a large troop of cavalry will complete this corps of the army. Thus united, the troops will move, day after to-morrow, July the 15th, to the invasion of the National Assembly, which will have been allowed to convene. The Assembly will be surrounded by the German regiments, and the ring-leaders of the Third Estate forthwith arrested."

In a lowered and confidential tone the Count continued:

> "The most dangerous of the rebels will be shot at once. A goodly number of them will be thrown into the deepest dungeons of the different State prisons of the kingdom. Finally, the small fry of the Third Estate will be exiled to at least a hundred leagues from Paris. A royal warrant will dissolve the National Assembly and annul its enactments. After which Monsieur Broglie, at the head of his army, will march on Paris, take military possession of it, establish courts-martial which will at once judge and put to death all the chiefs of the sedition, banish the less culpable, and confiscate their goods to the benefit of the royal fisc. Should it resist, Paris will be besieged and treated like a conquered city—three days and three

nights of pillage will be granted to the troops. After which, the royal authority will be re-established in full glory."

"There, gentlemen, that is the plan of campaign of the court."

Loud acclamations from the company—excepting only the Abbot—greeted the reading of the communication by Monsieur Plouernel.

"This plan seems to me to be at all points excellently expeditious and practical," said Victoria. "It has every chance of success. Still, has the court foreseen the event of Paris, protected by barricades and defended by determined men, resisting with the force of despair? Has the court foreseen the event of Monsieur Broglie being defeated in his conflict with the people?"

"Madam, that case also is provided for," answered Plouernel. "The King and the royal family, protected by a powerful force, will leave Versailles and retire to a fortified place on the frontier. The Emperor of Austria, the Kings of Prussia and Sweden, and the majority of the princes of the Germanic Confederation, will be prepared to assist the royal power. Their armies will cross the frontier, and his Majesty, at the head of the arms of the coalition, will return to force an entry into his capital, which will be subjected to terrible chastisement."

"One and all, we are prepared to shed our blood for the success of this plan," cried the Viscount of Mirabeau, swelling with enthusiasm. "To battle!"

"Has this plan the approval of the King?" asked Victoria. "Can one count on his resolution?"

"The Queen but awaits the hour of putting it into practice to inform his Majesty of it," answered the Count. "Nevertheless, the King has already consented to the assembling of a corps of the army at Versailles. That is a first step gained."

"But if the King should refuse to follow the plan? What course do you then expect to take?" persisted Victoria.

"It will go through without the consent of Louis XVI. If necessary, we shall proceed to depose him. Then Monseigneur the Count of Provence will be declared Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, and the Queen, Regent, with a council of unbending royalists. Then we shall see courts-martial and firing squads in permanence! Volleys unceasing!"

"It is done for royalty if the court dare put its plan, into execution," muttered Victoria to herself. "To-morrow the Bastille will be taken." Then, rising, her face glowing with animation, and holding her glass aloft, she called, in her brilliant voice:

"To the death of the Revolution! To the re-establishment of Royalty! To the triumph of the Church! To the Queen!"

And catching her fire, the whole company, with one voice, cried:

"Death to the Revolution!"

"Meet me to-morrow morning at Versailles, gentlemen, in battle," cried Plouernel.

And all except the Abbot shouted back the reply:

"In battle! We shall all be at Versailles to deal the people its death-blow!"

The sarcastic coolness of the priest sat the Count ill. "Are you stricken dumb, Abbot," he inquired, "or do you lack confidence in our plan?"

"No, I have not the slightest confidence in your plans," answered the prelate calmly. "Your party is marching from blusterings to retreats, and on to its final overthrow, which will be that of the monarchy. But we shall be there, we the 'shaven-heads,' the 'priestlets,' as you dub us; the 'creatures of the Church,' 'hypocrites and Pharisees,' to repair your blunders, you block-heads, you lily-livers! We of the frock and cassock contemn you!"

This deliverance of the Abbot was followed by a storm of indignant cries from the assembled guests. Threats and menaces rose high.

"By heaven!" shouted Barrel Mirabeau, "if you were not a man of the cloth, Abbot, you would pay dear for your insults!"

"Let him rave," said the Cardinal, shrugging his shoulders, "let him rave, this hypocrite of the vestry-room, this rat of the Church, this Jesuit!"

"Mademoiselle Guimard awaits his Eminence in her carriage!" called out a lackey, stepping into the room.

"The devil! The devil!" muttered his Eminence the Cardinal as he rose to go. "I clean forgot my Guimard in the midst of my political cares. Well, I must go to face the anger of my tigress!"

The banquet broke up. The guests left the table, and gathered in little groups before parting, still carrying on the discussion of the evening. Only Abbot Morlet stood apart, and as he let his sardonic glance travel from group to group, he muttered to himself grimly:

"Simpleton courtiers! Imbecile cavaliers! Stupid prelates! Go to your Oeil-de-Boeuf! Go to Versailles—go! To-morrow the dregs of the populace will have felled their first head. The appetite for killing comes by killing. As to that foreign Marchioness, of whom it is well to have one's doubts, if it becomes advisable to get rid of her, her handsome head with its black hair will look well on the end of a pike some of these days. So let's be off. I must prepare that bully of a Lehiron, the old usher of the parish of St. Medard, to call together to-night his band of rascals, ready for anything. And then to get ready my disguise and that of my god-son, little Rodin!"

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE HALL OF THE PORTRAITS.

Half an hour later none of that brilliant company remained in the home of the Count of Plouernel save the Count himself, and Victoria Lebrenn. The two were in the Hall of the Portraits, in contemplation of which the beautiful Marchioness seemed lost. Struck with her long silence, and seeing her gaze riveted upon the pictures, the Count approached her, saying in a surprised and passionate voice:

"Do you know, Madam Marchioness, that I shall end by becoming jealous of my ancestors? For several minutes they alone have been happy enough to draw your attention."

"True, Count. I was reflecting on the glory of your race. Proud was I, for your sake, of your illustrious origin."

"Ah, Victoria, such words! But allow me to tell you, my radiant Marchioness, how I love you. Every day I feel my mad passion grow. By my honor as a gentleman, you could have led me on to treason as easily as you have confirmed me in the path of loyalty which I now tread. You have so mastered me that to possess your love I would have betrayed my King, and forever stained my escutcheon." Then, casting himself on his knees before the Marchioness, the Count continued in a trembling voice, "Is that not yet sufficient, Victoria?"

At the moment that the Count of Plouernel had seized and was covering with kisses the hand of Victoria, a loud knock was heard at the door of the salon.

"Rise, Count," said Victoria, quickly. "It is one of your men."

Robert the steward entered precipitately, bearing in one hand a tray on which lay a despatch. He said to his master:

"A courier from Versailles brought this despatch for my lord. The courier reached the house only with the greatest difficulty. To escape arrest by the people in the streets he was forced to leave his horse some distance from the barrier, and to throw off his royal livery."

"You may go," replied Monsieur Plouernel, as he took the message.

He tore open the envelope and made haste to read the contents of the missive, while Victoria followed him with curiosity burning in her eyes, and said in her most winning voice as she drew close to him, "News of importance, no doubt, my dear Gaston? You seem much moved by it."

"Read, Marchioness, for I have no secrets from you," answered Plouernel, handing the despatch to Victoria. "Judge of the extreme urgency of my information!"

The young woman eagerly grasped the letter, cast her eyes over it, and then said, with a silvery laugh: "But it is in cipher. Give me the key. I cannot read it—without your help."

"True—pardon my distraction," replied the Count, and he read as follows, translating the cipher as he went:

> "To-day's events in Paris, and the news from the country, are of such nature that our measures must be pushed forward to execution. Repair to Versailles at once. Let not one of our friends be missing. It will probably be done to-morrow.
>
> "Versailles, seven o'clock in the evening."

"And it is now past midnight!" exclaimed Victoria, "You should have received the message at least two or three hours ago. Whence the delay? Must it be laid to negligence, or treachery? Both suppositions are possible."

"You forget, Marchioness, that the messenger was compelled to use great precautions to enter Paris, and that his precautions in themselves, were quite capable of causing the delay. So that it is neither false play nor carelessness—no one is guilty."

"So it may be. But there is not a moment to lose. You must be off to Versailles at once. Order your carriage immediately. Let your coach-wheels scorch the pavement."

"It would be imprudent to take a carriage into the streets to-night. I shall go on horseback accompanied by one of my men; I shall go towards Great Rock and Queen's Court, till I pick up the road that runs from Courbevoie to Versailles. Then, like the wind for Versailles."

Monsieur Plouernel grasped the young woman's hand and added in a voice of emotion—"God save the throne!"

Victoria turned towards the door, paused a moment on the sill to make a final gesture of farewell, and left the room, musing to herself:

"*In order to strike terror to the court, to make their plant miscarry, the people must take the Bastille to-morrow! No hesitation—it must be done!*"

CHAPTER IX.

FILIAL CONFIDENCES.

The home of Monsieur Desmarais, attorney at the court of Paris, deputy of the Third Estate to the National Assembly, the same who had been beaten by the orders of the Count of Plouernel, was situated near the St. Honoré Gate. There he occupied a beautiful dwelling of recent construction and decorated with taste. The day after the banquet participated in at the Plouernel mansion by the heads of the court party, Madam Desmarais and her daughter Charlotte, a charming girl of seventeen, were engaged in a sad interchange of thoughts.

"Ah, my child," said Madam Desmarais, "how troubled I feel at what is going on in Paris!" As her child did not answer, the mother stopped and looked at her. The girl was plunged in deep revery.

For a moment longer the girl maintained her silence. Then, her face suffused and her eyes filled with tears, she fell upon her mother's neck, buried her face in the maternal breast, and murmured in a smothered voice:

"Mother, dear, for the first time in my life I have lacked confidence in you. Pardon your child!"

Surprised and disturbed, Madam Desmarais pressed her daughter to her bosom, dried her tears, urged her to calm herself, and said, embracing her tenderly: "You, to lack confidence in me, Charlotte? You have a secret from me? Am I not, then, your *bestest* friend?"

"Alas, I fear I had almost forgotten it. Be indulgent toward your daughter!"

"My heaven! What anguish you are putting me to! I can not believe my ears. You—to have committed a fault?"

"I doubted your heart and your justice. I formed a bad judgment of my father and you, who have surrounded me with tenderness since my birth."

"Finish your confidence, painful as it may be. Put an end to my uncertainty," pleaded the mother.

Charlotte drew back a moment; then she proceeded in broken accents:

"About six months ago, we came to live on the second story of this house, then still unfinished. Father was much taken with one of the workmen—"

"You speak of John Lebrenn, the foreman of our ironsmith, Master Gervais?"

"Struck with the excellent education of Monsieur John Lebrenn, father offered him the freedom of our library, and made him promise to come and visit us on his holidays. Father therefore considered Monsieur John Lebrenn worthy of admission to our friendship. That is how I must interpret father's actions."

"Your father evinced, perhaps, too much good will towards the young fellow, and my brother has taken my husband to task for authorizing too intimate relations between us and a simple workman. Each should keep his place."

"Uncle Hubert," answered Charlotte, "always showed himself hostile towards Monsieur Lebrenn, and even jealous of him."

"Your uncle Hubert is a banker of wealth, and could have entertained for the protegé of my husband neither jealousy nor animosity."

"Nevertheless, father's 'protegé' has been able to be of value to him, for I have often heard father say to Monsieur John that it was to him and his efforts that he owed his election as deputy for Paris."

"It is a matter of common kindness for my husband to thank this young workman for some services he was able to perform in the interest of his election."

"Allow me, dear mother, to tell you that father does not look at things as you do; for last Sunday he invited Monsieur John to dinner with us, calling him *my friend*. Father repeated to him several times that, thanks to the progress of the revolution, privileges of birth would be soon wiped out, and that equality and fraternity would reign among men."

"Well, Charlotte! And suppose equality were to reign among men—what conclusion do you draw from that?"

"Monsieur John Lebrenn being the equal of my father, bonds of friendship could exist between them."

"I shall admit, for the moment, that an ironsmith's apprentice might think himself the equal of an attorney at the bar of Paris. What do you conclude therefrom?"

"I hoped you would have understood," stammered the young girl in confusion, and more embarrassed than ever at seeing her mother so far from suspecting the nature of the confidence she was about to make.

Suddenly a dull and heavy roar, prolonged and repeated from echo to echo, shook and rattled the windows of the room.

"What noise is that!" cried Madam Desmarais with a start, and raising her head.

Crash upon crash, more distinct than the first, rattled again the windows and even the doors of the dwelling. At that instant in rushed one of Madam Desmarais's maids, screaming out with affright:

"Madam, Oh, madam! It is the cannon! It is the roar of artillery!"

"Great God!" exclaimed Madam Desmarais, turning pale. "And my husband! To what dangers will he be exposed!"

"Do not worry, dear mother. Father is at Versailles," spoke out Charlotte, now the comforter.

"They are attacking Paris. The counter-attack will lead on to Versailles. There will be uprisings, insurrections, massacres!"

"The suburbs are attacking the Bastille," answered Gertrude, the maid, all of a tremble. "At daybreak our neighbor, Monsieur Lebrenn the ironsmith, armed with sword and gun, placed himself at the head of a troop, and marched upon the fortress."

"Alas, he rushes into the arms of death—I shall never see him more!" cried Charlotte, starting to her feet. And overcome with emotion and fear, she paled, her eyes closed, and she fainted in the arms of her mother and the servant, who bent over her plying their simple restorative cares.

For a long time the detonation of the artillery and the rattle of musketry continued unabated. At length the firing slackened, became desultory, and finally ceased altogether. The tumult gave way to a profound silence. Charlotte regained consciousness. Her face hidden in her hands, she was now seated beside her mother, who regarded her daughter with a severe and saddened look. The older woman seemed to hesitate to speak to the girl; finally she addressed her in a voice that was hard and dry:

"Thank heaven, Charlotte, you have recovered from your faint. Let us continue our interview, that was so unfortunately interrupted. Meseems it is of extreme importance for us all. I can guess its conclusion."

The hard lines in the face of Madam Desmarais and the iciness in her tone took the young girl aback; but overcoming the passing emotion, she raised her head, revealing her countenance wet with tears, and answered:

"I have never practised dissimulation towards you. So, just now, I could not conceal the fears which assailed me for John Lebrenn—for I love him passionately. I have pledged him my faith, I have received his in return. We have sworn our troth, one to the other. There, my dear mother, that is the confidence, I wished to make to you."

"Oh, woe is us! The predictions of my brother are realized. How right he was to reproach my husband for his relations with that workingman! Unworthy daughter!" continued Madam Desmarais addressing Charlotte, "How could you so far forget your duties as to think of uniting your lot with that of a miserable artisan? Shame and ignominy! Dishonor to your family—"

"Mother," replied Charlotte, raising her head proudly, "my love is as noble and pure as the man who calls it forth."

Gertrude, the serving maid, here again broke precipitately into the room, joyfully crying as she crossed the threshold:

"Madam, good news! Your husband has just entered the courtyard."

"My husband in Paris!" exclaimed Madam Desmarais. "What can have taken place at Versailles? Perhaps the Assembly is dissolved! Perhaps he is proscribed, a fugitive! My God, have pity on us!"

She rushed to the door to meet her husband, but checked herself long enough to say to Charlotte:

"Swear to me to forget at once this shameful love. On that condition I consent to withhold from your father all knowledge of the wretched affair."

"My father shall know all!" replied Charlotte resolutely, as Monsieur Desmarais entered the room.

CHAPTER X.

DEPUTY DESMARAIS.

The deputy of the Third Estate was a man in the prime of life; his intellectual face betrayed more of diplomacy than of frankness. The disorder of his apparel and the perspiration that covered his brow bespoke the precipitancy of his return. His pallor, the contortion of his features, the fear portrayed upon them, disclosed the anxiety of his mind. But his whole expression relaxed at sight of Charlotte and her mother. He pressed them several times in turn to his bosom, and cried joyously:

"Dear wife—dear daughter—embrace me again! I never before thought what a consolation in these cursed times the sweet joys of the domestic hearth would prove."

And again embracing his wife and daughter, the advocate added, "Blessings on you both for your presence. You have made me forget for a moment the atrocities committed by a cannibal people!"

As Monsieur Desmarais uttered these last words, a storm of triumphal outcries, first distant, then gradually drawing nearer, smote upon his ear: "Victory! The Bastille is taken by the people! Down with the court! Down with the traitors! Down with the King! Death to the King! Long live the Nation!"

Then as gradually the cries moved away and died out in the distance.

"The Bastille is taken—but how much blood had to be shed in the heroic attack!" thought Charlotte, endeavoring to curb her apprehensions for John Lebrenn. Then, carrying her handkerchief to her lips to smother a sob, she added

to herself, "He is dead, perhaps. O, God, have pity on my grief."

"What mean these cries, my friend?" asked Madam Desmarais of her husband. "Is it possible that the Bastille has fallen into the hands of the people? Can the working classes have overcome the army? In what sort of times do we live?"

"The Bastille is taken! Cursed day—the people are on top!"

Charlotte heard with astonishment the execrations of her father on the victory just won by the people. But before she was able to explain to herself this revulsion in her father's beliefs, Gertrude re-entered the room, calling out through the open door—

"Good news again! Mother Lebrenn, our neighbor, has sent one of her apprentices to inform you that she has just received a note from Monsieur John, saying that he received a slight gunshot wound in the shoulder during the battle—and announcing that the people is everywhere victorious!"

"John Lebrenn!" exclaimed Monsieur Desmarais, enraged. "He took part in that insurrection! Send answer to Mother Lebrenn that I take no interest in parties to massacre!" Then recollecting himself, he added, "No—say to the apprentice that you have delivered the message."

"Not a word of interest, and John wounded," thought Charlotte. "Ah, at least, thanks to You, my God, John's wound is slight. I need not tremble for his life."

"If the revolution one of these days miscarries, it will be the fools of the stamp of this Lebrenn who will be to blame," continued Desmarais bitterly. "They will not comprehend that the ideal government is a bourgeois, constitutional monarchy, amenable to the courts, disarmed, and subordinated to an assembly of representatives of the Third Estate. These miserable workingmen dishonor the revolution by assassination."

"Father," responded Charlotte firmly, her forehead flushed with a generous resolve, "Monsieur John Lebrenn can not be called an assassin."

"I, too, believed in the honesty of that workman whom I showered with favors, in spite of the warnings of your uncle Hubert," replied Desmarais. "But when John Lebrenn takes part in this insurrection, I withdraw my esteem. I look upon him as a brigand!"

"John Lebrenn a brigand!" exclaimed Charlotte, unable to restrain her indignation. "Is it you, father, who thus insult a man whom you but now called your friend! What a contradiction in your language!"

"My dear husband," interposed Madam Desmarais, interrupting her daughter to retard an explanation of which she dreaded the issue: "You have not yet told us what compelled your departure from Versailles, and why you are in Paris instead of in session with the National Assembly."

"Last evening and night the most sinister rumors were in circulation about Versailles. According to some, the court party had secured from the King the dissolution of the Assembly. The members of the Left were to be arrested as seditious characters, and imprisoned or banished from the kingdom."

"Great heaven—that is where you sit, my friend! To what danger have you not been exposed!"

"They would not have taken me from my curule chair alive," responded the attorney grandly. "But the court party, frightened by the peals of the cannon at the Bastille, the roar of which carried to Versailles, drew back before the fearsome consequences of such an attempt."

"I breathe again," exclaimed Madam Desmarais with a sigh of relief. "You are neither a fugitive nor proscribed. God be praised!"

"Still, other reports agitated Versailles and the Assembly on the score of the uneasiness in Paris. During the night they saw, from the housetops, the gleam of burning barriers. In the morning a courier despatched by Baron Bezenval, commandant of Paris, brought news to the government that the people of the suburb of St. Antoine, assisted by those from the other suburbs, were besieging the Bastille. This sort of aggression was considered by the majority of the representatives an enterprise as blameworthy as it was senseless. No one could conjecture that a mob of people, in rags, almost without arms, could take a fortress defended by a garrison and a battery of artillery. The attempt was in the highest degree extravagant."

"The victory of the people was truly heroic," answered Madam Desmarais. "It really savors of the miraculous."

"Alas, a few more miracles of that stamp and the royal power is overthrown, and we fall into anarchy," moodily replied the advocate. "The people, drunk with its triumph, will not content itself with wise reforms. Having overthrown the royalty, the nobility, and the clergy, it will turn on the bourgeoisie, and we, its allies during the combat, shall become its victims after the victory. It will push to the end the logic of its principles."

"Good heavens, my friend, you express to-day the same opinions you till lately fought in my brother!"

"Your brother Hubert is a violent man who knows nothing of politics," answered the attorney, much embarrassed by his wife's observation; and he added, "This morning the National Assembly, wishing to ascertain the truth as to the conflicting rumors of events in Paris, commissioned several of its members, myself among the number, to learn by actual witness the march of affairs, and, if possible, to check the shedding of blood. In spite of our haste to the city, when we arrived the people were already masters of the Bastille and had already disgraced their victory by slaughtering the Marquis De Launay, governor of the fortress, and several officers. These murders were then followed by ghoulish scenes, which I beheld with my own eyes. But everything in its time. My colleagues and I went to the City Hall. We succeeded, with much effort, in working our way through the swarms of people in arms. We saw the unhappy Flesselles, President of the Committee of Notables, livid, whelmed with blows and insults, his clothing torn to ribbons, dragged into the square and massacred: after the noble, the bourgeois! Among the assassins I

remarked a brawny giant, with the face of a gallows-bird, and a little short man whose visage half vanished under a shock of red beard, evidently false, who dragged at his side a young boy of eight or nine years. At one instant I thought that the unhappy Fleselles might be saved, but the declamations of the red-bearded man and the giant raised to a paroxysm the fury of a band of savages whom they seemed to direct, and I knew then that the Provost of the merchants was lost. The fellow with the red beard drew up to him and cracked his head at one blow, with the butt of his pistol. The savage band hurled itself upon the unfortunate man as he fell to earth, and riddled him with wounds. The giant put the climax to the horrible deed: he cut off the head and impaled it on the end of a pike. Then the whole band of scoundrels, the little boy along with the rest, began to dance around the hideous trophy, singing and shouting."

"My blood freezes in my veins, my friend, when I think of the danger you ran in the midst of that frantic populace," said Madam Desmarais. "Those madmen are worse than cannibals—and Paris seems to be in their power."

"That is what I saw; but unfortunately that is not the only crime there is to deplore. Other murders followed this first one. The blood thus shed threw the populace into a species of frenzy. Finally I was able to escape, to get out of the crowd, and I hastened to you, dear wife, and to our daughter. These are the crimes that the takers of the Bastille either perpetrated, or are accomplices in. By giving the signal for insurrection, they have thrown the people into all the dangers of a revolt. That is why John Lebrenn is no better in my eyes than a common bandit."

"You are unjust, father, toward him whom you called your friend," ventured Charlotte, in a voice firm with resolution. "On reflection you will return to sentiments that are more just to Monsieur Lebrenn."

Struck with astonishment at his daughter's words and tone, the advocate questioned his wife with a look, as if to seek the cause of this strange appeal on the part of Charlotte for Monsieur John.

"It is I, father, who can give you the explanation you seek of my mother. I shall not falter in doing so," said Charlotte; and after a momentary pause she continued:

"I shall not recall to you how many times you have uttered yourself in terms of friendship and esteem for Monsieur Lebrenn. The good opinion you held of him was merited, and I dare vouch that he will continue to show himself worthy of it. I shall not recall to you the proofs of devotion Monsieur Lebrenn has given you, notably at the time of your election. It is not willingly that I bring back to your memory the incident of the outrage of which you were the victim at the instigation of Monsieur the Count of Plouernel, and which you communicated to Monsieur Lebrenn in confidence one evening about two months ago. It costs me much to reopen in your heart that rankling wound. But do you remember the generous choler with which Monsieur Lebrenn was seized at your revelation? 'I am but a mechanic, and without doubt this great lord will consider me unworthy to raise a sword against him,' said Monsieur John to you, 'but I swear to God, I shall punish the wretch with these stout arms that heaven has bestowed upon me.' Already he was bounding towards the door to be off to avenge your insult, when you and my mother stopped him with great difficulty, plying your supplications to make him promise not to attack your enemy. And then, clasping him in your arms, you said to him, your voice quivering with emotion, and your eyes filled with tears, 'Ah, my friend, you shall be my son; for no otherwise than as a son did you feel the insult I received. This mark of attachment, joined to all the other proofs of your affection, renders you so dear to my heart that from this moment I shall look upon you as one of the members of our family. You have won all our hearts—'"

"And what has all this to do with the excesses which Monsieur Lebrenn has been one of the instigators of, and with the assassinations which I have witnessed? Come, speak clearly, explain yourself. I understand nothing of all this pathos."

"By what right, father, do you render Monsieur Lebrenn responsible for a murder to which he was an entire stranger?"

"But whence this great interest, my daughter, in taking the part of Monsieur Lebrenn against your father?"

"In spite of my ignorance of politics, dear father, I know that in attacking the Bastille the people wished to destroy the house of durance where shuddered so many innocent victims. And perhaps Monsieur Lebrenn, in joining himself with the insurgents, hoped to find his father in one of the dungeons of the fortress."

"And if by chance he should discover him!" exclaimed advocate Desmarais, more and more surprised and irritated at his daughter's persistence in defending Lebrenn. "Does that chance absolve him from the excesses for which the taking of the Bastille was the signal? Ought not the responsibility for these acts fall upon those who took part in the attack, among others on Monsieur Lebrenn, who, it seems, is one of the leaders of the insurrection?"

"Does the memory of services rendered, father, weigh so heavily upon you that you seek to evade all recollection of them, under the pretext of a responsibility which you endeavor to load on a generous man for the crimes committed by others?"

"Do you know, Charlotte," answered the advocate severely, after a few moments' reflection, "that your persistence in defending that man would justly give me strange suspicions regarding your conduct?"

"My friend," interrupted Madam Desmarais, "do not attach any importance to a few words which have escaped our daughter in a moment of excitement."

"You are mistaken, dear mother. I am perfectly calm. But I can not submit to hearing a man of heart and honor calumniated without protesting against what I regard as a great wrong to him. Why should I not say to father what I have just said to you, mother—that for two months my faith has been pledged to Monsieur John Lebrenn, that I have sworn to him to have no other husband than he? And I shall add, before you, my father, and you, my mother, that I shall be true to my promise."

"Great God!" cried the advocate, stunned with amazement, "that miserable workman has dared to raise his eyes to my daughter! He has stolen my child from me! Death and damnation, I shall have vengeance!"

"You are in error, father; your daughter has not been stolen away," proudly returned Charlotte. "That *miserable* workingman in whose presence you have so many times argued against the privileges of birth, against the artificial distinctions which separate the classes in society—that *miserable* workingman whom you treated as a friend, an equal, when you judged his support necessary to your ambition—that *miserable* workingman placed his faith in the sincerity of your professions, father, he saw in me his equal—and his love has been as pure, as respectful as it has been deep—and devoted—and my heart—is given to him—"

"You are a brazen hussy!" yelled the lawyer, pale with rage. "Leave my presence! You disgrace my name!"

"On the contrary, father, I hope I do honor to your name, in putting into practise those principles of equality and fraternity whose generous promoter you have made yourself."

At that moment the noise of many voices was heard under the windows of the Desmarais apartment, crying enthusiastically: "Long live Citizen Desmarais! Long live the friend of the people! Long live our representative!" These eloquent testimonies of the popular affection for Monsieur Desmarais offered so strange a contradiction to the reproaches which he had just addressed to Charlotte, that under the impression of the contrast the lawyer, his wife and his daughter fell silent.

"Do you hear them, father?" Charlotte at last ventured. "These brave people believe, the same as I, in the sincerity of your principles of equality. They acclaim you as the friend of the people."

At the same instant Gertrude ran into the room breathless with excitement, exclaiming: "A troop of the vanquishers of the Bastille, with Monsieur John Lebrenn at their head, has halted before the house. They want monsieur to appear on the balcony and address them."

"Death of my life! This is too much," snarled the advocate, at the moment that new cries resounded from without:

"Long live Citizen Desmarais. Long live the friend of the people! Come out! Come out! Long live the Nation! Down with the King! Death to the aristocrats!"

"My friend, you can not hesitate. You will run the greatest danger by not appearing and saying a few good words to these maniacs. In bad fortune we must show a good heart," said Madam Desmarais, alarmed; then addressing Gertrude: "Quick, quick, open the window to the balcony."

CHAPTER XI.

LIONS AND JACKALS.

Gertrude hastened to execute her mistress's order, and revealed to the deputy's family St. Honoré Street, packed, as far as the eye could reach, with a dense crowd. The windows of the houses bordering on it were filled by their inhabitants, drawn thither by the commotion. The column of the vanquishers of the Bastille was stationed in front and to both sides of the Desmarais domicile; it was composed for the most part of men of the people, clad in their working clothes. Some carried guns, pikes, or swords; several among them were armed with the implements of their trade. All, bourgeois, mechanics, soldiers, acclaimed the victory of the people with the cry, a thousand times repeated:

"Long live the Nation!"

In the center of the column glowered two pieces of light artillery captured in the courtyard of the redoubtable prison. On the caisson of one of these cannon, erect, majestically leaning on a pike-staff from which floated the tricolor, stood a woman of massive stature, a red kerchief half concealing the heavy tresses which fell down upon her shoulders. Her dark robe disclosed her robust arms. She held her pike in one hand—in the other a shattered chain. Woman of the people as she was, she seemed the genius of Liberty incarnate.

To the rear of the cannon rested a cart trimmed with green branches and surrounded by men who bore at the end of long poles or of pikes chains, garrottes, gags, iron boots, iron corsets, pincers, and other strange and horrible instruments of torture gathered up in the subterranean chambers of the Bastille. In the car were three of the prisoners delivered by the people. One of these was the Provost of Beaumont, imprisoned fifteen years before for having denounced the famine agreement. Another, who seemed to have lost his reason in the sufferings of a long and drear captivity, was the Count of Solange, imprisoned by *lettre de cachet* during the reign of Louis XV. The last of the three prisoners was broken, bent to the ground, tottering. He lifted to heaven his colorless eyes—alas, the unfortunate man had become blind in his dungeon. It was the father of John Lebrenn. Poor victim of tyranny! He feebly supported himself by the arm of his son, wounded though the latter was.

Such was the picture that met the gaze of advocate Desmarais as he stepped out upon the balcony of his dwelling, his wife and daughter on either side of him. Charlotte's first glances went in search of, and as soon found, John Lebrenn. With a woman's intuition she divined that the aged figure beside him, snatched from the cells of the Bastille was indeed his father.

The appearance of advocate Desmarais and his family was greeted with a new outburst of acclaim:

"Long live the friend of the people!"

In stepping forth upon the balcony, Desmarais had yielded merely to policy. He made a virtue of necessity. Condescending, gracious, complaisant, he began by greeting with smile, look, and gesture the populace assembled beneath his windows. Then he bowed, and placed his hand on his heart as if to express by that pantomime the emotion, the gratitude, which he experienced at the demonstration of which he was the object.

Silence was re-established among the crowd. John Lebrenn, still standing in the cart beside his father, addressed the attorney in a voice clear and sonorous:

"Citizen Desmarais, defender of the rights of the people, thanks to you, our representative in the National Assembly! Your acts, your speeches, have responded to all that we expected of you. Honor to the friend of the people!"

The advocate signified that he wished to reply. The tumult was hushed, and the deputy of the Third Estate delivered himself as follows:

"Citizens! my friends, my brothers! I can not find words in which to express the admiration your victory inspires me with. Thanks to your generous efforts, the most formidable rampart of despotism is overthrown! Be assured, citizens, that your representatives know the significance of the taking of the Bastille. The Assembly has declared that the ministers and the councillors of his Majesty, whatever their rank in the state, are responsible for the present evils and those which may follow. Responsibility shall be demanded of the ministers and all functionaries!"

"Bravo! Long live Desmarais! Long live the Assembly! Long live the Nation! Death to the King! Death to the Queen! Down with the aristocrats!"

"Nothing could be more pleasing to me, citizens," continued Desmarais, "than the choice you have made of Citizen Lebrenn as the spokesman of the sentiments that animate you. Honor to this young and valiant artisan, the son of one of the victims rescued from the Bastille!"

This allocution, pronounced by advocate Desmarais with every appearance of great tenderness, moved the people. Tears dimmed the eyes of all. The father of John Lebrenn seized his son in his arms, and Charlotte, unable to restrain her tears, murmured as she cast a look of gratitude toward heaven, "Thanks to you, my God! My father is his true old noble self again. He sees the injustice of his opposition to John!"

When the emotion produced by his last words had somewhat subsided, advocate Desmarais resumed: "Adieu till we meet again, citizens, my friends—my brothers! I return to Versailles. The Assembly has despatched three of my colleagues and myself to learn at first hand how it fares with the good people of Paris. When our report is called for, we shall be ready. Long live the Nation!"

With a final farewell gesture to the throng, Desmarais quitted the balcony and re-entered his apartment. In a few moments the column took up its interrupted march, and disappeared. Almost immediately there disgorged itself tumultuously into St. Honoré Street a band of men of an aspect strangely contrasting with that of the populace just addressed by Monsieur Desmarais. Some were dressed in rags, others wore a garb less sordid, but nearly all bore on their faces the stamp of vice and crime. The band was composed of men without occupation; do-nothing workmen; debauched laborers; petty business men ruined by misconduct, become pickpockets, sharpers, infesters of houses of ill fame and other evil resorts; robbers and convicts, assassins—a hideous crowd, capable of every crime; an execrable crowd, whom our eternal enemies keep in fee and easily egg on to these saturnalia, for which the people is but too often held culpable; wretches in the hire of the priests, the nobles and the police.

At the head of these bandits marched a man with the face of a brigand, of gigantic stature and herculean frame, and conspicuously well clad. Once a "cadet," then a gaming-house proprietor, then usher of the Church of St. Medard, Lehiron, for such was the name of the leader of the band, had been expelled from his last employment for the theft of the poor-box. Around his waist a sash of red wool held two horse-pistols and a cutlass that had parted company with its sheath. His coat and the cuffs of his shirt rolled back to the elbow, he gesticulated wildly with his bare hands, which were clotted with blood. At the end of a pike he still bore the head of Monsieur Flesselles, and from time to time, while brandishing the hideous trophy, he would cry out in a stentorian voice:

"Long live the Nation! To the lamp-post with the aristocrats! Death to all the nobles!"

"Death to the enemies of the people! The aristocrats to the lamp-post!" repeated all the bandits, brandishing their pikes, their sabers, or their guns blackened with powder.

"To the lamp-post with the aristocrats!" also cried the shrill and piercing voice of an urchin who gave his hand to a miserably clad character, the man of the false beard of whom Desmarais had spoken. It was the Jesuit Morlet, and the boy his god-son, little Rodin. At the moment that the band hove in sight of the lawyer's dwelling, the Jesuit drew close to Lehiron, and spoke a few words to him in a low voice. The latter stopped, signed to his followers for silence and cried at the top of his leathern lungs:

"Death to the bourgeois! Death to the traitors! To the lamp-post with Desmarais!"

Then the band resumed its way; and Abbot Morlet, posted at the head of the troop, made haste to bring it up to the last straggling files of the vanquishers of the Bastille. Then, upon the carriage of the cannon whence she dominated the throng, he beheld the woman with the red handkerchief and the dark robe. In spite of the change which her costume imparted to her features, the Jesuit was stupefied to recognize—Marchioness Aldini!

Barely had he recovered from his surprise when the Marchioness descended from the piece of artillery. As hastily, the Jesuit quitted his companions in order to trace her, and, if possible, clear up the suspicions which in his mind surrounded this one-time Marchioness, now heroine of the people. Little Rodin followed his dear god-father, and the two, elbowing their way through the people of the quarter, who were seized with surprise and affright at the murderous cries uttered by the sinister band which approached, inquired, as they went, for the beautiful dark woman coiffed in a red handkerchief who had just leaped down from the cannon—having, so the Abbot pretended, a

message for her. Finally a woman haberdasher, drawn to the threshold of her booth, replied to Abbot Morlet's interrogations:

"Yes, the beautiful young woman you seek has entered house No. 17, along with our neighbor John Lebrenn. That is all I can tell you."

"Then the Lebrenn family lives in this street, my dear woman?"

"Certainly. Mother Lebrenn and her family occupy two rooms on the fourth floor of No. 17."

"Thank you for your information, my dear woman," replied the Jesuit, with difficulty concealing the joy that the unexpected discovery caused him. "Many thanks!"

"And so," continued the Abbot, "I recover the traces of that family whom we have lost from sight for over a century. What a lucky chance! Two woodcocks in one springe—Marchioness Aldini and the family of Lebrenn. An enemy spotted, is one-half throttled. Let us train our batteries to suit."

"Dear god-father," put in little Rodin at that moment, with a determined air, "I am not afraid to look at heads mowed off."

"My child," replied the Jesuit with fatherly pride and happiness, "it is not enough to have no fear; one must actually feel his heart grow lightened when he sees the enemies of our holy mother, the Church of Rome, put to death."

"Dear god-father, was Monsieur Flesselles, then, an enemy of our holy mother, the Church?"

"My child, the death of Monsieur Flesselles, innocent or guilty, was useful to the good cause."

Meanwhile, Lehiron's band, just then passing under the windows of Desmarais's home, continued to shriek, "Death to the enemies of the people! Death to the bourgeois! To the lamp-post with Desmarais!"

The cries had not yet reached the ears of the attorney, who had no sooner withdrawn from the balcony than his daughter, throwing herself into his arms, said to him in a voice broken with sobs of joy:

"Thanks, Oh, thanks, father, for what you have just said!"

"What are you thanking me for now?"

"For the noble utterances you have just addressed to Monsieur John Lebrenn," replied Charlotte delighted, not noticing the brusque transformation which came over the face of the advocate at her words.

"How! You have the presumption to abuse the necessity I found myself reduced to, in speaking a few words of good will to that laborer in order to save my house from pillage, and perhaps to protect my own life and that of my wife and daughter—you presume to abuse that necessity to oblige me to give my consent to your union with an ironsmith's apprentice? You are an unworthy daughter!"

"Then—your cordial words, your touching protestations, were but lies!" murmured the young girl, crushed by her father's rough speech. "It was all comedy and imposture!"

"Charlotte," continued Desmarais in a tone of harsh resolve, "cut short this passion which is a disgrace to all of us! I swear you shall never see that man again. To-morrow you leave Paris. It is my will."

"Father, my father—I implore you—revoke that sentence—"

"My dear friend," pursued Desmarais, addressing his wife and not heeding his daughter, "I shall delay for twenty-four hours my return to Versailles. Hasten all your preparations for the trip. We shall leave to-morrow morning. I shall take you along, as well as our daughter."

"Pity, father! Do not drive me to despair—"

"You know my will. Nothing can bend it."

"Cursed be this day," cried the young girl with indignation; "cursed be this day when you force me to forget the respect I owe a father. Helas! it is you, you yourself, father, who just now, this very hour, protested your love for the people, your disdain for the privileges of birth and wealth. And now you declare before me that your protestations were false, that you despise the people, fear them, hate them. The imposture and the lie drive me to rebel."

"Hold your tongue, unworthy minx! Do you not see the window is open, and that your imprudent words can be heard without? Have you resolved to get us all killed?" cried Desmarais, running to the window to close it.

It was just the minute that Lehiron's band was passing the house. At the instant that the lawyer took hold of the casement fastening to draw shut the window, over the rail of the balcony, at the height of his own countenance, there appeared the livid head of Flesselles, impaled on its pike. A cry of fear broke from Desmarais, and he recoiled from the sill, clapping his hands before his eyes to shut out the grisly spectacle. The band halted before the attorney's door. Anew the cries burst loose without:

"Long live the Nation!"

"Death to the enemies of the people!"

"To the lamp-post with the aristocrats!—to the lamp-post with Desmarais!"

The clamors seemed to come so pat upon the words of Charlotte, that Madam Desmarais, stricken with affright, threw herself on her knees in an attitude of prayer, clasped her hands, and stammered out an appeal to God.

"To the lamp-post with Desmarais! Death to the traitor!" shrieked Lehiron's band once more, and passed on its way. The cries of "Death!" faded away in the distance as Lehiron's troop followed in the wake of the conquerors of the Bastille. It was the pack of jackals following the lions.

Desmarais gradually recovered from the state of rigid fright in which he was plunged, and cried out to Charlotte in a voice trembling with repressed rage:

"Unnatural daughter! Parricide! Did you hear the cries of death hurled at your father by those cannibals of Paris, who carry in triumph the head of Flesselles? These men, who perhaps quite soon will have made your father undergo the same torture, are the friends, the brothers of John Lebrenn. Your lover is, like them, an assassin. Horror upon all this revolted plebs!"

CHAPTER XII.

REUNITED FROM THE BASTILLE.

While advocate Desmarais was whelming his daughter with reproaches on the score of her love for John Lebrenn, the latter was at his mother's knee in their modest lodgings on the fourth floor of the old house in St. Honoré Street. In the larger of the two rooms composing the family's apartments, were to be seen two beds. One had never been occupied for years, since the day Ronan Lebrenn disappeared without a soul knowing what had become of him. The room also contained a sort of little bookshelf garnished with books printed with his own hand, a portable workbench at which John in the evenings finished up pieces belonging to his ironsmith's trade, tools, some little furniture, and a buffet of walnut-wood in which reposed the relics and legends of the family.

Madam, or Mother, Lebrenn, as she was called in the neighborhood, was nearly sixty years of age. Domestic griefs, rather than years, had enfeebled and ruined her health. Her venerable countenance was of an extreme pallor, and sadly sunken. The poor woman held in her hands the head of her son, kneeling before her. The aged mother stroked it several times, saying in a voice thrilled with emotion:

"Dear boy, you have come back to me at last. I can now reassure myself on the state of your wound. Helas! how great was my anguish during all the time of that frightful combat. The little note you sent me after the taking of the Bastille indeed calmed a little my terrors for you, but without stilling them completely. I feared lest, out of tenderness, you sought to deceive me as to the gravity of your hurt. Now I am coming to myself from my fears, and yet I still must hold you in my arms. Dear and only child whom God has left to a poor widow—how sweet it is for a mother to embrace her son!"

"Come, good mother, I see your spirit is still troubled by the pangs of this morning. But are you quite sure you are a widow? Am I truly your only child?"

"Helas! have not your father and sister both disappeared? Are they not lost forever to your poor mother?"

"But why should they not return to us some day?"

"Dear boy, if they lived, your father and sister whom you love so much, would we not have heard some news of them, even if it were impossible for them to come to us?"

"You are right, good mother. But you presume that it would have been possible for them to have sent us some intelligence of their fate. May we not suppose, though, that father was thrown into some state prison, and that he was deprived of all communication with the outside? So sad a supposition has nothing strange in it."

"In that case, my child, the prison would have proven your father's tomb, so frail was his health. We could not dare to hope that he would be able to surmount the rigors of his captivity."

"But it might also be, good mother, that the hope of seeing us some day may have helped him to endure his sufferings."

"Do not essay, dear boy, to raise in my heart hopes, which, deceived too soon, will but plunge me back again into despair. My dear husband is indeed lost to me, helas! As to your sister, we may well believe we shall never see her more. She also is lost to us. Without doubt she has sought in death a refuge from her anguish, since the fatal revelation of her earlier life to her fiance, Sergeant Maurice."

"Nothing has come to light so far to confirm your apprehensions on the subject of these afflictions—dear, good mother—"

"If my poor girl is not dead—what can have been her lot? I shudder even to think of it—misery, or dishonor!"

"I do not wish, good mother, to hold out to you hopes, which, when deceived, will revive your sorrow and seriously compromise your health, perhaps your life. But I believe I can without danger accustom you to the idea that my sister still lives, and has not ceased to be worthy of your affection; and also that father, after having languished long years in a prison pit, may still recover his liberty, and that we may see him.—That is a hope in my heart which I would cause you to share. Follow well my reasoning—"

"'Twould be too much happiness for me—I cannot believe it. And if I could believe it, I ask myself whether I have

the strength to bear so much joy. Rapture can kill, as well as grief, my dear son."

"And so, dear mother, if such events are to be told, I shall have recourse to roundabout methods to make you acquainted with such unhoped-for news. If it were about father—for example—I would say, that the victorious people penetrated into the Bastille to deliver the persons thrown into the dungeons, and that, among them, we found one who resembled father; that we seized the prison registrars and made them search in their registers for the records of a prisoner who was very dear to me, as it might have chanced that my father was among the number; that, in one of these registers, I read the date, 'April 22, 1783,' and right after it, 'No. 1297—incarcerated—upper tier—cell No. 18.'"

"April 22, 1783," repeated Madam Lebrenn pensively. "That is the day after your father disappeared."

"I would tell you that beside the date there was no name given for the prisoner, it being the usage to replace the name with a number. I would add, that, struck by the singular coincidence between the date and the time of father's disappearance, I went down to visit cell No. 18, as was indicated in the register—"

"And then?" exclaimed Madam Lebrenn feverishly, and with growing anxiety.

"The cell was empty. But they told me that the prisoner who occupied it was an old man grown blind, alas, during his confinement. I asked where they had taken the unfortunate man, and dashed off to seek him. Isn't this all interesting, mother?"

"Why do you break off your story? For I feel that your supposings are but preparations for some revelation that you are about to make. You look away from me—John, my boy, my dear boy!" cried Madam Lebrenn, reaching towards her son and making him turn his face up to her—"You weep! No more doubt of it—Lord God! the old man—was—he was—"

She could not finish. The word died on her lips, and she nearly swooned away. John, still kneeling before her, sustained her in his arms, saying: "Courage, good mother. Hear the end of my tale."

"Courage, say you? But you are deceiving me, then? It was not then—your father?"

"It was he! 'Twas indeed he whom I held in my arms. He lived—you shall see him soon. But, poor dear mother, have courage. We are not yet at the end of our trials."

"Since your father lives, courage is easy to me! Let them bring him to us quick!"

"Alas, you forget that in his dungeon father lost his sight. Besides, the weight of his irons, the humidity of his cell, have palsied, have paralyzed his limbs. He can hardly drag himself along."

"But he lives! Ah, well! His infirmities will render him more dear to us," cried Madam Lebrenn in lofty exaltation, and suddenly rising. "Let us go to meet him."

"One moment, good mother. They are bringing him to us. But I have still to prepare you for another piece of good fortune. You know the proverb, good mother, 'Good fortune never comes singly.' But, first, I want to acquaint you with the person who broke open father's cell, who freed him from his irons, and who bestowed upon him the simple cares that he long needed."

"Tell me, dear son, who was your father's liberator?"

"His liberator was a woman—an intrepid, heroic woman, who during the assault of the Bastille braved the fire of musketry and cannon and led the attackers, red flag in hand. Under a perfect hail of bullets she let down the drawbridge across one of the moats of the fortress, and was the first to run to the dungeons to free the prisoners. It was she who rescued father from his living grave."

"Blessed be that woman! I shall cherish her as a daughter!"

"That heroic woman, who is truly worthy of your love—is Victoria! Is that enough happiness for us? Father and sister, both have come home to your caresses. They are there, close to us, at our neighbor Jerome's, and await but the pre-arranged signal to come in."

And John Lebrenn, joining the action to the words, struck three blows on the wall.

The door flew open, and on the sill appeared father Lebrenn, leaning on one side on the arm of Victoria, on the other on that of neighbor Jerome. Madam Lebrenn, intoxicated with joy, flung herself into the arms of her husband and daughter.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LEBRENN FAMILY.

Thus reunited, the Lebrenn family gave themselves up to those sweetest of reminiscences, the recollections of sorrows now no more. The father recounted to his wife and children the tortures of his long captivity. Victoria retold the events in which she had been an actor since she had left them, not neglecting her affiliation with the sect of the

Voyants, or "Seeing Ones." Due tribute having been paid by the family to the civil cares of the day, the conversation turned upon their private interests.

John informed his father of his love for Charlotte Desmarais, and of the hope he cherished of soon uniting his destiny with hers. After listening attentively to his son, the old man said, in a voice marked with sadness:

"Alas, my dear John, I augur no good of your love. Advocate Desmarais is rich; he belongs to the bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie, like the nobility, has its arrogance, its haughtiness. I much doubt whether he will give his consent to the marriage."

"That would have been true before, good father," replied John. "But ideas have changed of late years; great progress has been made during your sad imprisonment. People and bourgeoisie are now but one party, united by the same interests, by the same hopes, and both resolved on ending the privileges of our enemies, royalty, the Church, and the nobility. The bourgeoisie has learned that in the struggle it has joined with the monarchy, it has but one support, the people. If it is the head, we are the arms. The Third Estate possesses the shining lights, the wealth; but we, of the seed of the people, we have the numbers, the force, the courage. And then, to accomplish the revolution, our co-operation is absolutely necessary to the bourgeoisie. They must count on the workingmen, the proletariat. We have the power and the right."

"Perhaps, my son. Yet, social prejudices are not effaced in a day. And for a long time to come, I fear, the bourgeois will see between himself and the artisan the same distance which separates him, the bourgeois, from the nobility."

"Nevertheless, my friend," interposed Madam Lebrenn, "Monsieur Desmarais has always received our son on a footing of equality, calling him friend, and inviting him to pass his evenings with him. He has heaped upon our son many marks of his gratitude."

"Marks of gratitude, Marianne? For what?" asked the blind man. "What service has our son done Monsieur Desmarais? Or is his friendship disinterested?"

"I did my best to insure his election to the States General," replied the young artisan.

"So," said the old man, thoughtfully, "advocate Desmarais owes his election to your efforts, to your exertions?"

"He owes it to his merit, to his value. I only suggested Monsieur Desmarais to those of our fellow citizens who had confidence in me, and all acclaimed him."

"In short, you powerfully aided in his election. I am no longer astonished that he treats you as a friend, an equal. But it is a far cry, my son, from words to acts. I doubt the sincerity of this lawyer's affection."

"That doubt would never enter your thoughts, good father, if you knew the excellent man. If you had heard him inveigh, as I have, against the distinctions of birth and fortune—"

"Perhaps he had in mind only the privileges of the nobility," observed Victoria, who until then had remained grave and silent. "The prejudices of the Third Estate are tenacious."

"I should add, dearest sister, that he idolizes his daughter so, that to see her happy, he would sacrifice all the prejudices of his class—even if he were still under their influence, which I can not believe. I am well assured of that."

"And his daughter is an angel," added Madam Lebrenn. "I have seen and can appreciate her."

"The excellence of our son's choice is not doubted," replied the old man, half convinced. "And, after all, it may be that Monsieur Desmarais does belong to that portion of the bourgeoisie which sees in the proletariat, disinherited for so many centuries, a brother to be guided and helped along the path of emancipation. If such is the case, my son, your marriage with Mademoiselle Desmarais may be consummated, and become the joy of my old age."

"Brother," asked Victoria, "has Mademoiselle Desmarais informed her family of this projected union?"

"At our last meeting, she assured me that she would soon broach the subject to her mother, and inform her that she had pledged me her faith, as I have mine to her. But I can not yet tell you whether the confidence has been made."

"Does Mademoiselle Desmarais seem to have any doubts as to the consent of her relatives?"

"Among those relatives there is an uncle, Hubert, a rich banker, who without doubt will oppose the project. This moneyed bourgeois entertains for the working class the most supreme contempt. But the violence of his opinions has brought about a rupture between him and Monsieur Desmarais. As to the latter and his wife, Mademoiselle Charlotte has no doubt of their consent, by reason of the affection and esteem they have always evinced for me."

"Brother," continued Victoria after a moment's reflection, "I counsel you, make your demand for the hand of Mademoiselle Charlotte this very day. I base my advice on urgent grounds. If Monsieur Desmarais really sees in you a friend, an equal, if his devotion to the people and the revolution is sincere, the glory you have won at the taking of the Bastille can not but plead in your favor; his consent will be given immediately. On the contrary, if his protestations of love for the people have been but a mask of hypocrisy, it is better to know at once how to regard him; in that case, he will repulse you, or will evade giving you a direct answer. It is not merely a question of your love, brother, but of our cause—of a grave responsibility that weighs upon you. Your friends placed their faith in you when you asked their votes for Monsieur Desmarais; you owe it to them, now that the occasion presents itself, to make a decisive test, and assure yourself whether the convictions expressed by Monsieur Desmarais are sincere. If he refuses you the hand of his daughter, it shows that he is with us from the lips only, not from the heart. In that case, it will be proven that advocate Desmarais is a hypocrite and a traitor! Would not then your duty, your honor, brother, demand that you unmask the double-dealer?"

"Nothing more just than what Victoria has said," declared the old man. "You should, my son, go this very day and

lay your suit before Monsieur Desmarais."

John thought for an instant, and answered: "You are right, father. My line of conduct is mapped out for me. I go at once to Monsieur Desmarais's, and formally present my request for the hand of Charlotte."

"Brother," interposed Victoria, suppressing a sigh, "have you informed Monsieur Desmarais fully on our father's disappearance? He should know all that relates to that mournful event."

"Monsieur Desmarais knows that immediately upon the publication of a hand-bill by father, he disappeared, and that we believed him dead or shut up in some state prison. He even knows the contents of the pamphlet which father wrote, and often has he shed tears in my presence when speaking of the disgrace of which you were a victim at the hands of Louis XV."

A bitter smile contracted Victoria's lips, and she replied, "My father hid the truth in what he wrote, in order to stigmatize the first crime, and he threw a veil over the consequences of my dishonor. Have you raised the veil which covered my life? Did you speak of the series of assaults of which I was the victim?"

"Sister," answered John Lebrenn, "out of respect for our family, I did not inform Monsieur Desmarais of the consequences of that first royal dishonor. I merely told him that you had been snatched from us, the same as my father, and that we knew not what had become of you. My confidences did not extend beyond that."

"Your reserve was wise and prudent, dear brother. Continue to guard my secret from Monsieur Desmarais and his daughter. For them, as for all who know you, I must remain as dead."

"Let it be as you desire, sister. But the dissimulation weighs on my heart like an act of cowardice."

"The dissimulation is necessary to-day, brother, but it will not last forever. When you shall have a deeper knowledge of the character of your wife; after some years of marriage and motherhood shall have ripened her judgment, then, and only then, you may make to her a complete confidence of my past. Until then, I must remain dead to her, as to all—except you three and one other of our relatives, the Prince of Gerolstein, my initiator into the Voyants. Dead I shall be to the world, but living to you and to Franz of Gerolstein."

"This Franz of Gerolstein," asked Victoria's father, "is he not one of the princes of that sovereign house of Germany founded of old by the descendants of our ancestor Gaëlo the Pirate?"

"Yes, father; the heir to a reigning prince was to-day one of the most fearless attackers of the Bastille."

At this moment a knock was heard at the door.

"Enter," cried John, and to the astonished eyes of the Lebrenn family appeared Franz of Gerolstein. In the Prince, whom Victoria had just named, John recognized one of his fellow-combatants of the day.

"Franz, here is my brother, of whom I have often spoken to you," said Victoria, taking John's hand and pressing it into that of the Prince. "You are relatives—now be friends. You are both worthy, one of the other. Both march in the same path."

"My dear John—for so it is that friends and relatives of the same age should greet," answered Franz with cordial familiarity, affectionately closing in his own hand that of the young artisan, "I know through your sister all the good that can be thought of you. That will tell you how glad I am to meet you."

"I also, my dear Franz, am happy to find in you a relative and a friend," John made answer, no less affectionately than the Prince. "Chance has made you of the sovereign race, yet you fight for the freedom of the people."

"My dear John, I am, like you, a son of Joel, the brenn of the tribe of Karnak. More than once, across the ages, the republican ardor of the old Gallic blood has roused itself in my plebeian race—although, by an uncouth stroke of destiny, it has been muffled under a sovereignship and a grand-ducal crown."

"Aye, we are indeed of the same blood—your words, your acts prove it," said the blind father. "Your hand—let me also press your hand, my brave young man."

Franz stepped toward Monsieur Lebrenn. "I am deeply sensible of these marks of fatherly good-will," he said. "They console me for the rigors of my own father, who has banished me from his presence and forbade me from his states."

"What can have been the cause of such severity!" rejoined the old man in surprise. "What is your crime?"

"My crime?" replied Franz, with a slight smile. "My crime consists in attaching scant weight to our sovereignty. I tried more than once to bring my father to more just, more modest appreciation of our origin. 'Did not our family,' I said to him, 'come into its power through the audacity of an adventurer? May the earth lie light on our ancestor Gaëlo! But he was the companion and pupil of old Rolf, a frightful bandit, who, each spring, came to ravage the banks of the Loire and the Seine.' My father's answer was that all the crowned heads of the world, big or little, were sprung from no less savage a beginning. To which I retorted that there would come the day when the people, enlightened as to the origin of their pretended masters, would tire of being the exploitable property, the forced laborers, the chattels of a few royal families whose founders were fit for the galleys or the gibbet; and that I feared for kings, princes, emperors and Popes lest, by some terrible reversal of things here below, the people, driven to the limit of endurance, should treat them as their august founders deserved, and the most of them to this very day deserve to be treated."

"In good sooth," said John Lebrenn, laughing, "that language was surely severe for a Prince to hold—and to monarchs!"

"So, my dear John, my father grew furious at my language. In fine, I concluded by urging him to set a great example to the other princes of the Germanic Confederation, by laying aside his grand-duchy. 'Lay aside,' I said to

him, 'a power stained with crime in its very origin, and lead the people of your states and the other German principalities to unite in a republic like the cantons of the Swiss, or the provinces of the Netherlands. The Poles, the Hungarians, the Moldavians, the Wallachians, enslaved by Prussia, by Russia and by Austria, but trained to republicanism by their old elective customs, will soon be attracted by the example and the cry of liberty! Then the three last powerful despotisms of Europe—Prussia, Austria, and Russia—will find themselves hemmed in, threatened by free peoples, and we shall soon have an end of these last lairs of royalty!'"

"That was preparing for the future!" the old man exclaimed. "The United States of Europe! The Universal Republic!"

"But my father preferred to hang to his throne," continued Franz. "Then convinced of the futility of my appeals, and holding the duty of a citizen in precedence over that of a son, I passed from word to action. With all my power and by every means at my disposal I propagated in Germany, its cradle, the society of the Illuminati; my father banished me."

"Your account of yourself, Monsieur Gerolstein, deepens still more the esteem in which I needs must hold you," nodded the old man.

"These words of regard are doubly precious, Monsieur Lebrenn. They shall add their bonds to those of the relationship already existent between us. It is in the name of those very bonds that I am about to reveal to you one of the motives of my visit—a cordial offer of my services. It is a blood-relation, it is a friend who speaks, Monsieur Lebrenn; do not then, I beg of you, yield to a susceptibility in itself honorable, but perhaps exaggerated. You were a printer. For long your labor provided for the wants of your family. But now you have lost your sight in prison; you are feeble. Madam Lebrenn is old. What are to be your resources against the material needs of existence?"

"My health, thanks to God, is not so weakened that I can no longer work," replied Madam Lebrenn brightly. "The presence of my husband will double my strength."

"And I, mother," added John, "am I not here by you? Reassure yourself, Franz, my father and mother shall want for nothing. We are, nevertheless, deeply sensible of your offer. We thank you, but we decline, firmly."

"John, allow me to interrupt you," began the Prince. "I know from your sister what an industrious and skilful workman you are. But, please you, let us look at the situation together. Have you been able to go to your shop for the last four days? Considering the great events close at hand, of which the taking of the Bastille is but the precursor and sign, can you count on the full disposition of your time? The struggle once engaged between the nation and the royal power, will it not continue impetuous, implacable? Is it at a season when the liberty of the people trembles in the balance that you ought to abandon the field of battle? And still your family must live, and it can only live by your daily labor."

"Often have I said," exclaimed Victoria, "that the people has never had the time to complete the revolutions it began! or else, if they were accomplished promptly, decisively and overwhelmingly, the time has always been lacking to defend the conquest, to maintain it, consolidate it, and fructify it. The people's enemies, on the other hand, gentlemen of leisure, free from care, kings, priests, nobles or tax-farmers, have awaited, under cover, the certain hour to ravish from the people the benefits of its short-lived conquest."

"Alas, it is but too true," assented her father. "The time has always been lacking—the time and the money."

"Such is the fatal verity!" continued Gerolstein. "Would that verity could convince the people that if they can, which is rarely the case, make some little savings from their meager pay, it is not at the tavern they should spend them. For those savings of the worker should, when the day arrives, insure to him a portion of the necessary leisure to emancipate himself. And if he has been able to put aside nothing, he is in error to yield to an exaggerated scruple of delicacy and repulse the aid fraternally offered to him by his friends in order that he may be assured one of the means to clinch his victory."

"A singular occurrence which I witnessed this morning," responded the young artisan, "strikingly reinforces your argument. One of my friends, a journeyman carpenter, and several others of our comrades, were gathered at break of day in the neighborhood of the Bastille, awaiting the signal for the attack. A man simply clad, and with an open countenance, accosted them: 'Brothers,' said he, 'you go to-day to fight for your liberty. It is your duty. But to-day you will not go to your shops, and will earn nothing. If you have families, how will they live to-morrow? If you are bachelors, what will you live on yourselves? Allow then, one of your unknown friends to come to your aid as a brother. It is not an alms that I offer; I only assure you your leisure for this great day, by delivering you from your cares for the morrow.'"

"That 'unknown friend' was the banker Anacharsis Clootz, the treasurer of the Voyants, and rich enough in his own name to aid our brothers for a long time to come," explained Franz in an undertone to Victoria, without interrupting John, who continued:

"My comrades accepted the offer so delicately made, without much hesitation."

"Now, Monsieur Lebrenn, can you still shrink from accepting, as John does, my tenders of service?"

"No, Monsieur Gerolstein, neither I nor my son will hesitate any further in accepting your generous offer, should there arise any necessity of falling back upon it," replied the father of the house.

"John," said Victoria, suddenly, "it is growing late. Go at once to Monsieur Desmarais, who is liable at any moment to leave for Versailles. Your plan must not be altered."

"True," answered the young man with a shudder. "The project is now doubly important. I must to it without delay."

"My friends, you know advocate Desmarais, deputy of the Third Estate in the States General?" asked Franz of Gerolstein. "He is reputed a good citizen and a friend of the revolution."

"We all believe that Monsieur Desmarais is not one of those suspicious and craven bourgeois who tremble at the revolution," John answered, as he made toward the door. Then he returned—"Till we meet again, Franz, I hope; meseems we are already old friends."

"Franz will await here the result of your visit, brother," said Victoria.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BOURGEOIS UNMASKED.

Monsieur Desmarais, still affected by the cries uttered by Lehiron's mob and unable to account for the apparently sudden revulsion of the sentiments entertained for him by the people, was earnestly conversing with his wife and her brother, Monsieur Hubert. The latter he had summoned to his side to consult on the weighty resolves he felt forced to take, both on the score of his daughter, and on the line of policy which he should adopt to ride the gathering political storm.

Monsieur Hubert, Desmarais's brother-in-law and a rich banker of Paris, was a very honest man, in the accepted sense of honesty in the commercial jargon; that is to say, he scrupulously fulfilled his engagements, and never loaned his money at higher rates than the law allowed. At heart he was dry; his spirit was jealous and sinister. A man of inflexible opinions, he nursed an equal aversion for the clergy, the nobility, and the proletariat. He regarded the Third Estate as called to reign under the nominal authority of a constitutional head, an emperor or king, whom he called a "pig in clover," in imitation of the English; the intervention of the people in public affairs he considered the height of absurdity. Monsieur Hubert lived in the St. Thomas of the Louvre quarter, a quarter hostile to the revolution, where he had recently been promoted to the grade of commander of the battalion. This battalion, called the "Daughters of St. Thomas of the Louvre," was almost entirely composed of royalists. The banker was about fifty years of age; of slight build, one could see in his physiognomy, in his glance, that in him nervous force supplied the place of physical energy. At this moment he was plunged in a deep silence. His sister and Monsieur Desmarais seemed to hang with an uneasy curiosity on the result of the financier's reflections. The latter at length seemed to have reached the end of his cogitation, for he raised his head and said sardonically:

"In the light of your confidences, dear brother-in-law, I can only remind you that four months ago I told you you were wrong to let yourself be dragged into what you called the 'cause of the people.' My sincerity caused a sort of break between us, but at your first call, you see me back again. My previsions have been fulfilled. To-day the populace has been unchained, and I see you all struck with fright at the cries of death that have rung in your ears."

"My dear Hubert," replied Desmarais, restraining his impatience, but interrupting the financier, "please, do not let us concern ourselves with politics now. We begged you to come to our aid with your advice; you put to one side our disagreement; we thank you. So please you then, help us to recall to her senses our unworthy daughter, who is madly smitten with an ironsmith's apprentice, our neighbor, whom you have several times met in our house."

"Very well then, my dear Desmarais; let us put aside politics for the moment. Nevertheless, since we are concerned with the unworthy love of my niece for that artisan, I must, indeed, recall to your mind that I have often reproached you for your intimacy with the young fellow. To-day, a grave peril menaces you. Your regrets are tardy."

"My dear Hubert, we waste precious time in vain recriminations of the past. Unfortunately, what is done, is done. Let us speak, I pray you, of the present. My wife and I, in order to cut short this attachment of Charlotte for John Lebrenn, have decided to take our daughter with us to Versailles. What do you think of that resolution?"

"That it will not accomplish the object you seek. Versailles is too near to Paris. If your man is as persevering as enamored—not of Charlotte, but of her fortune, for, do not mistake, the fellow is after nothing but her dower—he will find a way to meet her. My advice would be to send Mademoiselle Charlotte, instantly, a hundred leagues from Paris, to throw this lover off the track. Send her, say, to Lyons, to our cousin Dusommier; my sister will accompany her and remain beside her until this puppy-love is forgotten. A month or two will do for that."

"Your advice, brother, seems wise. But I fear that Charlotte will not consent to the trip."

"Heavens, sister! Is paternal authority an empty word! A flightabout of seventeen years to dare disobey the orders of her parents? That is not probable, surely. Have some strength."

"But it is well to be prepared for everything. Let us suppose this case—she refuses to obey—"

"In that case, brother-in-law, willy-nilly, bundle Mademoiselle Charlotte into the stage for Lyons—then, whip up, coachman!"

Just then Gertrude the servant entered and said: "Monsieur John Lebrenn desires to speak with monsieur on a very pressing matter. He is in the vestibule."

"What! The wretch still has the audacity to present himself here!" cried Hubert, purple with rage.

"He does not know that my daughter has revealed their engagement; and besides—a while ago—" stammered Desmarais, turning red with confusion, "I had to give him a cordial greeting."

"Yes, brother," said Madam Desmarais, coming to the aid of her husband, "a while ago, a column returning from

the Bastille, commanded by John Lebrenn, halted before our house, shouting 'Long live Citizen Desmarais! Long live the friend of the people!'"

"And so, I had to bow to necessity," acknowledged the lawyer. "I was forced to harangue the insurgents."

"Wonderful, brother-in-law, wonderful!" retorted Hubert, with a burst of cutting laughter. "The lesson and the punishment are complete!"

"My friend—if you receive this young man, be calm, I conjure you," said Madam Desmarais uneasily to the lawyer. "Refuse him politely."

"Death of my life! my poor sister, have you not a drop of blood in your veins?"

"Brother, I beg of you, do not speak so loud. John Lebrenn is even now, perhaps, in the dining room."

"Ah, heaven, if he is there—so much the better! And since no one here dares speak outright to one of the famous conquerors of the Bastille, I take it upon myself," cried Hubert still louder, his eyes glaring with anger, and starting for the door of the room.

But Madam Desmarais, alarmed and suppliant, seized the financier by the arm, exclaiming in a trembling voice, "Brother, I beg you! Oh, God, have pity on us!"

Hubert yielded to the prayers of his sister and stopped just as Desmarais, emerging from his revery, said to his wife with a sigh of relief, "Dear friend, I have hit upon quite a plausible way, in case Monsieur Lebrenn has the impudence to ask for our daughter's hand, to reject his demand without giving him anything to be offended at. I shall refuse him without irritating him."

"Another cowardice that you are meditating," cried Hubert, exasperated. "Let me receive your workingman!"

"I thank you, brother-in-law, for your offer. Please leave me alone. I shall know how to guard my dignity." Then, addressing Gertrude.

"Show Monsieur Lebrenn in."

"We shall leave you, my friend," said Madam Lebrenn to her husband. "Come, brother, let us find Charlotte. I count on your influence to dissuade her from this match, and to bring her back to herself."

Hubert took the arm of his sister, and left the room; but not without saying to himself as he did so, "By heaven, I shall not lose the opportunity of speaking my mind to that workingman, if only for the honor of the family. I shall have my chance to talk."

As the wife and brother-in-law of lawyer Desmarais disappeared through one of the side-doors of the room, John Lebrenn was shown in by Gertrude through the principal entrance. Desmarais, at the sight of John, controlled and hid his anger under a mask of cordial hospitality. He took two steps to meet the young man, and clasped him affectionately by the hand:

"With what pleasure do I see you again, my dear friend! Your hurt, I hope, is not serious? We were quite alarmed about you."

"Thanks to God, my wound is slight; and I am truly touched by the interest you show in me."

"Nothing surprising, my dear John. Do you not know that I am your friend?"

"It is just to throw myself upon your friendship that I have come to see you."

"Well, well! And what is it?"

"It is my duty at this solemn moment to answer you without circumlocution, monsieur," said John Lebrenn in a voice filled with emotion. "I love your daughter. She has returned my love, and I am come to ask of you her hand."

"What do I hear!" exclaimed advocate Desmarais, feigning extreme surprise.

"Mademoiselle Charlotte, I am certain, will approve the request that I now prefer to you, and which accords with the sentiments she has shown me."

"So, my dear John," continued the attorney with a paternal air that seemed to augur the best for the young workman, "my daughter and you—you love, and you have sworn to belong to each other? So stands the situation?"

"Six months ago, Monsieur Desmarais, we pledged ourselves to each other."

"After all, there is nothing in this love that should surprise me," continued Desmarais, as if talking to himself. "Charlotte has a hundred times heard me appreciate, as they deserve to be, the character, the intelligence, the excellent conduct of our dear John. She knows that I recognize no social distinction between man and man, except only that of worth. All are equal in my eyes, whatever the accidents of their birth or fortune. Nothing more natural—I should rather say, nothing more inevitable—than this love of my daughter for my young and worthy friend."

"Ah, monsieur," cried the young mechanic, his eyes filling with tears and his voice shaken with inexpressible gratitude, "you consent, then, to our union?"

"Well!" replied Monsieur Desmarais, continuing to affect imperturbable good-fellowship, "if the marriage pleases my daughter, it shall be according to her desire. I would not go against her wishes."

"Oh, please, monsieur, ask mademoiselle at once!"

"It is needless, my dear John, perfectly needless; for, between ourselves, a thousand circumstances until now

insignificant now flock to my memory. There is no necessity for my questioning my daughter Charlotte to know that she loves you as much as you love her, my young friend. I am already convinced of it!"

"Hold, monsieur—pardon me, I can hardly believe what I hear. Words fail me to express my joy, my gratitude, my surprise!"

"And what, my dear John, have you to be surprised at?"

"At seeing this marriage meet with not a single objection on your part, monsieur. I am astonished, in the midst of my joy. The language so touching, so flattering, in which you frame your consent, doubles its value to me."

"Good heaven! And nothing is more simple than my conduct. Neither I nor my wife—I answer to you for her consent—can raise any objection to your marriage. Is it the question of fortune? I am rich, you are poor—what does that matter? Is the value of men measured by the franc mark? Is not, in short, your family as honorable, in other words, as virtuous as mine, my dear John? Are not both our families equally without reproach and without stain? Are not—"

And Desmarais stopped as if smitten with a sudden and terrible recollection. His features darkened, and expressed a crushing sorrow. He hid his face in his hands and murmured:

"Great God! What a frightful memory! Ah, unhappy young man! Unhappy father that I am!"

Apparently overcome, Desmarais threw himself into an arm-chair, still holding his hands before his eyes as if to conceal his emotion. Stunned and alarmed, John Lebrenn gazed at the lawyer with inexpressible anguish. A secret presentiment flashed through his mind, and he said to Charlotte's father as he drew closer to him, "Monsieur, explain the cause of the sudden emotion under which I see you suffering."

"Leave me, my poor friend, leave me! I am annihilated, crushed!"

John Lebrenn, more and more uneasy, contemplated Charlotte's father in silent anguish, and failed to notice that one of the side doors of the room was half-opened by Monsieur Hubert, who warily put his head through the crack, muttering to himself, "While my sister and her daughter are in their apartment, let me see what is going on here, where my intervention may come in handy."

After a long silence which John feared to break, advocate Desmarais rose. He pretended to wipe away a tear, then, stretching out his arms to John, he said in a smothered voice:

"My friend, we are very unfortunate."

The young artisan, already much moved by the anxieties the scene had aroused, responded to Desmarais's appeal. He threw himself into the latter's arms, saying solicitously:

"Monsieur, what ails you? I know not the cause of the chagrin, which, all so sudden, seems to have struck you; but, whatever it be, I shall fight it with all my spirit."

"Your tender compassion, my friend, gives me consolation and comfort," said Desmarais in a broken voice, pressing John several times to his heart; and seeming to make a violent effort to master himself, he resumed in firmer tones, "Come, my friend, courage. We shall need it, you and I, to touch upon so sad a matter."

"Monsieur, I know not what you are about to say, and yet I tremble."

"Ah, at least, my dear John, our friendship will still be left to us. It will remain our refuge in our common sorrow."

"But to what purpose?"

Perceiving out of the corner of his eye the nonplussed countenance of John Lebrenn, who stood pale and speechless, advocate Desmarais heaved another lamentable sigh, pulled out his handkerchief and again buried his face in his hands.

"What the devil is my brother-in-law getting at?" exclaimed Hubert to himself, cautiously introducing his head again through the half-open door, and observing the young artisan. The latter, dejected, his head bowed, his gaze fixed, was in a sort of daze, and searched in vain in his troubled brain for the true significance of Desmarais's lamentations. Finally, desirous at any price to escape from the labyrinth of anxiety that tortured his soul and filled his heart with anguish, he said falteringly to the lawyer:

"Monsieur, it is impossible for me to picture the apprehension with which I am tortured. I adjure you, in the name of the friendship you have up to this moment shown me, to explain yourself clearly. What is this cause for our common sorrow? You have just appealed to my courage; I have courage. But, I pray you, let me at least know the blow with which I, with which we, are threatened!"

"You are right, my dear John. Excuse my weakness. Let us face the truth like men of heart, howsoever hard it may be." Desmarais took the hands of the young artisan in his own and contemplated him with an expression of fatherly tenderness. "You would have rendered certain the happiness of my only child, of that I am sure. But this marriage is impossible!"

Seeing the young artisan, at these words, grow mortally pale, and stagger, the lawyer supported him, and continued in his mock-paternal voice: "John, I counted on you to help us bear the blow that was to fall on us. Now you weaken—"

Young Lebrenn pulled himself together, summoned back his spirits, and in a voice which he strove hard to render firm, said: "Now I am calmer. Be pleased to inform me how these projects of marriage, first hailed by you with such kindness, are now suddenly become impossible?"

"Helas!—because of all the joy—which your proposal heaped upon me, I forgot, as you did—a sad circumstance. And then, all of a sudden the memory—came back to me. Your family—is it, like mine, stainless? Alas, no! Your father wrote—printed—published a pamphlet in which he recorded that his daughter—your sister—had been the mistress of King Louis XV. You know my susceptibility where honor is concerned! My daughter may never enter the family which bears that indelible blot."

"Ah, by my faith! The trick is great!" muttered Hubert, the financier, stepping out of the neighboring room and slowly entering the parlor without at first being perceived by either John Lebrenn or Desmarais.

Hearing only the words of the father of his beloved one, John at first reeled with dismay. But his good sense quickly coming to his aid, and remembering the doubts of his father and Victoria as to Desmarais's consent to his daughter's union with an ironsmith's apprentice, he detected the refusal hypocritically veiled under the excuse employed by the advocate. Cruel was the young man's disillusionment. It dashed at once his dearest hopes, and his confidence, until then implicit, in the sincerity of the principles professed by the deputy of the Third Estate. The double shock was so severe that John, refusing, like all generous characters, to believe evil, began to cast about for excuses for the advocate's conduct. The following thought sprang up in his head: Perhaps Desmarais had learned of the consequences of the debauchery of Louis XV; perhaps he knew that Victoria had been held in the lupanar in King Louis's "Doe Park," and had later been imprisoned in the Repentant Women. If he knew all this, John thought, Desmarais could not help, as Victoria had told him, but refuse, upon a very pardonable scruple, to grant him his daughter.

Preserving, then, his hope, not indeed of overcoming the objections of Charlotte's father, but of being saved from having to regard him as a double-dealer and a traitor, John controlled his emotions, raised his head, and turned his eyes square upon Desmarais. Only then did he perceive the presence of banker Hubert, the sight of whom always inspired him with the profoundest antipathy. Surprised and pained, above all, at the presence of this personage at so delicate a juncture, John remarked that the financier conversed in a low and sardonic voice with his brother-in-law.

"Monsieur," said John to Desmarais, "you will recognize, I hope, that our interview is of such a nature that it can not continue except between you and me?"

"From which it seems that Citizen John Lebrenn politely shows me the door!" retorted Hubert, with a mocking leer.

"Sir," impatiently answered the young mechanic, "I desire to remain alone with Monsieur Desmarais, to discuss family matters."

"I would beg to remark to—Citizen John Lebrenn, that my brother-in-law has no secrets from me, in what touches the honor of our family. I shall, therefore, assist at this conference."

Desmarais, at first highly opposed to the unforeseen presence of the banker, soon resigned himself gracefully to the intrusion, hoping to find in it a pretext for hastening to an end an interview which was becoming quite embarrassing to him. Accordingly, he made haste to say very affectionately to the young artisan:

"My dear friend, I have acquainted you with the cause which bars a marriage that would otherwise have been the embodiment of my views. Let us never again refer to a subject justly so painful to us both."

"Pardon me, monsieur," returned the young workman firmly; "but before taking my leave of you, I have just one more question to ask, and which you will please to answer."

"Speak, my dear John, what is it?"

"You refuse me the hand of Mademoiselle Charlotte because my sister was the mistress of Louis XV?"

"Alack, yes. Your father himself, without naming, it is true, his daughter, stigmatized, denounced to the public indignation that horrible fact. He told how your unfortunate sister, having been kidnapped at the age of eleven and a half, left the Doe Park only to disappear forever. Since that sad day, no one has ever heard of the poor creature, who embarked in all probability for America, there to await the end of her unhappy life. That is my opinion."

"So, monsieur, you share our belief on the subject of my sister's disappearance? The victim has been sacrificed?"

"Eh, surely! But whence your insistence on the subject, my dear John?"

The voice, the features of the lawyer proved his sincerity. He was manifestly ignorant of Victoria's prolonged sojourn in the royal pleasure-house at Versailles, and her subsequent imprisonment in the Repentant Women—fatal circumstances, which in John's mind, might have explained Desmarais's refusal. The last illusion that John Lebrenn still hugged to heart now vanished. But containing his indignation, he addressed the advocate: "And so, monsieur, my marriage with Mademoiselle Charlotte is impossible, solely because my sister, snatched from the bosom of her family by a procuress at the age of eleven, was violated by Louis XV?"

"Is not that good and sufficient cause?"

"And is not Citizen Lebrenn satisfied?" put in Hubert, who for several minutes had been with difficulty bottling up his rage. "The dismissal is given in good form, by heaven! You have nothing to do but retire."

"Please, my dear John, attach no importance to the temper of my brother-in-law," interposed advocate Desmarais, extending his hand to the young man. "Excuse, I beseech you, his thrusts; I should be very sorry to have you depart from my house under a false impression."

"Citizen Desmarais, I long trusted in your friendship," replied John, without taking the hand that the lawyer held out to him. "I am not the dupe of the vain pretext with which you color your refusal. It is not the brother of the unhappy child dishonored by Louis XV that you repulse; it is the artisan, the ironsmith."

"Ah, my dear John, I protest, in the name of our common principles, against such a supposition. You are in error!"

"Blue death! brother-in-law, have the courage of your opinion!" shouted Hubert, unable to contain himself. "Dare to tell the truth! Such hypocrisy and cowardice revolt me."

"Once more, brother-in-law, mix in your own affairs!" cried the advocate, exasperated. "I know what I am saying! I find intolerable your pretension to dictate my answers to me."

John Lebrenn turned to the financier, as if to address his words through him to the lawyer. "You, Citizen Hubert, are sincere in your aversion, in your disdain for us. You are an enemy of the working class, but an open one. We can esteem you while we join battle with you. You are a man of courage, in spite of your prejudices. Alas, the people and the bourgeoisie, united and pursuing the same object, would be invincible and would change the face of this old world. But the bourgeois mistrust the workers and turn against them, when they should sustain them, guide them, direct them in the uprisings whose object is the reconquest of their common rights. The people have so far borne witness by their conduct to their affection, their trust in the bourgeoisie. They have had, they will have faith in it to the end. But sad and irreparable will be the evil for you and for us, if one day the bourgeoisie, having utilized the people to overcome the nobility, should seek to reign in the shadow of a fictitious royalty; to substitute its own privileges for those we will have helped it to overthrow; to perjure itself by merely changing the style of our yoke; and refuse to satisfy our legitimate demands. That day, we shall fight the bastard royalty of the shekel, the bourgeois oligarchy, even as we now fight the royalty of divine right and the aristocracy!"

"And hunger will defeat you, vile mechanics! For the moment always comes when you must resume the yoke of forced labor!"

Hardly had Hubert hurled this threat of savage exultation at John Lebrenn, when the door flew open, and Charlotte, her eyes red and filled with tears, rushed in, followed by her mother.

The change in Charlotte's features, her grief-stricken appearance, gripped John Lebrenn's heart as if in a vise. Lawyer Desmarais and his brother-in-law seemed as much irritated as astonished at the presence of the young girl. She, after a momentary struggle, spoke straight to Desmarais in a firm and even voice:

"I have just learned from mother that Monsieur John Lebrenn came to ask of you my hand, and that your intention was to answer the request with a refusal—"

"Yes, niece," interjected Hubert, "your father has just now refused your hand to Monsieur Lebrenn. We all oppose the union, which would be a disgrace to our family."

"Father, have you so made up your mind?"

"Daughter, reasons which it is useless to inform you of, oppose, indeed, this marriage. I can not give my consent to it."

"Do these reasons attaint, in any way, the honor, probity, or conduct of Monsieur John Lebrenn?" asked the young girl unfalteringly.

"Monsieur Lebrenn is an upright man; but the lawyer Desmarais can not give, will not give, his daughter in marriage to an ironsmith's apprentice. It is out of all reason."

"So, then, father, you refuse for no other reason than prejudice against the inequality of condition between Monsieur Lebrenn and me?"

"No other reason; but that suffices to make this union impossible."

"Monsieur John Lebrenn," then said Charlotte, advancing toward the young artisan and tendering him her hand with a gesture full of grace and dignity, "in the presence of God, who sees me and hears me,—you have my pledge! I shall wed none other but you. I shall be your wife,—or die a maid."

"Adieu, Charlotte, thou love of my life. I, too, shall be till death true to my promise. Let us have faith in the future to break down all barriers."

The betrothed exchanged a tender hand-clasp, and Charlotte, followed by her mother, left the room; while John Lebrenn, bowing to Monsieur Desmarais and his brother-in-law, withdrew without a word.

CHAPTER XV.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE PEOPLE.

While the Lebrenn family patiently awaited the outcome of John's visit to advocate Desmarais, the blind old father, restored once more to his humble hearth, was eager, if not to see—that faculty had long been snatched from him—at least to touch again his beloved family relics, carefully locked, along with their accompanying legends, in the walnut cabinet. The Prince of Gerolstein was smitten with lively emotion as Victoria deposited on the table, together with the parchments, or the papers yellowed with age, those objects so precious to the family by reason of the memories interwoven with them.

"Oh! Franz," said Victoria to the Prince with emotion, after having contemplated at length the sacred relics transmitted in her family from generation to generation for eighteen hundred years and more, "what touching souvenirs! What woes, what miseries, what iniquities, what acts of oppression, what tortures, are recalled to our memory by these inanimate objects, witnesses of the age-long martyrdom of our plebeian family. Malediction on our oppressors—Kings, men of the Church, men of the sword!"

"Alas, our sad history is that of all enslaved people, oppressed from age to age since the Frankish conquest," replied Franz of Gerolstein. "If one should dare to doubt the right of this decisive and holy Revolution which the taking of the Bastille this day ushers into being, would not that right be proven by these legends inscribed in the tears and blood of our fathers? What a heritage past generations hand down to the present!"

"Perhaps the moment has come to act on the view expressed by our ancestor Christian the printer," observed Monsieur Lebrenn. "He was of the opinion that sooner or later it would be of value to publish our legends, as a work of historic instruction for our brothers of the people, kept till now in the densest ignorance concerning their own true history."

"Nothing, in truth, could be more opportune. Aye, these tales, published now under the title of the MYSTERIES OF THE PEOPLE, would have a powerful influence on the spirit of the masses."

"The Society of Jesus is in our days still as active as of old," added Victoria, thinking of her encounter with Abbot Morlet the previous evening. "Facile in all disguises, the adepts of that body will without doubt, as in the days of the League, take on the popular mask, in order to drive the people to excesses and smother their cause under the results of their own misguided exasperation. The recommendation of Loyola, relative to our legends, has most certainly been preserved in the archives of the Society, where the name of our family and those of so many others are inscribed on their Index. We must expect, sooner or later, some attempt on the part of these Jesuits to seize our records."

"Good father," assented Franz, "I share Victoria's uneasiness. Here is what I would suggest: I know a retreat almost inaccessible to the Jesuits. Let us thither transport the manuscripts; there they will be in perfect safety. An energetic, intelligent, and discreet editor, for whom I will vouch as for myself, shall to-morrow morning begin the copying of the legends; and soon we shall be on the way to publish our Mysteries of the People."

Further discussion of Franz's plan was interrupted by the return of John Lebrenn. As soon as he entered the room, Victoria divined, by the expression he wore, the ill success of his mission.

"Alas! Monsieur Desmarais has refused you the hand of his daughter?"

"It is true," replied John. "Charlotte made a solemn declaration, before her assembled family, that she would never have another husband but me. That is the sole favorable result of my errand."

"Son, listen, what noise is that!" suddenly exclaimed Madam Lebrenn, turning her head toward the stairway. "There seems to be a gathering in our yard."

With a crash the chamber door was flung open, and their neighbor Jerome, who lodged on the same story, entered, pale, fearsome, and crying in a voice of alarm:

"You are lost—they're coming up—there they are—they want to kill you!"

Then arose from the staircase the noise of tumultuous steps, mingled with cries of,

"Long live the Nation!"

"Death to the traitors!"

"To the lamp-post with the aristocrats!"

"Death to the nobles and those who support them!"

John Lebrenn, after sharing for a moment the surprise of his family, cried out as he ran towards the door, "What do these men want?"

"It is a band of mad-men," answered Jerome, gasping. "They pretend that there is a noblewoman here—some Marchioness or other whom they want to hang to the lamp-post. Flee! Do not attempt resistance!"

At Jerome's words a light dawned upon Victoria. The Jesuit at Neroweg's banquet had recognized her in the column of the victors of the Bastille! It was he who had pointed her out to the swords of the assassins as a Marchioness!

"As to me," quoth the Prince of Gerolstein, drawing two double-barrelled pistols from his pockets, "I shall singe the heads of four of these brigands!"

"Franz, let us see, first of all, to the defense of mother and father," cried Victoria; and drawing from its sheath the hunting knife which the Prince carried at his side, she gripped the weapon with a virile hand, and prepared to protect the aged man and his wife, who instinctively retreated into a corner of the room.

All this occurred with the rapidity of thought. John, who, in spite of the prayers and efforts of neighbor Jerome, had stepped out upon the landing to see what manner of men were invading the house and mounting the stairway, was immediately hurled back across the sill by Lehiron. A dozen scoundrels armed with pikes and sabers were ranged on the landing and the topmost stairs. Seizing his musket and clapping on the bayonet, John then drew near to Franz and Victoria in order to cover with his body his mother and father, who, mute and terrified, trembled at every limb. Thus ranged, the two men and Victoria prepared to meet their assailants.

Lehiron, who strode alone into the chamber, was taken aback by the resolute attitude of the three. Franz, with his double-barrelled pistols, covered the intruders; Victoria, fearless, her eyes flashing, held aloft her hunting-knife; and

John Lebrenn stood ready to plunge his bayonet into the bandits' breasts. Suddenly little Rodin appeared. He slipped through Lehiron's followers, entered the room, approached the giant, made him a sign to stoop over, and then, stretching on tiptoes, whispered in his ear:

"Don't forget the papers!"

"Hush, vermin, I know what's to be done here," retorted the Hercules; and taking two steps toward John, whom he threatened with his cutlass, he roared:

"Citizen Lebrenn, you play the people false! You are hiding here an aristocrat, Marchioness Aldini—there she stands—" and Lehiron designated Victoria with his weapon. "She is one of the harpies of the Austrian party. She sat last night at the board of a royalist council-feast. You are conspiring with her against the Nation. You will deliver the jade to us, and also all the papers in your house, which are claimed by justice. Quick! Or your lives shall pay the penalty."

"To the lamp-post with the noblewoman! Live the Nation! Death to the traitors!" cried Lehiron's band of jackals, and brandishing their pikes and swords they poured into the room. But the giant, held in awe by the pistols trained upon him and not anxious to have recourse to force except in the last extremity, waved back his brigands with a gesture and addressed himself again to John:

"Deliver up the noblewoman and the papers, and your life will be spared. But be quick about it."

"Helas! My God! Have pity on us!" murmured Madam Lebrenn, overcome with terror and throwing her arms about her blind old husband.

"Out of here, you scoundrels!" was the answer of John Lebrenn. Lehiron waved his hand to his gang of bandits and cried:

"Forward! To the lamp-post with the traitors!"

As the valiant leader of the cut-throats gave the command, he himself leaped to one side and ducked his head to escape the pistol-fire of Franz of Gerolstein. But the latter no less quickly changed the aim of his weapon, and pulled the trigger. The giant flew back almost his full length, flung out his arms, dropped his cutlass, tumbled to his knees, and rolled over, face down, on the floor, almost mortally wounded.

All of a sudden, above the tumult was heard a cry of pain from Madam Lebrenn:

"Oh, the wicked child! He is biting me!"

John turned, and while his two companions fell upon their adversaries, ran to his mother and found her in a desperate struggle with little Rodin. The latter, faithful to the tuition of his dear god-father, and hoping to profit by the turmoil, was about to make off with the bundle of manuscripts. Madam Lebrenn seized hold of him to take them away, and the little rat had bitten her savagely on the hand. To snatch from the Jesuit's god-son the treasured legends, seize him by the slack of his pantaloons, and send him rolling ten paces away, was the work of an instant for young Lebrenn. The terrible child, wriggling and sliding like a snake between the legs of John's companions, gained the stairway and escaped with his discomfited accomplices.

The attempted arrest of Victoria and theft of the legends added fuel to the fears of the family on the machinations of the Jesuits. That very day the Prince deposited in safe keeping the records and relics of the family of Lebrenn.

Two days after our interview, Charlotte Desmarais wrote to me, John Lebrenn, a letter that was touching, and in all points worthy of her. She informed me of her departure for Lyons, whither her mother was to accompany her.

From the month of July, 1789, up till December, 1792, nothing of importance occurred in our family save the death of our beloved parents. My father died on the 11th of August, 1789; my mother, ill for years, survived him but briefly; she expired in our arms on October 29th of the same year.

Monsieur Desmarais continues to hold his seat at the extreme Left of the National Assembly, near Robespierre. He defended Marat from the tribunal, and makes one of the republican group headed by Brissot, Camille Desmoulins, Condorcet and Bonneville. Formerly a member of the Jacobin club, Desmarais later transferred his allegiance to the Cordeliers. He seemed to fear losing his popularity, which he regards as the safeguard of his property and perhaps of his life. Monsieur Hubert, differently from his brother-in-law, has the courage of his convictions; he declares frankly for the Moderates. The financier still commands the battalion of the Daughters of St. Thomas, one of the most hostile to the Revolution. Franz of Gerolstein was suddenly called to the side of his father, who had been stricken gravely ill. Our relics and legends are still in the place of security where he deposited them.

My sister Victoria shares my dwelling and lives on the proceeds of her sempstress's trade. We have promised Franz to fall back on his aid in case of necessity. I notice with disquietude the character of Victoria growing somber apace; at times her revolutionary fervor becomes wild in its exaltation. In vain I attempt to calm her, in vain I appeal to her heart, to her good sense, in order to convince her that, apart from cases of insurrection or legitimate defense, we must strike our enemies only with the sword of the law, unorganized popular justice being always blind in its execution.

"And when the sword of the law, confided to the hands of our enemies, rusts in its sheath? When treason enwraps the great criminals from justice, and insures them impunity, what shall the sovereign people do then?" Victoria asks me.

To which I reply: "The sovereign people, the source and dispenser of all power, by election, should depose its faithless officers at the expiration of their term, and, if they be traitors, send them before their natural judges. That is the rational course to pursue."

"No," my sister makes answer. "All these formalities are too slow. On certain occasions the people should exterminate its enemies in the name of public safety."

Alas, it was in the name of public safety that men, the most pure and heroic of the Revolution, were one day to smite each other down, to the profit of our eternal enemies.

Victoria did not soon again see the Count of Plouernel. Seized, in spite of his braggadocio, with panic and alarm at the taking of the Bastille, he was among the first to emigrate at the heels of the Count of Artois and the Princes of Conti and Condé. We did not set eyes on him again till 1793.

Lehiron survived his wound. Doubtless at the instigation of Abbot Morlet, he later made a similar descent, I know not for what purpose, upon an old and isolated house in St. Francois Street, in the Swamp, occupied by an aged Jew and his wife. The Voyants had for a long time held their meetings in this building. Lehiron's attempt upon it was without result, according to what the Jew later told my sister, without, however, going at all into the causes that led to it.

The interval between the months of July, 1789, and December, 1792, a period so uneventful in our private life, was nevertheless fertile in great occurrences in the life of the Nation, occurrences the importance of which was immense. I have preserved these to our family legends by means of extracts from a journal kept by me, in which, of an evening, I would inscribe the striking events observed by Victoria and myself during the day. To these notes I have often added salient passages from the Revolutionary journals of the time—a heroic epoch which will leave its mark on the annals of the people!

PART II.

THE BOURGEOIS REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATION INSULTED—AND AVENGED.

The taking of the Bastille on July 14, 1789, dealt a mortal blow to the power of the monarchy, the same as its influence and that of the nobility and the clergy were wiped out when, upon the closing of the Tennis Court at Versailles, and braving the orders of dissolution pronounced by Louis XVI, the deputies of the Third Estate constituted themselves a sovereign, constituent, and inviolable assembly. The results of that immortal day of the Fourteenth of July were in the highest degree advantageous to the cause of the people. The King was forced to return to Paris to render homage to the popular victory, and threw off the white cockade for the new national tricolor, blue, white, and red.

The fall of the Bastille re-echoed throughout France. Everywhere the people and the bourgeoisie of the towns rose against the representatives of the royal power, and replaced them with municipal governors elected by the citizens.

This general insurrection against royalty, and against the privileges of nobility and clergy, threw into affright the Right side of the National Assembly, where sat the most violent antagonists of the Revolution.

The Center of the Assembly, called by turns the Plain and the Swamp, had no settled convictions whatsoever. The Left was almost entirely composed of the deputies of the Third Estate, among whom, famous for their eloquence, were Sieyès, Duport, and Barnave. On this side also were some few scattering representatives of the nobility, such as the Duke of Orleans, the Marquis of Lafayette, the Lameths, and, most illustrious of all, the elder Mirabeau, a magnificent orator, but corrupt in his private life. At the extreme Left sat a deputy, then obscure and next to unknown, but destined soon to become the incarnation of the French Revolution. 'Twas Maximilien Robespierre, attorney at the bar of Arras.

In one single night, the night of the 4th of August, 1789, the old feudal edifice crumbled before the determined attitude of the nation. O, sons of Joel, let us glorify the memory of our obscure ancestors, who prepared the triumph of the Revolution.

The imperishable work of the National Assembly was the Declaration of the Rights of Man. This monumental document embraced territorial and administrative unity; social, civil, political and religious equality; and above all, the formal recognition of the sovereignty of the people as the source of all power and of all functions, which it delegated to its representatives by election. Nevertheless we must admit that the Constitution of 1789-1791 lacked much that it should have contained, and contained much which it would have been better without. Such, for instance, were its several breaches of the sovereignty of the people, like the distinction drawn between "active" and

"passive" citizens, the two-degree election, and the requirement of a certain amount of direct taxation to qualify one for election as a representative. The Convention later corrected these injustices; but it must be noted that the Constitution of 1789-91 made no provision for the rights of women. Our Gallic fathers admitted women into their city councils, even when the deliberations turned on matters of war. Equality of civil and political rights for men and women should have figured at the very head of the Constitution. The question of marriage should there have been taken up and established as a matter of free unions, ruled by mutual tastes and agreements. Property should also have been reorganized, and declared collective in the state, the department, the district, or the commune, according to its nature, and no individual should have possessed more than a temporary title to the instrument of labor or the plot of ground which he needed for his support, and which should have been assigned to him gratuitously by the commune. The abolition of inheritance would have logically followed, and the suppression of interest on capital. A system of free, compulsory, and nonsectarian education should have been proclaimed, and also the right to assistance during youth, old age, illness or unemployment.

However that may be, and in spite of the regrettable omissions in the Constitution, honor to the labors of the legislators of '79. The clergy, the nobility, the monarchy, smitten in their prestige, in their property, in their privileges, and in their temporal authority, received their death blow. The National Assembly inaugurated the era of enfranchisement. It could, with good right, date its work the Year I of Liberty. But we must not forget that it was the revolutionary attitude of the populace of Paris at the attack on the Bastille, that ushered in our freedom.

But a fact often before made manifest, almost one century after another, was now once more to come into play. The royal power, forced to grant concessions, sought only how best to elude or annul them, employing to this end, each in its turn, perfidy, perjury, and violence!

Soon the hostility of the court showed itself in the open. Louis XVI refused to sanction the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the corner-stone and basis of the Constitution, and opposed his veto to the law attaching for sale the goods of the clergy. Thereupon, projects fatal to liberty began to rear their heads with unheard-of insolence. On October 1, 1789, the foreign troops were summoned to Versailles. The Body Guard bespoke to a banquet the newly arrived officers, together with those of the Montmorency Dragoons, the Swiss regiments, the Hundred-Swiss, the mounted Police, and the Mayor's Guard. Several monarchical captains, picked out from among the National Guard of Versailles, were also invited. The officers of the army, instead of wearing the national tricolored cockade, affectatiously displayed enormous cockades of white. The Court was tendering to the Army a sumptuous banquet, the expenses of which were paid by the King. The tables were spread in the Opera Hall of the palace, which was brilliantly lighted. The bands of the Flanders regiment and the Body Guard played during the repast royalist or topical airs, such as "Long Live Henry IV," or "O Richard, O My King, the World Is All Forsaking Thee." The wine, liberally distributed, rose to all heads. They drained their bumpers to the health of the royal family; one captain of the National Guard proposed the health of the Nation; he was drowned with hoots.

Soon the officers called in their soldiers, who were massed in all the alcoves. Then the King entered the hall in a hunting habit, accompanied by the Queen, who held the Dauphin by the hand. At the sight of Louis XVI, the officers were transported with enthusiasm. The German regimental band struck up the "March of the Uhlans," a foreign war song. The drunkenness rose to frenzy. Insults and bloody threats were hurled against the Revolution, against the Assembly. The cavalry trumpets sounded the charge. The officers whipped out their sabers to cries of "Long live the King!" The tricolored cockade was trampled under foot. Then these rebels, dragging after them their soldiers, as drunk as themselves, poured out into the courtyard of the palace, crying savage imprecations against the Representatives of the people. The National Assembly, intimidated, defenseless, surrounded by these saturnalia of military force and placing little reliance in the National Guard of Versailles, hardly dared show its fears. Unpardonable weakness!

But the people of Paris were watching in their clubs. The press sounded the alarm.

"That Saturday night," wrote Camille Desmoulins in his journal, *Revolutions of France and Brabant*, "Paris rises. It is a woman, who, seeing that her husband is not listened to in his district meeting, is first to run to Foy's Cafe, at the Palais Royal, and denounce the royalist orgy. Marat flies to Versailles, returns like the lightning, and cries to us, 'O ye dead,—awake!' Danton, on his part, thunders in the club of the Cordeliers; and the next day this patriotic district posts its manifesto demanding a march on Versailles. Everywhere the people arm; they seek out the white cockades and the black ones, the latter the Catholic rallying sign, and—just reprisals—trample them under foot. Everywhere the people gather, discussing the imminence of the danger. They hold councils in the gardens of the Palais Royal, in the St. Antoine suburb, at the ends of the bridges, on the quays. They say the hardihood of the nobility is growing visibly, that the boat laden with flour, which arrives morning and night from Corbeil, has not come at all for two days. Is the court, then, going to take Paris by famine? They say that despite the orders of the Assembly, the local councils are still functioning; that that of Toulouse is burning patriotic leaflets; that the council of Rouen has ordered the seizure of citizens acquitted by the Assembly; that the one of Paris has recorded itself, and is obstinately determined to make use of its Gothic formulas 'Louis, by the grace of God, King' and 'Such is our good pleasure.' And finally they say that conclaves are being held in the aristocrats' mansions, and that they are secretly enrolling gangs of ruffians for the court."

Loustalot, a fearless young man, a generous and noble character, and one of the most brilliant spirits of his time, wrote in his journal, *The Revolutions of Paris* (No. XIII):

"There must be a *second burst of revolution*, we have maintained for several days. Everything is ready for it. The soul of the aristocratic party has not yet left the court! A crowd of Knights of St. Louis, of old officers, of gentlemen, and of employes already included in the reforms or desiring to be, have signed agreements to enlist in the Body Guards or other troops. This roll includes already more than thirty thousand names. The project of the court is to carry the King to Metz, there to await foreign aid, in order to undertake a civil war and exterminate the Revolution!"

And finally Marat, in *The Friend of the People*, of the 4th of October, 1789, gave the following advice, with that promptitude of decision, that deep sagacity, and that admirable and practical good sense which were his characteristics:

"The orgy has taken place! The alarm is general. There is not an instant to lose. All good citizens should assemble in arms, and send strong detachments to take possession of the powder at Essonne; let each district supply itself with cannon from the City Hall. The National Guard is not so senseless as not to join with us, and to take care of its officers if they give orders hostile to the people. Finally, the peril is so imminent that we are done for if the people does not establish a tribunal and arm it with public powers!"

Admonished, enlightened, aroused by these ardent appeals to its revolutionary spirit, Paris was soon assembled in insurrection. But, strange and touching at once as it was, the signal for this new revolution was given by the women. Flour and grain, by reason of the court's complot, began to run low. A young girl of the market quarter entered the barracks of the St. Eustace body guard, seized a drum, and marched through the streets beating the charge, and crying "Bread! Bread!" A great throng of women fell in behind her, and together they invaded the City Hall, where the monarchical directorate was in session. These virile Gallic women demanded arms and powder, exclaiming, "If the men are too cowardly to go with us to Versailles, we shall go alone, and demand bread of the King and avenge the insult to the national cockade!" Stanislas Maillard, an usher and a Bastille-hero, addressed the courageous women. They hailed him as their chief, and marched on Versailles.

Close upon their heels a deputation of grenadiers of the National Guard presented itself at the City Hall, and addressing Lafayette, their General, held to him the following language:

"General, we are commissioned by six companies of grenadiers. We do not yet wish to believe you a traitor, but we believe the government has betrayed us. That must end! The people want bread, and cry for it. We shall not turn our bayonets against women. The source of the evil is at Versailles—let us go after the King and fetch him to Paris. Chastisement is demanded for the Body Guards and the Flanders regiment, who, at the royal orgy, trampled on the national cockade. If the King is too weak to bear the crown, let him be deposed."

In the face of the exasperation of the people, Lafayette decided to take horse, and himself gave the signal for departure. The National Guard took the road for Versailles, preceded by an advance guard of about ten thousand women. My sister Victoria joined the Amazons. From her I have the following account of their expedition:

Along the way, they recruited their ranks steadily from among their own sex. The Old Iron Quay was thronged with women recruiting agents and the troops they had marshalled. The robust kitchen maid, the trim modiste, and the humble sempstress, all swelled the phalanx of warriors. The old devotee, who was on her way to mass, found herself carried off for the first time in her life, and protested vehemently against the abduction! The women elected a president and a council board. All who were "borrowed" from their husbands or parents were first presented before the president and her aides-de-camp, who pledged themselves to watch over the morals and honor of all who joined the troop. And the promise was religiously kept; not the slightest disorder marred the journey.

The vanguard of women arrived at Versailles. Usher Maillard counseled his companions to send a committee of twelve to the National Assembly, to request that several Representatives of the people be added to their number to accompany them before the King. The Assembly granted their request, and commissioned several of its members to conduct to the palace the delegates of the women of Paris. The deputation was brought before Louis XVI. He greeted the women with apparent good will, and promised them to watch over the provisioning of Paris.

But during this very talk of the King with the delegation of women, a plot was being hatched out for Louis's flight. The plot was discovered in time, and the palace placed under the surveillance of the National Guard. During the night, the multitude of men and women from Paris, augmented by Lafayette's army, sought shelter in the churches, or bivouacked on the palace grounds. At early dawn, several citizens, seeing a trooper at one of the windows, addressed some insults to him. The latter loaded his gun, took deliberate aim at a citizen, and killed him. The pretorians of Louis XVI opened the fight. The Parisian women and the National Guards, yielding to their legitimate indignation, invaded the palace. Blood was shed. The victorious people demanded and secured the return of the King and the royal family to Paris.

Such were the results of the days of the 5th and 6th of October, 1789.

CHAPTER II.

MIRABEAU.

At the end of that same year of 1789, the National Assembly decreed the abolition of tithes, without redemption, and the immediate sale of the properties of the clergy. The value of these properties amounted to more than four thousand million francs. At the beginning of the year 1790, the Assembly decreed itself the Convention. In that memorable session, Mirabeau took the floor, concluding a magnificent speech with this peroration:

"They ask since when the Deputies of the people have become a National Convention? I reply, The day when, finding the entrance to their seats blocked with soldiers, they adjourned to the Tennis Court, where they swore to die rather than abandon the rights of the people! That day our powers changed their nature, and those that we have exercised have been legitimatized, sanctified, by the adherence of the people! I would recall to you the words of that grand man of antiquity, who disregarded the formal laws to save his country. Summoned before a factious tribunal to answer, Whether he had observed the laws, he said, 'I swear that I have saved the country!'" And turning toward the deputies, Mirabeau concluded, "I swear that you have saved France!"

The entire Assembly rose to its feet with enthusiasm, and vowed that it would disband only after the completion of its work.

In spite of this energetic attitude of the Assembly, the court continued its intrigues against the Revolution. Louis XVI planned a new flight, for the purpose of seeking aid from the foreign rulers. It was at this moment that the great scandal occasioned by the discovery of the Red Book electrified the city.

Deputy Camus had found among the papers whose surrender had been demanded by the Committee on Finance, a certain ledger bound in red morocco, containing the account of the secret expenses of Louis XV and Louis XVI. In the items on this ledger figured princes, grand seigneurs, and all the royal coterie. The Count of Artois, brother to the King, was recorded as having, under the ministry of Calonne, put his fingers on 14,050,050 livres, merely for "extra expenses." Monsieur the Count of Provence, another brother of the King, had gone through, for his part, 13,880,000 livres. Among the courtiers, the Polignac family was down for 700,000 livres pension: a Marquis of Autichamp for four several pensions: the first for services of his late father; the second, for the same object; the third, same reason; and the fourth—for the same cause. A German prince was also the beneficiary of four pensions: first, for his services as a colonel; the second, the same; the third, the same; and the fourth, as a *non-colonel*. A certain Desgalois of La Tour was drawing 22,720 livres as the total of his four pensions: the first, as first president and intendant; the second as intendant and first president; the third for the same considerations as above, etc., etc..

"At last we have it, the Red Book," wrote Camille Desmoulins with his brilliant imagery and pitiless incisiveness. "The Committee on Finance has broken all the seven seals which locked its fatal pages. Here is fulfilled the terrible threat of the prophet, here it is accomplished before the last judgment: *Revelabo pudentia tua*—I shall uncover your shame!"

All the while inflaming the inhabitants in whatever provinces it could, the clergy but awaited the opportune instant to blow into a blaze the carefully sown sparks of civil war. The court and Louis XVI thought themselves at the moment of triumph in having gained Mirabeau over to their cause by the power of gold—Mirabeau, the mettlesome tribune, the mighty orator, who had so far served the cause of liberty. Alas, it was but too true. Consumed with a thirst for luxury and pleasures, that great spirit had sold himself to the court for a million down and a pension of a hundred thousand livres monthly.

But death did not permit him to enjoy the fruits of his treason. On the 2nd of April, 1791, he died. Some hours before his death he heard the boom of cannon, and said, in his gigantic self-conceit, "Do they already sound the knell of Achilles?" His last words, in which his treason stands revealed, were: "I am in mourning for the monarchy; its remains will be the prey of the malcontents."

The people, trusting and credulous, and ignorant as yet of the renegading of their tribune, learned of his death with profound consternation. I traveled over Paris that day. Everywhere the mourning was deep. One would have thought a public calamity had fallen upon France; people accosted one another with the words, impressed with mournful despair: "Mirabeau is dead!" Tears flowed from all eyes. The weeping multitude religiously followed the ashes of the great orator, which were deposited in the Pantheon. Nevertheless two voices, two prophetic voices, rose alone above this concert of civic commiseration, protesting against the pious homage rendered to the memory of a traitor.

"As for me," wrote Camille Desmoulins in his journal, "when they raised the mortuary cloth that covered the body of Mirabeau, and I saw the man I had idolized, I vow I felt not a tear—I looked at him with an eye as dry as Cicero's regarding the body of Caesar pierced with twenty-three dagger-thrusts. It was the remains of a traitor."

And Marat, guided by a sort of intuition, wrote in *The Friend of the People* the day after Mirabeau's funeral: "Give thanks to the gods, people! Your most redoubtable enemy is no more! He died the victim of his many treasons, by the farsighted barbarism of his accomplices.[9] The life of Mirabeau was stained with crimes. May a veil forever hide that hideous picture. Mirabeau in the Pantheon! What man of integrity would desire to repose beside him? The ashes of Rousseau, of Montesquieu, would shudder to find themselves in company with the traitor! Ah, if ever liberty is established in France, if ever some legislator, according to what I may have done for the country, should attempt to decree me the honors of the Pantheon, I here vigorously protest against the black affront! Rather would I never die! Curses on the name of Mirabeau."

Strange prophecy! Mirabeau's secret papers, discovered on August 10, 1792, in the King's secret Iron Cupboard in the Tuileries, laid bare irrefutable proofs of his treason, and the National Convention on November 27 of the following year, issued the following memorable order:[10]

> "The National Convention, considering that there is no greatness in man without honor, decrees that the body of Honoré Gabriel Riquetti Mirabeau be withdrawn from the Pantheon. The body of Marat shall be transferred thither."

Ah, sons of Joel! Never forget those sacred words, *There is no greatness in man without honor*. For none was ever more exalted in genius than Mirabeau! And nevertheless, the National Assembly, responsive to a sentiment of justice and impartiality that reflects honor on it, expelled from the Pantheon the body of the man of genius, of the grand orator, of the fiery tribune who sold himself to the court, and replaced it by that of Marat, the humble journalist, the man of probity and disinterestedness, the friend of the people, the incorruptible citizen.

The death of Mirabeau disconcerted the court of Louis XVI, and shattered its hope of dominating, disarming, and vanquishing the Revolution by means of the National Assembly; the court then resolved to execute a project it had long been revolving, and had already vainly attempted at Versailles, on the days of the 5th and 6th of October. That project was:

"The King shall fly to some fortified place on the frontiers. There, surrounded by devoted troops under the

command of a royalist general (the Marquis of Bouillé), Louis XVI shall protest solemnly to all Europe against the usurpatory acts of the National Assembly, shall strongly invoke against the French Revolution the spirit of solidarity which ought to bind all sovereigns, and stamp out the revolt under the heel of the foreign armies."

This criminal project Louis XVI was on the point of carrying out. But Marat, always watchful, always prophetic, had, several days before the flight of the King, denounced the fact in these terms in *The Friend of the People* (June 16, 1791):

"They are working might and main to get the King into the Netherlands, on the pretext that his cause is that of all the Kings of Europe! You will be brainless enough not to prevent the flight of the royal family. Parisians—senseless people of Paris! I am tired of repeating it to you: Hold fast the King and the Dauphin within our walls; watch them with care; shut up the Queen, her brother-in-law, and her family. The loss of one day may prove fatal to the nation and dig the graves of three million Frenchmen."

Here I, John Lebrenn, begin the extracts from my journal.

CHAPTER III.

AT THE JACOBIN CLUB.

June 21, 1791.—The expected has happened. To-day, early in the morning, the rumor of the flight of Louis XVI and his family spread over Paris.

Victoria and I went out to observe what impression the desertion of the King and Queen would make upon the people. An innumerable multitude covered the garden of the Palais Royal, the place before the City Hall, and the grounds of the Tuileries and the National Assembly. At ten o'clock in the morning the municipal officers fired three cannon as an alarm. The tocsin sounded, the drums of the National Guard rang out the "assembly." The confusion was indescribable.

In the course of our travels we met Monsieur Hubert. It was the first time I had come face to face with him since the day I asked his niece in marriage. In full uniform, the banker was repairing to his Section, where his royalist district battalion, the Daughters of St. Thomas, was assembling. He approached me and cried brusquely:

"Well? The King has gone. But we don't want the Republic, and shall defend the Constitution to the death."

"What Constitution do you pretend to defend?" replied Victoria. "The Constitution recognizes a hereditary King, the King absconds. Circumstances themselves demand the Republic."

Hubert was dumb for a moment. Then he said, "Citizeness! The Assembly will name Lafayette provisionally Protector of the kingdom. For the rest, the Assembly has sent commissioners after the King, and we hope that they will succeed in reaching him before he gains the frontier. The question will be simplified."

At that moment a flux of the crowd tore Victoria and me away, and carried us on towards the palace of the Tuileries. The sentinels at the foot of the great stairway allowed everyone up into the apartments. The thronging visitors were, like ourselves, all under the influence of a mocking curiosity, remembering, as they did, that the monarch who inhabited these sumptuous apartments complained of the insufficiency of his 40,000,000 francs on the civil list, and pretended that he could not procure the necessaries of life. Leaving the palace again, we followed the boulevards back to the St. Antoine suburb. Everywhere were manifested aversion for royalty, contempt for the person of Louis XVI, and hatred for the Austrian, Marie Antoinette.

Several organs of the patriotic press lent their encouragement to the republican tendencies in the air, either by openly demanding the Republic, or by insisting that Louis had forfeited his title. Marat, in *The Friend of the People*, voiced in these words the indignation of the people against the King, the court, and the ministers:

"Citizens, Louis XVI has this night taken flight.... This King, perjured, faithless, without shame, without remorse, has gone to join the foreign Kings, his accomplices. The thirst for absolute power which devours his soul will soon turn him into a ferocious assassin. He will return to steep himself in the blood of *his subjects*, who refuse to submit to his tyrannical yoke.... And, as he waits, he laughs at the dullness of the Parisians, who took him at his word.... Citizens, you are lost, if you give ear to the National Assembly, which will not cease to cajole you, to lull you to sleep, until the enemy has arrived under our walls! Despatch this instant couriers to the Departments. Call the federated Bretons to your aid! Make yourselves masters of the arsenal. Disarm the mounted constables, the guards at the gates, the patrols of the fortifications, the hired troops—all counter-revolutionists! Citizens, name within the hour a pitiless dictator, who, with the same blow, will sever the heads of the ministers, of their subalterns, of Lafayette, of all the scoundrels of his staff, of all the counter-revolutionists, of all the traitors in the National Assembly."

In his *Revolutions of France*, Camille Desmoulins, with his brilliant mockery, characterized the situation thus:

"The King has fired point blank on the Nation; the shot has hung fire. Now it is the Nation's turn to shoot. Doubtless it will disdain to measure itself against a disarmed man, even if he be a King! And I would be the first to fire in the air—but the aggressor must beg of me his life."

Placards, inscriptions of all nature, posted on the walls of Paris, powerfully stirred the opinions of the people. Towards the close of the day, the journal called *The Mouth of Iron* published in a supplement a proclamation

addressed to the French by Louis XVI, which had been seized at the domicile of Laporte, one of the onhangers at court, who had been commissioned to print it and flood Paris with it.

"The King," so declared the manifesto, "has for a long time hoped to see order and happiness restored by the Assembly; he renounces that hope. The safety of persons and of property is compromised. Anarchy is everywhere. The King, considering himself a prisoner during his forced stay in Paris, protests against all the acts of the Assembly, and against the Constitution, which outrages the Church, and degrades royalty, subordinating it to the Assembly, reducing it to an insufficient civil list, etc., etc. In the face of such motives, in the disability under which I labor of stopping the evil, I had to seek my own safety. Frenchmen, you whom I call the inhabitants of my good city of Paris, beware of these insurgents! Return to your King! He will be always your friend, when our holy religion is respected, when the government is stable, and when liberty is established on unshakable foundations!

"*Signed*, Louis."

Hard by the site of the Bastille, on a pile of the ruins of the fortress, a young citizen, who by the elegance of his dress and the careful powdering of his hair seemed to be of the upper bourgeoisie, made the following motion:

"Gentlemen, in the present state of affairs, it would be very unfortunate for our disgraceful and perfidious King to be brought back to us! What can we do with him? This fugitive will come like Thersite, shedding those fat tears of which Homer speaks. So, then, if they commit the enormous mistake of bringing Louis XVI back to us, I propose this motion: That the Executive be exposed three days to public ridicule. That he be conducted by stages to the frontier, and that there the commissioners of the Republic who shall have so far escorted him shall solemnly present to this last of the Kings—their boots in his rear, and send him to the devil."

This novel motion was received on the part of all who heard it with shouts of laughter and applause. "Yes, yes! Let them plant their boots in the royal rear!" they echoed.

Such, in short, was the spirit of Paris on the 21st of June, 1791. The bulk of the bourgeoisie, thunder-struck at the absconding of its King, was resolved, in case the commissioners despatched by the Assembly were unable to overtake Louis XVI and bring him back, to shelter itself behind the protectorate offered to Lafayette, if they should fail to induce the Duke of Orleans to accept the constitutional royalty. The people on the contrary, were rejoiced to be rid of the King, and looked forward to a Republic.

That evening we attended the Jacobin Club, where a great audience was packed.

O, sons of Joel! I know not how to depict for you the emotions of patriotism, mingled with respect, with which we, the contemporaries of the great days of the Revolution, entered this ancient hall of the Convent of the Jacobins in St. Honoré Street, an immense hall, with walls of stone blackened and crumbled with age, lighted only by a few tapers placed on a heavy table, behind which sat the president and secretaries of the club.

The Jacobin Club was the revolutionary church most frequented by the people. In that plebeian forum were debated the great questions that agitated Paris, France, Europe! It was from that hearth glowing with patriotism that radiated the civic virtues which from one end of the country to the other fired all hearts. The Club of the Jacobins was the political school of the proletariat; it was there that the workingmen took direct hold of public affairs; it was in the midst of its tempestuous debates that the opinion of the people cleared itself and took form, whence it often went to weigh, with no negligible force, upon the deliberations of the National Assembly. It was from the heights of the ringing tribunal of the Jacobins that the vigilant citizens watched and heralded the manoeuvres of our enemies, and kept their eyes on the public functionaries; it was from this popular tribunal that issued the cries of mistrust or alarm. It was, in brief, from this tribunal that the patriots, at the approach of grave perils, reawoke the slumbering, misled or wearied public opinion, infused into it new activity, and rekindled in it the fever of revolution—a sublime mission!

Alas, by an unexplainable error of judgment, or of political tact, the Jacobins on the 21st of June, the day of the flight of Louis XVI, did not respond to the prayers of the people. The Jacobins did not profit by the circumstance, as favorable as unexpected, of the desertion of the King, to demand of the National Assembly, in the name of the Constitution, that the title of Louis XVI be declared forfeit. In this meeting, otherwise so moving, the conduct of the Jacobins was indecisive, equivocal, and blameworthy; for, in a revolution, not to profit by every favorable event is an unpardonable fault. A single error brings defeat.

When, about eight in the evening, Victoria and I entered the hall of the Jacobins, the chamber and the galleries were packed with spectators drawn thither by the importance of the debates which the events of the day were expected to call forth. Men, women, young girls, waited with feverish impatience for the meeting to be thrown open. One of the striking features of our revolution was the passionate interest taken by women in the affairs of the community; already, sons of Joel, you have seen them, these valiant Gallic women, taking as virile a part in action as in discussion, like their mothers of Gaul in the centuries agone.

The members of the bureau of the club took their places, and the tumult hushed. Citizen Prieur, of La Marne, presided; at his sides were the secretaries, Goncourt, Chéry, Jr., Lampidor, and Danjou. The president rang his bell, and announced the reading of an address sent to all the societies in the departments, which were in correspondence with the central club. Thus was explained the marvelous unanimity between the parent society of the Jacobins and the affiliated societies in the provinces. A profound silence now reigned in the chamber, while Citizen Danjou read the address:

> "Brothers and friends:
>
> "The King, led astray by criminal suggestions, has separated himself from the National Assembly. Far from being downcast over this development, our courage and that of our fellow citizens is risen to the emergency. Not a shadow of trouble, not a disordered movement, has accompanied the impression made upon us by this fact.

"A calm and determined firmness leaves us the disposition of all our forces; consecrated to the defense of a great cause, they will be victorious!

"All divisions are forgotten, all patriots are united. The National Assembly—that is our guide; the Constitution—that is our rallying cry."

It would be difficult to express the surprise, the disfavor, I had almost said the sorrow, which were produced in the audience by the reading of this opiate-laden manifesto, accepted by the majority of the members of the club.

But unexpectedly Camille Desmoulins appeared on the scene. He strode toward the tribunal and demanded of the president the floor for a communication he had to make to the Jacobins. Though still a young man, Desmoulins was an influential member of the Club of the Cordeliers. His physiognomy was expressive, ironical, and finely cut. He leaped to the platform, and in his incisive voice, while sober in gesture and bearing, he let loose his biting sarcasm:

"Citizens, while the National Assembly decrees—and decrees and decrees and never lets up decreeing—as much good as bad, and more bad than good—the people is acting admirably as police; and, showing itself no less a friend of provisional rule than the Assembly, it has decreed that all pillagers shall be provisionally—hanged to the lamp-post. Crossing Voltaire Quay just now, I saw Lafayette preparing to review the batallions of the blue-bonnets, drawn up on the quay. Convinced of the need of uniting on one leader, I yielded to an attraction which drew me over to the famous white horse. 'Monsieur Lafayette,' I called to him, 'I have indeed said some evil of you during the year, and thought no less. Now is the time to convict me of false testimony in safeguarding public affairs!' 'I have always known you for a good citizen,' gallantly replied the General, holding out his hand to me; 'the common danger has united all parties. There is no longer in the Assembly but one single spirit!'—'One single spirit! That is very few for so numerous and illustrious an assembly,' quoth I to the General. 'But why does this single soul of the Assembly affect to speak in its decrees of the *carrying off* of the King, when the Executive writes to the Assembly that no one is carrying him off at all, that he is going himself? I can pardon the lie of a servant who lies in the fear of losing his place if he tells the truth,' continued I, 'but the Assembly is not, to my knowledge, the servant of the Executive, whether present or in flight. The Assembly has three million pikes and bayonets at its service. Whence, then, comes the baseness, or the treason, which dictated to it such a vile falsehood!' '*The carrying off of the King!* The Assembly will correct that mistake in wording,' the General answered me. And he added several times, 'The conduct of the King is indeed infamous.'"

Camille Desmoulins stopped. He had seen Robespierre enter the hall, and prepared to descend from the tribunal, saying with cordial deference:

"Here is my friend and master. I yield him the floor."

Had it not been for the certainty of hearing Robespierre, the audience would undoubtedly have insisted on the completion of the lively oration just begun. But Robespierre was one of the most esteemed orators of the Jacobin Club, a high appreciation which he merited by his great talent, his tireless energy, the loftiness of his character, his integrity, the austerity of his morals, and his devotion to the revolutionary cause. Unhappily, that medal had a reverse: Robespierre carried his mistrust of men to an extreme; he showed himself always cold, harsh, and suspicious, to the point of committing acts of injustice towards citizens as devoted as himself to the public cause, but who had the pretension to serve it by means different from his.

The deep silence in the hall was re-established. The scattering conversation ceased. Robespierre was on the platform. His features, ordinarily impassible as a mask of marble, were now marked with a bitter irony, and he uttered his words in a voice that was at once curt, sonorous and metallic:

"It is not to me, citizens, that the flight of the first functionary of the State comes as a disastrous event. This day could be the finest day of the Revolution. It can still become so! The recovery of the forty millions which the entertainment of this royal individual costs would be the least of its blessings. But for that, citizens, other measures must be taken than those adopted by the National Assembly. And I seized the moment when the session was suspended to come here to speak to you of these measures, which there they do not allow me to propose. In deserting now his post, the King has chosen the very moment when the priests are trying to raise up against the Constitution all the idiots and blind-men who have survived the light of philosophy in the whole eighty-three departments of France; the moment when the Emperor of Austria and the King of Sweden are at Brussells to receive this perjured and deserting King. That does not alarm me a bit. Oh, no! Let Europe league herself against us—the Revolution will conquer Europe!

"No, I fear not the coalition of Kings," continued Robespierre, in a tone of proud disdain. "But do you know, fellow citizens, what frightens me? It is to hear our enemies hold the same language as we, it is to hear them exclaim like us, that we must rally to the defense of the Constitution. Louis XVI does not count alone on the assistance of foreign forces to re-enter his kingdom in triumph; he counts as well on the support of a party within, which to-day wears the mask of patriotism; of that party the National Assembly is the accomplice."

This new affirmation, so clear, so precise, of the culpable conduct of the Assembly excited afresh the murmurs of the Jacobins and the applause of the people. Every ear was strained to catch, with anxious impatience, the measures which Robespierre was about to announce as necessary to make this the most splendid day of the Revolution.

"What I have just said to you is the exact truth," proceeded Robespierre solemnly. "But could I make the National Assembly listen to the truth? No! I was not heard. Ah, I know, this denunciation is dangerous for me. What does that matter—it is useful for the public good. This denunciation will sharpen for me a thousand poniards! I shall become an object of hatred to my colleagues of the Assembly, who are nearly all counter-revolutionists—some through ignorance, others through fear, some through private reasons, others through blind confidence, others through corruption. I devote myself to hate—to death. I know it!" added Robespierre, with stoical tranquility.

"Ah! when, still unknown, I sat in the Assembly, I had already made the sacrifice of my life to truth, to the country.

But to-day, when I owe so much to the recognition, to the love of my friends, I accept death as a blessing. It will prevent me from witnessing inevitable evils."

Then, overcoming his passing emotion and returning to his natural inflexibility of bearing, he added in a voice short and firm:

"I have just held trial over the Assembly; now let it hold trial over me!"

The conclusion of this discourse produced an extraordinary effect upon the audience, and when Robespierre left the platform, the Jacobins rose with one spontaneous motion. Camille Desmoulins ran to the orator, and, his face moist with tears, said to Robespierre as he clasped him in a fraternal embrace:

"We shall die with you!"

One of the striking characteristics of Robespierre's policy was never to venture a motion when its success was problematical. Hence the apparent contradiction between the beginning and the end of the address he had just delivered. He had evidently intended to advise prompt and decisive measures against the royal power and against the Assembly; but, feeling the ground, and becoming assured that the measures he had to propose would meet with opposition among the Jacobins, Robespierre considered it wiser, more politic, to temporize, and to confine himself to casting suspicion upon the National Assembly.

Almost as soon as Robespierre left the tribunal, there were seen to enter the hall first Danton, a man of energy and action, and then Lafayette.

The presence of these two men, personifying respectively action and reaction, revolution and counter-revolution, drew forth from the meeting an obstreperous manifestation, part acclamation, part hisses. The exteriors of these two men offered a contrast in keeping with that of their opinions.

The young Marquis of Lafayette, tall of stature, slim, urbane, presented the accepted type of the grand seigneur. He wore with grace his uniform of commander-in-chief of the National Guard. Booted and spurred, his sword at his side, his hat under his arm, he entered that darksome hall where on every face he could read the sentiments of hostility which he called forth; and yet he advanced with the same aristocratic ease with which he would have presented himself in the Oeil-de-Boeuf, or court circle, at Versailles. His intrepid front bespoke the man insensible to danger; his piercing yet ever indecisive and fugitive glance, revealed a habit of conduct stamped with capability and cunning, yet always veering with his ambitions, and as changeable and diverse as the events which gave them birth; finally, his smile, which was almost invariably affable, courteous and insinuating, seemed to be ever courting popularity.

Danton, though also young and of athletic build, was careless of dress. The ill-restrained mettle of his carriage, his flashing eye, his countenance at once sensual and bold, idealistic and tender; his robust, sanguine and exuberant make-up, all bore testimony to the most contradictory qualities within him,—vices and virtues; energy and weakness; appalling cruelty and inexpressible, deep-seated tenderness; pettiness and heroism.

The presence of Danton in the hall of the Jacobins reawoke, re-excited the people. "There is Danton! There is Danton!" were the words which ran through the assembly with a thrill of curiosity, sympathy and confidence.

Danton mounted the tribunal, and in his thundering voice cried out:

"Citizens, on the result of this session hangs perhaps the safety of the country! The first functionary of the State has disappeared! Here, in this meeting, are assembled the men charged with the regeneration of France—some powerful in their genius, others in their influence! France will be saved if all internal dissension is hushed. That has not yet been done. Experience reveals to us the extent of our woes. I ought to speak, I shall speak, as if I were engraving history for posterity!

"And first," pursued Danton, indicating Lafayette with a gesture of contempt, "and first I interpellate Monsieur Lafayette, here present. I ask him what he has come to do here—he, at the Jacobins? He the signer of so many projected laws directed against liberty! He who demanded the dissolution of the Jacobin Club, composed almost entirely, according to him, of men without law, subsidized to perpetuate anarchy! He, who triumphantly led the inhabitants of the suburb of St. Antoine to the destruction of the dungeon of Vincennes, that last den of tyranny, and who, the same evening, accorded protection to the assassins who were armed with poniards to assist the King in his flight! Let us not deceive ourselves! That flight is the result of a conspiracy in which the public officials were confederates. And you, Lafayette, who answered with your head for the person of Louis XVI, have you paid your debt?"

In spite of this vehement apostrophe, which drew the applause of the people, Lafayette maintained his imperturbable coolness. He smiled, and indicated with a nod of his head that he wished to reply to the speaker.

"Citizens," continued Danton, "in order to save France, the people must take great satisfaction, and establish radical reforms. The people is tired of being braved by its enemies. It is anxious to send them back to oblivion. It is not a matter of altering the principle of the irrevocability of the Representatives of the people, but of expelling from the National Assembly and delivering to justice those of the deputies who call down civil war upon France by the audacity of an infamous rebellion. But if the voice of the defenders of the people is smothered, if our guilty officers put the country in danger, I shall appeal from them to posterity. It is for it to judge between them and me!"—

And Danton left the tribunal.

Great was the consternation of the populace, thus a second time deceived in its hopes; for the legitimate accusations hurled by the orator at Lafayette, and the vague proposition to drive the traitors from the Assembly, led to no positive measure, indicated no means of providing for the safety of the nation.

Lafayette stepped upon the platform just vacated by Danton. He comfortably established himself there. Then,

bowing with a grand air to the assembly, he laid down his hat, and said in a calm voice and with accents of perfect courtesy:

"Gentlemen, one of messieurs my predecessors did me the honor to ask why I had come to the Jacobins. I come to them because it is to them that all citizens should come in these times of crises and alarms. More than ever, gentlemen, must we now fight for liberty. I said among the first: 'A people that wishes to become free, holds its destiny in its own hands.' I was never more sure of liberty than after enjoying the spectacle presented to us by the capital during this day."

After a second obeisance to the audience, no less courteous than the first, the Marquis of Lafayette descended from the tribunal and quickly gained the door of the hall.

CHAPTER IV.

THE KING ARRESTED.

JUNE 26, 1791.—Last night Victoria and I were present at the return of Louis XVI to Paris. The King was arrested at Varennes, on the night of the 22nd of June. Citizen Drouet, an old dragoon and now master-of-the-post at St. Menehould, recognized Louis XVI under his disguise of valet-de-chambre while the coaches of the fugitive King were changing horses in his hostlery. The Queen, armed with a false passport, was traveling under the name of the Baroness of Korff and suite. Citizen Drouet did not dare arrest the fugitives at St. Menehould, the carriages being escorted by one of the detachments of dragoons and hussars which the Marquis of Bouillé, commander-in-chief at Metz, and accomplice in the flight of the King, had stationed along the road from Paris to the frontier. But after the departure of the royal coach Drouet took horse with one of his postillions, and following a short cut, arrived at Varennes ahead of the mysterious travelers. It was midnight. He at once gave the alarm and announced the speedy arrival of Louis XVI. The National Guard assembled under arms, and proceeded to arrest the King immediately upon his entering the town. Louis and his family were conveyed back to Paris by Barnave and Petion, the committee-men whom the Assembly had despatched on that errand.

During the days that elapsed between the King's flight and his forced return to Paris, diverse shades of opinion made themselves manifest in the capital. Brissot, in his journal, *The French Patriot*, summed up in clear and concise terms the consequences of the events which for five days had been agitating the city.

"What is to be done in the present circumstances?" said he. "Six plans are proposed: To abolish royalty and substitute for it a Republican government. To let the question of the King and royalty go before the nation for judgment. To judge the King by a national court. To demand his abdication. To remove Louis Capet and name a Regent—and, finally, to leave the King on the throne, and give him an elective cabinet. The first proposition is comprehensive: An end of Kings; let us be Republicans."

The sentiment for a Republic was growing greatly, as also was the public indignation against Louis XVI, and against the constitutionalist majority of the Assembly. Several causes worked toward these results, chief among them being the manifesto of the Marquis of Bouillé, the monarchist commander, addressed to the people, and winding up with the threat:

> I know my forces. Soon your chastisement will serve as a memorable example to posterity! That is how a man must speak to you in whom you at first inspired pity. Accuse no one of conspiracy against your infernal Constitution. The King did not give the orders that have been given: I alone have ordered everything. Against me, then, whet your daggers and prepare your poisons. You shall answer for the days of the King to all the Kings of the world. Touch a hair of his head, and there will not remain one stone upon another in Paris. I know the roads. I shall conduct the foreign armies. Farewell, messieurs; I end without comment. You know my sentiments.
>
> MARQUIS OF BOUILLÉ.

These insults, these menaces, addressed to the Revolution, to France in the name of all the Kings of the world by a royalist confidant and accomplice of Louis XVI, by a general who, "knowing the roads, would lead the foreign armies upon Paris, of which he would not leave one stone upon another," unveiled, with brutal frankness, the plan of the federated sovereigns. Nevertheless, such was the blindness of the National Assembly that instead of declaring the deposition of Louis XVI and bringing him before their bar, they contented themselves with decreeing: "That a guard be given to the King to be responsible for his person, and that the accomplices of his flight be examined by the committee-men of the Assembly, who will also hear the statements of Louis XVI and the Queen."

We went, Victoria and I, to the Elysian Fields, about six in the evening of the 25th of June, to be present at the entry of Louis into his good city of Paris.

A vast concourse of people covered the Elysian Fields and Louis XV Place. After great effort we succeeded in drawing near to the double cordon formed by the National Guard to allow a free passage to the royal cortege. A murmur beginning in the distance and drawing nearer and nearer announced the arrival of the King. General Lafayette passed by at a gallop, escorted by a brilliant staff of blue-bonnets, on his way to meet the carriages.

The brave Santerre, so highly esteemed by the inhabitants of the St. Antoine suburb, also passed by on horseback to join the royal escort. He was accompanied by two patriots, Fournier the American, and the Marquis of St. Huruque, one of those aristocrats who embraced the revolutionary cause. Santerre advanced at the head of his battalion, recruited among the districts of St. Antoine. Nearly every citizen in that corps, too needy to purchase a uniform, was dressed in his workman's habiliments. The greater part of them bore pike-staffs in lieu of guns. The aspect of these men—their half-bared breasts, their honest, energetic and bluff faces, their resolute attitude, their every-day working clothes, and their proletarian woolen caps—offered a striking contrast to that of the "Bearskins," as were called, from their head-gear, the grenadiers of the National Guard from the districts in the center of Paris, nearly all constitutional monarchists.

Soon, repeated nearer and nearer, were heard the words: "Here comes the King! Here comes Capet! Here are Monsieur and Madam Veto!" All eyes were turned toward the royal equipages. As they drove by, a storm began to gather, the lightning flickered and the thunder growled; the heavens grew dark and lent a doleful illumination to the spectacle of which we were the witnesses. A battalion of the National Guard, preceded by Lafayette's staff-officers, led the way; then came the two royal coaches. Ah, this was no longer the time of monarchic splendors, paid for out of the sweat of an enslaved people! This was no longer the time of gilded coaches, surrounded by pages and lackeys, and fleetly drawn by eight horses richly caparisoned, preceded by outriders in dashing liveries, escorted by equerries, guards, and gentlemen loaded with gold and silver broideries, and flashing like a dazzling whirlwind along the avenues of the royal parks!

The first of the two carriages in which the royal family and its suite were riding under escort, was an enormous yellow berlin, which had served Louis in his flight. Covered with dust and mire, it was dragged by six post-horses harnessed on with ropes, and mounted by postillions whose hats bore long tricolored ribbons and cockades.

The carriage went by at a walk, giving all a good view of the royal family. Louis XVI was dressed in a maroon suit with a straight collar—his disguise as valet-de-chambre to the pretended Baroness of Korff. He occupied a seat at the right, in the bottom of the berlin, at the side of which General Lafayette strutted on horseback. The bloated face of Louis XVI, imprinted with the spineless inertia of his character, expressed neither fear, nor anger, nor surprise. With his elbow he nudged the Queen, who was seated beside him, and pointed out to her with his finger one of the placards, which bore in large letters the words: "Silence, and remain covered, citizens. The King is to pass before his judges."

In the front part of the carriage we saw the King's sister, Madam Elizabeth, her face sad and sweet. She seemed greatly afraid, and held her eyes cast down. Close beside her was Petion, one of the commissioners of the Assembly, grave and severe. The other commissioner, Barnave, one of the chiefs of the Girondin party, a fine-looking young man, attached at times a furtive but passionate gaze upon Marie Antoinette, with whom, according to report, he was already seriously smitten. Between his knees he held the Dauphin, Marie Antoinette's son, a pretty child with golden curly hair, who laughed and smiled with boyish carefreeness.

The second coach contained the personages of the court who had participated in the King's escape. Next came a little open carriage trimmed with green twigs from which floated the tricolored flag. In this vehicle, standing erect, in an attitude of triumph, rode Drouet the post-keeper and his postillion William, both of whom had helped bring about the arrest of the King at Varennes.

The procession was closed by the St. Antoine battalion, commanded by Santerre. As it came in sight the people cried with one voice, "Long live the law! Long live the Nation!" Then the storm broke over Paris, and amidst such exclamations, mingled with the crashing of thunder, Louis XVI entered as a prisoner the palace of his fathers.

Such was the blindness of the Assembly in its bourgeois egotism, in its mistrust of the people, in its absurd hatred of republican government, that it still thought to impose upon France the authority of this King, disgraced, despised even by his own partisans, and convicted of perjury, treason, and conspiracy with the foreigner.

CHAPTER V.

THE DAY OF THE FIELD OF MARS.

July 17, 1791 (Midnight).—I have just returned to our lodging, my spirits still in the grip of horror and affright. I have been at the massacre of the Field of Mars. Curses upon Lafayette!

The recital of this mournful event, which must be charged to the bourgeoisie, will be of service to the sons of Joel.

From early morning, the weather was magnificent. Not a cloud flecked the azure of the sky. A great mass of people, myself among them, directed their steps toward the Field of Mars, men, women and children in holiday apparel. Every face breathed joy, and on all countenances shone satisfaction. At least as many women as citizens were in the throng. They, also, felt a legitimate pride in being able to prove their devotion to civic duty by affixing their names to a petition destined for the National Assembly.

About half after eight in the morning, as I reached Great Rock, near one of the gates of the esplanade of the Field of Mars, I heard shouts, and almost immediately the crowd before me turned and fell away on either side, as if a prey to some unspeakable horror. Then I saw approaching the giant Lehiron, marching at the head of a band of his brigands—Lehiron, whom I had thought killed by Franz of Gerolstein, but who, recovered from his wound,

reappeared before my eyes. On the end of a pike the villain carried a freshly severed head; one of his disciples carried a second head likewise transfixed on a pike-staff, and shouted: "Death to the aristocrats! To the lamp-post with the enemies of the people!" Several vixens, drunk and in tatters, had joined the assassins and echoed their cries of death. In the group I recognized, through their feminine masquerade, Abbot Morlet and his god-son, little Rodin.

The band of murderers with their frightful trophies passed before me like a horrid vision.

At last, about two o'clock in the afternoon, a deputation of Jacobins arrived. The spokesman informed the eager and attentive crowd that an address proposed the evening before had been withdrawn by the club, as it might be construed as a rebellion against the Assembly. The people were for an instant rendered dumb by disappointment. A number of voices cried out:

"Then draw us up another petition. We will sign it!"

The Jacobin spokesman and four chosen from among his fellow delegates, Citizens Peyre, Vachart, Robert, and Demoy, drew up on the instant an address, which Citizen Demoy read, as follows:

"ON THE ALTAR OF THE COUNTRY,
"FIELD OF MARS, JULY 17 OF THE YEAR III OF LIBERTY.

"Representatives of the Nation:

"You are approaching the end of your labors. A great crime has been committed. Louis XVI flees, unworthily abandons his post. The citizens arrest him at Varennes. He is brought back to Paris. The people of the capital immediately demand that the fate of the guilty one be left undecided until an expression of opinion be obtained from the eighty-three departments of France. A multitude of addresses demanded of you that you pass judgment on Louis XVI. You, gentlemen, have prejudged him innocent and inviolable!

"Legislators, such was not the opinion of the people. Justice must be done.

"Everything compels us to demand of you, in the name of all France, that you reconsider your decision, that you hold that the offense of Louis XVI is proven; that the King, by the very fact of his flight, has abdicated.

"Receive, then, his abdication.

"Legislators, convoke a new constituent power, which will proceed in a truly national manner to deal with this guilty King, and above all to the organization of a new executive power.

"Signed:
"PEYRE,
"VACHART,
"ROBERT,
"DEMOY."

The reading of the petition, concise, measured in terms, but marked with energy, was received with unanimous applause. Its summary tenor, repeated from mouth to mouth down the whole length of the Field of Mars, received the assent of everyone. Then began an admirable scene. The petitioners, men, women and children, forming in long files, in perfect order, to the left of the staging, stopped one by one at the foot of the Altar of the Country, placing their signatures upon the thick book, whose many pages were bound together with lacings, and then descended on the other side of the stage; and all without confusion, without outcry, as if each were deeply conscious of the importance of the civic act.

Toward three o'clock I saw three municipal officers, girt in their sashes, mount the stage. They were Leroux, Hardy, and Renaud. The Jacobin delegation having given them notice of the petition, one of the three, after reading it to his colleagues, addressed the multitude as follows:

"Citizens, your petition is perfectly legal. We are charmed at the sight presented to us. Everything here is being carried on in admirable order. Some have told us there was a riot on the Field of Mars; we are now convinced that the report is baseless. Far from interfering with the signing of your petition, we shall aid you with the public powers if anyone attempts to trouble you in the exercise of your rights."

The words of the committee of the Commune of Paris were applauded by the crowd. The committee left, and the people continued to pour towards the Altar of the Country to sign the lists.

The day drew to its close. The sun disappeared behind the hill of Meudon. The hour of eight sounded from the clock of the Military School. A part of the vast throng which surrounded me, setting out to regain their homes, turned their steps toward that entrance to the Field of Mars which gives upon Great Rock. Each one rejoiced that he had assisted at the great demonstration.

Suddenly, from the neighborhood of the Great Rock gate, towards which we were proceeding, we heard the sound of a large corps of drums, beaten at the double-quick; then, in the pauses of the march, the heavy rumbling of several pieces of artillery; almost at the same instant, but further off, in the direction of the gate near the Military School, sounded the trumpet calls of cavalry; and finally, more distant still, the snarl of other drums from the quarter of the bridge leading across the Seine from the end of the field. The vast parade-ground, surrounded by walls whose perpendicular sides overhung great moats, was thus being invaded by an armed force advancing at once toward the three outlets through which the people intended to return to Paris. The immense deploy of troops, infantry, cavalry and artillery, converging in unison upon the Field of Mars, filled with an inoffensive multitude at the point of leaving it, caused great and general surprise, but at first aroused neither fear nor suspicion. The groups around me, yielding to innocent curiosity and to the love of sight-seeing native in the Parisian, quickened their steps "to see the soldiers go by," all the while asking themselves what could be the object of this massing of military forces. The advance guard of the column which entered by the Great Rock gate, was composed of the battalion of the National Guard

called, from their district, the Daughters of St. Thomas. Then followed General Lafayette, surrounded by his brilliant staff, and finally Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, accompanied by several municipal officers. One of these carried a staff around which was furled a piece of red cloth, hardly visible, for I had not noticed it except for the exclamation of an old man in front of me:

"Meseems they hoist the red flag! I believe that is not done except in the presence of public danger, in case of insurrection, or when martial law has been proclaimed from the City Hall!"

"In that case," anxiously queried the spectators, "can they have proclaimed martial law in the interior of Paris?" "Is there, then, trouble, or a tumult of the people, or an insurrection in the city? What about?"

While these words were being anxiously exchanged around me, the apparition of the almost invisible bit of red bunting, the expression of sinister glee I had just remarked on the faces of several inebriated National Guardsmen who, marching past the crowd, tapped their guns, crying "We shall send a few pills into the Jacobins;"—all these circumstances connected themselves in my mind and forced upon me all too clear a premonition of what was about to occur. The batteries of artillery had commenced to disgorge through the Great Rock gate when the bourgeois guard which was in line halted, and, deploying before its banner, advanced, with leveled guns and quickened pace, upon the multitude, which recoiled before it. At the same instant the cavalry entered at a rapid trot by the gate near the Military School, while the other column poured in by the bridge over the Seine. By this simultaneous manoeuvre the forty thousand persons or thereabouts who still remained in the Field of Mars, surrounded by embankments and walls, saw themselves hemmed in on every side by the troops who occupied the gates.

Vain would be any attempt on my part to give an idea of the stupor, then the fright, and soon the panic, which seized the helpless multitude. Great God, what a picture! What heartrending cries! What shrieks of children, of women, mingling with the imprecations of men whose energy became paralyzed, either by the physical impossibility of doing anything in the crush, or by their preoccupation to safeguard a wife, a mother, a daughter, or children of tender age, exposed to smothering, or to being trampled under foot!

Suddenly I saw appear, on top of one of the embankments, Lehiron and about a score of his cut-throat band, accompanied by some tattered, bare-headed urchins who cried:

"Down with the National Guard! Down with the blue-bonnets! Down with Lafayette!"

While his followers rained a hail of rocks at the city guard, Lehiron drew a pistol from his pocket, and, without even taking aim, discharged his weapon in the direction of the General's staff, shouting:

"Death to Lafayette!"

At the same moment, without unfurling the red flag, without Mayor Bailly having issued a single order, a company of the city guard opened fire, but shot in the air in the direction of the bank occupied by Lehiron and his pack. This first fusillade, although harmless, nevertheless threw the populace into inexpressible terror. Almost immediately, we were pierced by volleys from the whole platoon, this time deadly. I saw the face of the fine old man who had stood in front of me blanch under the blood which poured from his riddled forehead. A young woman who held her four or five-year-old son above her head lest he be smothered in the press, felt her child grow rigid and heavy; he had been shot through the body. Piercing cries or suppressed moans uttered on all sides of me told that other shots also had taken effect. The fusillade continued. A frenzy of flight, of everyone for himself, fell upon the huddled mass; the people elbowed and trod upon one another. In the midst of this frightful pell-mell, I lost my balance and fell over the body of the old man, which had until then been supported erect by the crowding of my neighbors. The aged body saved my life; it prevented me from being crushed under the feet of the throng. Nevertheless, I received several deep wounds on the head. I felt the blood flow copiously from them. My senses swam, and I completely lost consciousness.

When I came to myself, the clock of the Military School was striking ten. The moon, from the midst of a cloudless and star-strewn sky, lighted up the Field of Mars. The coolness of the night revived me. My first thought was for my sister—what anguish must have been hers! I saw, here and there, the wandering lights of several lanterns, by aid of which men and women had come to seek out among the dead and dying those whom they had left behind them.

Soon, some distance from me, I perceived a woman, tall and slender, in a white robe. This woman bore no lantern; she came and went hurriedly; halting and bending over, she contemplated the victims, she seemed to interrogate their features. My heart bounded; I divined that it was Victoria.

"Sister!" I cried, weakly.

I was not deceived. Learning by the popular rumor of the massacre which had taken place, Victoria had run to the Field of Mars to find me. Her tender cares summoned back my strength. She stanched the blood from my wounds, dressed them, and, supporting me on her arm, assisted me to the gate opening on Great Rock. We passed by the scaffolding on which had been erected the Altar of the Country. The steps were buried under corpses.

Arrived home with Victoria, I wished, after an hour's rest, to inscribe in my journal this very night the record of this fatal day of the 17th of July, 1791.

I have added to my record the following fragment of an article from the paper of Camille Desmoulins, explaining the causes of the massacre of the Field of Mars. Desmoulins's account, save in one point noted by me, is scrupulously exact. I copy it literally:

"Camille Desmoulins, sending to Lafayette his resignation as journalist:

> "'Tis wrong we were, the thing is far too clear,
> And our good guns have settled this affair.

"Lafayette, liberator of two worlds! Flower of janissary chieftains! Phoenix of constable-majors! Don Quixote of the Capets and the two chambers! Constellation of the White Horse! I improve the first moment that I touch a land of liberty to send you the resignation as journalist and as national censor which you have for so long been demanding of me. I place it also at the feet of Monsieur Bailly and his red flag. I feel that my voice is too feeble to raise itself above that of thirty thousand cowards and also of your satellites, above the din of your four hundred drums and your hundreds of cannon....

"You and your accomplices in the City Hall and the Assembly feared the expression of the views of the people of Paris, which will soon become those of all France. You feared to hear your sentence pronounced by the nation in person, seated on its bed of justice, in the Field of Mars. 'What shall we do?' you asked yourselves.

"'Eh, call to our aid martial law!' Against peaceful and unarmed petitioners, who were quietly practising their right of assemblage!

"Or, that is what the Constitutionals imagined, to the end of gratifying us a second time with martial law; and, instead of hanging one man (as the baker Francis), they massacred two."

At this point Camille Desmoulins recounts the arrest of two individuals found during the morning hiding under the Altar of the Country, and continues:

"The cowards, the back-sliding bandits, counterfeiting the appearance of exaggerated patriots, threw themselves upon the two unfortunates, tore them to pieces, cut off their heads, and went to promenade them about Paris.

"Thus sought they to prepare the citizens, by the horror of the spectacle, to support the declaration of martial law. Immediately the news spread in the city, with the rapidity of lightning—'Two heads have been struck off in the Field of Mars.' Then, 'Out upon the petitioners, the Jacobins and the Cordeliers!' Thus were the municipal officers bewitched."

Here Desmoulins forgets or passes over in silence the honorable conduct of a minority of the council of the Commune of Paris. The three councilmen, learning on their return from the Field of Mars of the proclamation of martial law, were astounded, and affirmed and testified on their honor that the most admirable order reigned on the concourse, that they had looked into the address to the Representatives of the people; that it was perfectly in place and legitimate; that they had assured the petitioners that, far from troubling them in the exercise of their duty, the municipal authority would protect them with all care. In fine, the three officers, deeply moved and indignant, exclaimed with tears in their eyes that it would disgrace them, ruin them, to march against petitioners to whom they had pledged and guaranteed complete security. But in spite of the generous words of the three officers, Lafayette excited his pretorians; they cried, goes on Camille Desmoulins:

"'There is the red flag already flung out. The most difficult thing is done. Now, if all the clubs, all the fraternal societies would meet at the Field of Mars to sign the petition for the abdication of Louis XVI, what a bowl of nectar that Jacobin blood would be to our palates!'

"And so the pretorians pushed their measures. They assembled ten thousand troops: infantry, cavalry, artillery. The night, the time set for marching, having come, Lafayette's three aides-de-camp spread themselves in the public places, declaring that their General had been assassinated by a Jacobin. But properly to judge of the fury of these idolaters, these blue-bonnets of the Nero of two worlds, one should have seen them in one moment pour furiously from their pens, or, rather, from their dens. They loaded with ball in plain view of the people; on all sides the drums beat the assembly; the twenty-seven battalions most heavily composed of aristocrats received the order to march upon the Field of Mars. They inflamed themselves to the massacre. As they loaded their muskets they were heard to say: *We shall send some pills into the Jacobins*. The cavalry flourished their sabers. It was half after eight in the evening when the red flag was unrolled as the signal for the massacre of inoffensive petitioners. The battalions arrived at the Field of Mars, not by one sole entrance, in order that the citizens might disperse, but by all the three issues at once, that the petitioners might be enclosed from all sides. And here is the final perfidy, that which caps the climax of the horrors of the day. These volleys—all delivered without orders—were fired upon petitioners, who seeing death advancing from all sides, and unable to flee, received them as they embraced the Altar of the Country, which in an instant was heaped with the corpses of the slain."

Such was the melancholy day of the Field of Mars. And yet the will of the petitioners—the forfeiture of Louis XVI's right to the crown and consequently the establishment of the Republic—was so sane, so logical, so inevitable by the march of events and the force of affairs, that the following year saw Louis suspended from the throne upon accusation of high treason, and saw the National Convention proclaim the Republic. But alas! how many victims!

CHAPTER VI.

WAR AND COUNTER-WAR.

After the massacre of the Field of Mars, the reaction thought itself all-powerful, and entered pitilessly upon its career of repression. The presses of the patriot journals were destroyed, their writers forced to flee or go into hiding. The clubs, under the weight of intimidation, remained almost silent.

Re-established in full power, Louis XVI immediately renewed his intrigues, within France with the enemies of the

Revolution, the nobility and priesthood, and without, with the Emigrant nobles, and foreign sovereigns.

The Constituent Assembly, having finished its labors, submitted the Constitution to the royal sanction, and declared itself dissolved on September 29, 1791. Although covertly resolved to tear the Constitution to shreds, the King solemnly swore to uphold it. The Constituent Assembly gave place to the Legislative Assembly. According to its own enactment, none of the old members could be re-elected. Robespierre and the other minority leaders no longer held their seats, therefore, among the Representatives of the people; but the principles which inspired the minority in the Constituent, became, through the majority of the Legislative Assembly, the expressed general opinion of France. The spirit of the Revolution was resuscitated by the elections. The Right of the new Assembly was not composed, as that of the Constituent, of grand seigneurs, cardinals, bishops, bourgeois aristocrats, men of the court or the sword, defenders of the old régime; the Right of the Legislative Assembly was occupied by the Constitutional party, represented outside the Assembly by the Club of the Feuillants. The heads of this party, Lafayette, Mathieu, Dumas, Ramond, Vaublanc, Beugnot, and others, sought the continuance in power of Louis XVI and the Constitution. The leaders of the Left were, to a great extent, from the department of the Gironde, whence the name of Girondins, applied to Vergniaud, Guadet, Gensonné, Ducos and their companions. Their leanings were either purely republican, or were on the way to become so. Finally Bazire, Chabot and Merlin sat at the extreme Left; but this faction, as well as that of the Girondins, was devoted to the Revolution, and determined to defend it by all means. The Center of the Assembly, undecided and watery, voted as the spirit moved them, sometimes with the Left, sometimes with the Right. In short, the majority of the body, no longer able to doubt the treason of Louis XVI or his secret understanding with the foreign coalition, was undisguisedly hostile to royalty. It even decided, at its first session, to suppress, in the reports of the representatives of the sovereign people and its executive committee, those ridiculous appellations of *Sire* and *Majesty*, the superannuated relics of monarchical fetichism.

Louis XVI, on his part, believing himself sure of the assistance of the foreign sovereigns, and counting, within, on the activity of the clergy and the complicity of the generals and officers of the National Guard, obstinately defied the Assembly. The King chose his ministry from the Feuillant Club, notoriously counter-revolutionary. In vain did the Assembly render its decrees against the priests, who were fanning the fires of civil war; against the aristocrats, who were flocking to join the body of Emigrants gathered in arms on the frontier. Louis XVI opposed his veto to the execution of these decrees. Soon there came to light the odious plot of the foreign war, organized between the King, the ministers, the court party, and the despots of Europe. The Emigrants made open preparations on the frontiers for an armed invasion under the protection of the German princes bordering on France, and were to serve as advance guard to the troops of the coalition. These threatening preparations aroused the Representatives. Isnard mounted the tribunal and exclaimed:

"Representatives of the people, let us rise to the height of our office. Let us speak to the King, to his ministers, to Europe, with the firmness that befits us. Let us say to the King: You reign but by the people and for the people. The people alone is sovereign! Let us say to the ministers: Choose between public gratitude and the vengeance of the laws. Let us say to Europe: France draws her sword; the scabbard she will fling away. Then she will wage to the death the war of the peoples against the Kings, and soon the people will embrace before the spectacle of their dethroned tyrants; the earth will be consoled, the heavens satisfied!"

Meanwhile Louis cloaked himself in a well-feigned submission to the orders of the Assembly. He promised to hold off the German princes firmly and with dignity. 'Twas the promise of a King! Under the pretext of possible eventualities of war, he chose as Minister of War the Count of Narbonne, a young courtier crammed with ambition and audacity. The latter organized three army corps, placing the first under the command of the Marquis of Lafayette, and giving the other two to the Marquis of Rochambeau and Marshal Lukner, two enemies of the Revolution.

Robespierre, Danton, and Billaud-Varenne were farsighted enough to detect the conspiracy hidden beneath these ostensible preparations for war. In the memorable meeting of the Jacobins, of the 12th of December, 1791, several orators of the republican party gave utterance to their sentiments.

"Far be it from me to raise my voice against the cruel necessity of an inevitable war," declared Billaud-Varenne. "No! For when in 1789 people were congratulating themselves, saying that never had a revolution cost so little blood, I always answered: A people which breaks the yoke of tyranny can never seal its liberty irrevocably save by tracing the decree which consecrates it with the points of their bayonets! These must be plunged at least into the breasts of our enemies! Only by combating them can we be freed of them forever!"

"If it were a question of deciding whether, actually, we were to have war, I would answer, Yes," declared Danton in turn. "Yes, the clarions of war resound; yes, the exterminating angel of liberty will smite the satellites of despotism. But when are we to have the war? Is it not after having well judged our situation, after having weighed everything, after having deeply scrutinized the intentions of the King who is going to propose war to us? Let us be on our guard against the Executive."

Thus did Billaud-Varenne denounce at the Jacobins the plan of the counter-revolution, of which war was the mask. Thus did Danton, while sharing the same suspicion, nevertheless incline toward war, asking only that before the declaration of hostilities, the Assembly should scan closely the intentions of Louis XVI. Brissot took the floor and spoke for war, but a revolutionary war.

Robespierre finally arose to the tribunal:

"It seems to me that those who desire to provoke war have only adopted that opinion through insufficient scrutiny of the nature of the war we are about to embark upon, and of the circumstances with which we find ourselves surrounded. What sort of a war is it proposed that we declare? Is it a war of one nation against other nations? Is it a war of one king against other kings? Is it a war of revolution by a free people against the tyrants who override other peoples? No! What they propose to us, citizens, is the war of all the enemies of the French Revolution against the Revolution itself! This I shall prove by examining what has occurred up to this day, from the administration of the Duke of Broglie who in 1789 proposed to annihilate the National Assembly, up to that of the last successors of this

minister....

"Behold what tissues of prevarication and perfidy, of violence and of ruse! Behold the subsidized sedition! Behold the conduct of the court and of the ministry! And is it to that ministry, is it to those agents of the executive power, that you would entrust the conduct of the war? Is it thus you would abandon the safety of the country to those who wish to destroy you?

"The thing which you have most cause to fear, is war. War is the greatest scourge which can, in our present circumstances, menace liberty! For it is in no wise a war kindled by the enmity of peoples. It is a war concerted by the enemies of our Revolution. What are their probable designs? What use would they make of these military forces, this augmentation of power which they ask of you under the pretext of war? They seek, in strengthening the powers of the crown, to force us to a deal! If we refuse, these royalists will then attempt to fasten it upon us by the force of the arms which you will have put into their hands.

"What, there are rebels to punish? The Representatives of the people aimed at them with a decree, and the King opposed his veto to the decree! Instead of allowing the punishment, imposed by the Assembly upon the Emigrants, to take its course, the King proposes a declaration of war, a sham war, whose only aim is to place a formidable military force at the disposal of the enemies of the Revolution, or to open to them our frontiers, thanks to the treason of the aristocratic generals still at the head of our armies! There you have the secret workings of this cabinet intrigue! There is the heart of this complot in which we shall be lost if we allow ourselves to be taken by the snare so craftily colored with patriotism and martial ardor, sentiments so strong in the French spirit."

The sagacity of Robespierre thus tore the veil off the double project of Louis and the Austrian Committee, that perennial hotbed of conspiracy. The soul of this Committee was the Queen, and its numerous emissaries maintained relations with the Emigrant nobles and the foreign Kings; but Louis XVI and his court, by the sublimation of duplicity, carried treason within treason. They deceived even their accomplices.

Louis XVI wanted war because he reckoned on a victory by the allied Kings, and upon their early entry into Paris. Lafayette and his party never mingled in this machination against the country; hence, in order to obtain their support for the declaration of hostilities, Louis had to feign to conspire with them for the triumph of the constitutional kingdom and monarchic institutions.

The Girondins, scenting peril and treachery, sought to conjure away the dangers of the situation by imposing on Louis XVI three ministers whom they thought worthy of their confidence: General Dumouriez was charged with Foreign Affairs; Servan with the Department of War; and Roland with the ministry of the Interior. Dumouriez was a man of war, resourceful, bold and fiery, cunning and subtle of policy, but already grown old in underground intrigue and occult diplomacy; ambitious, cynical, intemperate of habit, covetous to the point of exaction, unreasonable in pride, without virtues, without principles, capable of serving valiantly the Republic and the Revolution, or of shamefully betraying both, according to the exigencies of his interest or ambition. Servan, an officer of genius, was a soldier of integrity, industry and modesty. He was capable and upright, and devoted to the Revolution. Roland was one of the purest and most beautiful characters of the time—simple, stoical, austere, disinterested, of scrupulous honesty, and with a firmness of will equal to the rigidity of his republican convictions, which were shared by his young and charming wife, the soul of the Girondin party, where she reigned as much by the loftiness of her spirit as by her qualities of heart and the attraction of her person.

On April 19, 1792, the Assembly declared war on Austria. Some days after the opening of the campaign the army corps under Count Theobald of Dillon, was, at the first engagement, stampeded before the armies of the coalition. The royalist officers gave the cry "Each for himself!" and provoked a panic among the troops. The army fled in full rout. The enemy crossed our frontiers and the heart of France fell under the menace of the foreign cohorts.

The Girondins recognized the trap into which their patriotism had led them, and spurred by the realization took three active revolutionary measures. They pronounced a sentence of exile upon the fractious priests, the promoters of civil war, who refused to stand by the Constitution; they had the Assembly decree the dissolution of the paid guard of Louis XVI; and they ordered the establishment of a camp of twenty thousand men around Paris, to form a reserve army and to cover the threatened capital. But Louis entered upon an open war with the Assembly, maintained his veto in the matter of the refractory priests, and refused to sanction the organization of the camp at Paris. Roland and Servan, the two patriot ministers, were unseated the 13th of June, and Louis formed a new cabinet, choosing its members from among the enemies of the people.

Still in the dark as to the designs of Louis XVI, and believing that the moment for a coup-d'-etat had arrived, Lafayette wrote from his camp a threatening letter to the Assembly, under date of June 16. The Assembly summoned Lafayette before its bar. He refused to appear. His trial was carried on without him, and he was acquitted by an immense majority. The clubs were thrown into a ferment. Danton at the Cordeliers, Robespierre at the Jacobins, organized for the 20th of June a peaceful demonstration to celebrate the anniversary of the oath of the Tennis Court, and to give Louis XVI a solemn warning. A huge multitude, swelled by women and children, gathered and marched down from the suburbs. The men were in arms; each district dragged its cannon with it. The delegates of the demonstration appeared at the bar of the Assembly. The spokesman delivered himself of his message:

"Legislators, the people comes this day to make you share its fears and its disquietudes. This day recalls to us the memorable date of the twentieth of June, 1789, at the Tennis Court, when the Representatives of the nation met and vowed before heaven not to abandon our cause, to die in its defense. The people is up and alive to what is occurring; it is ready to take decisive measures to avenge its outraged majesty. These rigorous measures are justified by Article II of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, Resistance to Oppression."

While part of the manifestants stationed themselves in the vicinity of the meeting hall of the Assembly, a large body of them planted a tree, symbolic of Liberty, in the garden of the Tuileries. The invasion of the palace gardens was accomplished with perfect order. Louis stood upon a chair in the recess of a window, surrounded by a detachment of National Guards.

One citizen, bearing a red cap on the end of a pole, passing in turn before the King, stopped for an instant and cried "Long live the Nation!" Then Louis XVI, leaning over and making a sign to the citizen to approach his pole nearer, voluntarily took the red cap and placed it on his head. A burst of fervid applause, from everyone who witnessed it, greeted the King's act.

It was a day of suffocating heat; and Louis, seeing a National Guardsman with a water-gourd, indicated by signs that he wished to drink. The guard with alacrity offered his gourd to the King, who slowly quaffed its contents.

But the demonstration of the 20th of June changed in nothing the disposition of the court. Louis XVI continued his shady machinations, and, on the 25th of July, the Duke of Brunswick, generalissimo of the armies of the coalition, issued, in the name of the King of Prussia, the Emperor of Austria, and the Germanic Confederation, a manifesto against France.

The plans of the court were that the Duke of Brunswick, at the head of the Prussians, should cross the Rhine at Coblenz, ascend the left bank of the Moselle, attack that point, and march upon Paris by way of Longwy, Verdun and Chalons. The Prince of Hohenlohe, commanding the troops of the duchy of Hesse and a body of Emigrants, was to march on Thionville and Metz. General Clairfayt, at the head of the troops of the Emperor of Austria and another corps of Emigrants, was to cross the Meuse and make his way to Paris by Rheims and Soissons. Other bodies of the hostile army, placed on the northern frontier and along the Rhine, were to attack the French troops and assist the convergent march of the coalition upon the capital, which they were to seize.

The publication of the manifesto of the tyrants, so far from crushing the energy of the Revolution, exalted it to the pitch of heroism. The journal *The Revolutions of Paris* renders in glowing terms its account of the spirit in Paris and the departments:

"The National Assembly has at last pronounced the terrible formula, the signal of peril, the appeal to the courage of the people: *The nation is in danger!* The danger is, in fact, immense. The Directorate of the department of Paris is the most potent instrument the court has served itself with to beat down liberty. The majority of the other Directorates of departments, all the administrators, all the tribunals of justice, all the constituted authorities, are also either openly or covertly the accomplices of Louis XVI, of Marie Antoinette the Austrian, and of the courts of Berlin and Vienna. Louis XVI affords striking protection to all the fanatics, the artificers of civil war. This enemy, disguised under the name of the Constitutional King of France, does more harm of himself than all the other despots of Europe ever could. France is fallen into a state of convulsion, which will precipitate her into either slavery or anarchy. The country is in danger; the people is in insurrection! Frenchmen, you have at last become free!

"France has but two dangerous enemies: Lafayette and Louis XVI; and if the latter were stricken down, Lafayette would no longer exist.

"Then let Louis XVI be driven forever from the throne, and the nation is saved! People, to arms!"

Indeed, an insurrection alone could save public affairs. On August 4 Danton said at the Cordeliers: "The people must be appealed to, they must be shown that the Assembly can not save them. There is no safety save in a general rebellion."

"There is but one question to solve," said Robespierre on the 9th of the same month, at the Jacobins; "That question is the deposition of Louis XVI."

From the beginning of the month of August, the ferment in Paris was on the increase. Every patriot instinctively felt the approach of grave public danger, and vied with his comrades in the effort to overcome it.

The Sections of Paris met nightly to deliberate on public matters. The Section of the Blind Asylum, or "Quinze-Vingts," in the suburb of St. Antoine which was the most influential of all, took the initiative in the measures for insurrection, with this manifesto:

MINUTES OF THE SECTION OF THE BLIND ASYLUM, AUGUST, 9, 1792.

> The Section received the commissioners of the following Sections: Fish-Wife, Good-News, Carpet-Shop, Montreuil, Gravillieurs, Beaubourg, Red-Cross, Culvert, Lombards, Ill-Counsel, Popincourt, the Arsenal, the Tuileries, etc., etc. All have adopted the decisions of the Section of the Blind Asylum, recognizing that they were armed solely for the safety of public affairs and the regeneration of France.
>
> An address was read from the federates of the eighty-two departments, asking the Sections of Paris to assemble in arms.
>
> On the motion of its members, the Section decided that each of the Sections of Paris shall name three committee-men, the same to meet at the City Hall of Paris, replace the present Municipal Council, and consider the means necessary for the public weal.
>
> The Sections shall receive no orders other than those coming from a majority of their committee-men, forming the *Commune of Paris*.
>
> The committee-men named to represent at the Commune the Section of the Blind Asylum are Huguenin, Rossignol, and Balin.

Each Section formulated the powers given by it to its committee-men in the new council of the Commune of Paris. Thus, the formula of the Blind Asylum Section read: "The Section gives to its committee-men unlimited power to do everything to save the country." Prominent among the committee-men elected by the Sections to the new council were Robespierre, Billaud-Varenne, Fabre D'Eglantine, Chaumette, and Fouquier-Tinville.

The first act of the members of this revolutionary Commune was to march to the City Hall on the night of the 9th of August, and in the name of the sovereign people, whose representatives they were, to depose the old Municipal

Council from its functions, with the following decree:

> The Assembly of the Committee-men of the Sections, assembled with full power to save the common weal, considering that the first measure of safety is to seize all the powers that have been delegated to the Commune of Paris, and to remove from the staff of the National Guard the evil influence that it has upon the public liberty, decree:
>
> 1.º The staff is suspended from its functions.
>
> 2.º The Municipal Council is suspended. Citizen Petion, Mayor, and Citizen Roederer, attorney for the Commune, shall continue their duties.

These measures taken in the name of the majority of the citizens of Paris, according to the powers conferred upon it, the new Commune of Paris organized and established itself in permanence in the City Hall, ready to conduct itself in line with the Revolution; while the people loaded their muskets and cannon and prepared to march on the palace of the Tuileries.

CHAPTER VII.

TRIUMPHANT INSURRECTION.

Called to my place in the battalion of my Section, the Section of the Pikes, I found myself on guard at the National Assembly on this night of the 9th of August. About half after eleven, just as I finished my watch, I heard the assembly beat, and the bells ringing. Soon there arrived in haste, some alone, some in groups, a large number of the popular Representatives. Awakened by the tocsin and the drum, they were repairing to their meeting place, laboring under the presentiment of some untoward event. Otherwise the greatest quiet reigned about the quarter of the Tuileries. Being now off duty, I hastened to one of the public galleries of the Assembly, which, despite the lateness of the hour, were not long in filling with an eager, restless crowd, composed, for the most part, of women, young girls, and old men. The male constituency which usually attended the sessions was this time occupied elsewhere; that is to say, they had scattered to the ends of Paris where they were preparing the revolt. All the working men were under arms.

In the center of the semicircle formed by the great hall of the Riding Academy, in which the Assembly was sitting, rose the rostrum, with the arm-chair of the president. Behind the chair opened a sort of recess, enclosed by a grating. It was the place assigned to the short-hand writers, or *logotachygraphes* as they were called, persons skilled in the art of writing with the speed of speech, who were charged with transcribing the discourses of the speakers.

It was the common word in the galleries that all the Sections of Paris were assembling in arms in their respective quarters, and that their committee-men had gone to the City Hall to exercise the powers of the Commune of Paris. It was also said that the federates of Marseilles, gathered at the Cordeliers, had sent a patrol into the neighborhood of the Tuileries, and arrested, near the Carousel, a counter-patrol of royalists, among whom were the journalist Suleau, Abbot Bourgon, and an ex-bodyguard named Beau-Viguier. Further it was declared that two thousand former nobles had been called together at the Tuileries, as well as a large number of veteran officers or body-guardsmen, to defend the palace. Some said that the Swiss regiments, re-enforced by those from the barracks of Courbevoie, were at the palace, supported by a formidable battery of artillery, and that Mandat, commander of the National Guard, had announced that he would crush the insurrection. The approaches to the palace were guarded by gendarmes afoot and on horse. Everything pointed to a desperate resistance should a struggle be engaged between the people and the defenders of the Tuileries.

About two o'clock in the morning the Representatives, to the number of about two hundred, decided to convene the session. The tocsin, accompanied by the distant din of the drums beating the assembly or the forward march, was still to be heard. In the absence of the president of the Assembly, Citizen Pastoret took the chair, and the secretaries assumed their places at the table.

Hardly had the session been opened when the delegates of the Lombards Section appeared. The leader of the deputation, wearing a red cap and carrying his gun, strode forward and cried:

"Citizen Representatives, the court is betraying the people! The Lombards Section has joined the insurrection, and at break of day will do its duty in the attack on the Tuileries. We go to meet our brothers."

"The people should respect the law and the Constitution," was the answer of Pastoret.

At these words of Citizen Pastoret, loud murmurs arose from the extreme Left. Pastoret yielded the chair to Morlot, the president, who had come in; and at the same time there appeared at the bar of the Assembly three officers of the old Municipal Council.

"You have the floor," said the president to them.

Pale and quavering one of the officers spoke: "The alarm bell sounds in Paris! The ferment is at its height! Everywhere the Sections are gathering in arms. Several of our colleagues, sent to the City Hall to learn how matters stood, have been arrested. The insurgents are preparing to march at daybreak upon the Tuileries."

"An act of high justice!" cried one of the members of the Left. "Within the Tuileries' walls resides the bitterest

enemy of the public good! He must be annihilated by the sovereign people!"

The words were greeted with enthusiastic applause from the galleries; in the midst of which a hussar hurriedly approached the chair and delivered a letter to the president. The latter read it, and touched his bell as a signal for silence. When the cries of the gallery had partially subsided, he said:

"Gentlemen, I am advised by the police officials that every minute messengers come from the Sections asking for Monsieur Petion at the City Hall, assuring them that the rumor has spread that he went to-night to the palace, and that he runs great danger of death; it is feared the royalists may assassinate him."

At these words the uneasiness and agitation of the galleries was extreme. The patriotism, the courage of Petion, his boundless devotion to the Revolution, had made him dear to the people.

At this moment Petion himself entered the hall and advanced to the bar. Thus reassured on the score of the dangers run at the Tuileries by the Mayor of Paris, the galleries broke into loud acclamations.

"Monsieur Petion," the president said, "the Assembly has been keenly anxious for your safety. It would be pleased to receive your account of the dangers to which it is said you were exposed."

Petion answered, calm and grave: "Occupied solely with public affairs, I quickly forget what affects my own person. It is true that to-night, on my arrival at the palace, I was quite illy greeted. Swords leaped from their scabbards, and I heard threats uttered against me. These did not disconcert me—"

The first rays of the sun were beginning to dim the lamps which lighted the hall; nearly all the Representatives of the people were assembled in their accustomed places. The Right seemed thrown into consternation by Petion's calmness.

Of a sudden a deputy came tumbling into the hall, rushed to his seat on the Right, and, his features distorted, his clothes in disorder, he cried in a voice trembling with emotion:

"The Tuileries will be attacked! The Sections, in arms, hold all the approaches to the palace! Whole companies of the National Guard, notably the cannoniers, are fraternizing with the Sections. The cannon are trained upon the palace. The troops who defend it are decided on a desperate struggle. Blood will flow, the lives of the King and his family are in danger!"

The Assembly maintained a solemn silence. One deputy on the Right arose, and with a trembling voice said: "I ask that a committee be appointed this instant to go and invite the King and his family to come and place themselves in the heart of the Assembly, to be under our protection."

"There is no necessity for your motion," answered the president; "the Constitution leaves the King the power of placing himself in the heart of the Assembly whenever he finds it convenient."

A justice of the peace, in a condition of extreme agitation, presented himself at the bar. "Monsieur President," he exclaimed, "a quarter of an hour ago I was in the courtyard of the Tuileries. I witnessed grave things, which may enlighten the Assembly on the situation at the palace, at this moment when a terrible struggle is about to break out, which may mark the foundering of the monarchy."

"Speak, sir," replied the president.

"This morning at six o'clock, the King descended into the courtyard of the Tuileries to review the troops. The Queen accompanied him; behind them went a group of gentlemen in civilian dress, armed some with swords, some with hunting-knives, others with carbines, or blunderbusses. This unaccustomed escort first of all produced a very bad impression upon the National Guard; then, as firm and decisive as was the Queen's countenance, that of the King was undecided, embarrassed, I would even say sour. He seemed to be still half asleep. Some cries, nevertheless, of 'Long live the King!' were heard from some of the companies, but the battalions from Red-Cross and all the cannoniers cried 'Long live the Nation!' I even heard some cries of 'Down with Veto!' 'Down with the traitor!' The King turned pale, made a gesture of wrath, and returned brusquely into the palace. The Queen, left in the courtyard, approached the staffs of the battalions of Ill-Counsel and Arcis which had just arrived, and said to them, indicating the group of gentlemen who attended her, 'These gentlemen are our best friends. They follow us at the moment of danger. They will show the National Guard how one dies for his King—'"

The justice was interrupted, his voice was drowned in the great tumult which arose outside, in the courtyard of the Riding Academy. Nearer and nearer drew the clamors. Many of the deputies rose to their feet; some climbed down precipitately from their benches, crying in affright, "The people are invading the Assembly!" "Keep your places!" called out several of their colleagues to those who had quitted their seats, "Let us know how to die, if die we must, at our posts." The agitation waxed its greatest in the hall and the galleries. In vain the president rang his bell, begging his colleagues to return to their benches and be seated. His exhortations falling unheeded, he rose and put on his hat, as a sign that the session was closed. The cries without came closer and closer. Several ushers burst in. One of them, leaping up the steps to the chair, spoke a few words to the president. The latter clasped his hands with a gesture of extreme surprise. Then he uncovered again, and began again to ring his bell vigorously, while the other ushers, going from group to group, or mounting on the benches, spread among the Representatives the news which seemed to produce so extraordinary a sensation. Little by little calm was established. The president was able to make himself heard, and said in a voice of emotion:

"Gentlemen, the King and his family have left the palace. They throw themselves upon the National Assembly!"

Another member of the old Municipal Council presented himself at the bar, saying:

"Monsieur President, the King asks leave to come to you accompanied by his guard, which will watch over him, and over the National Assembly."

At this proposition a part of the Center, the Left, the extreme Left and the galleries, all gave vent to their

indignation. On all sides people cried "No! No! The Assembly is under the safekeeping of the people! No bayonets here! Down with the pretorians! Long live the Nation! Down with the King!"

Ringing his bell the president called out loudly: "I propose the following resolution: The National Assembly, considering that it needs no other guard than the love of the people, charges its committee-men to watch over the tranquility within its precincts, and proceeds to the order of business."

A thunder of applause overwhelmed the closing words of this motion, which was adopted with an immense majority. The municipal officer took his leave to report to the King the decision of the National Assembly, when almost immediately another usher rushed in, crying:

"The King and Queen ask to be introduced to the care of the Assembly."

So, indeed, it was. The King was garbed in a suit of violet silk, which disclosed his blue sash worn crosswise; he wore a hat of the National Guard, for which he had exchanged his bonnet with the white plume. His puffy features, empurpled with heat and emotion, and dripping perspiration, expressed a mixture of fear and crafty irritation. His obesity made his gait heavy and ungainly. Behind him advanced Marie Antoinette, giving her arm to Count Dubouchage, Minister of Marine, and leading the Dauphin by the hand. Trembling and terrified, the child pressed close to his mother, who, pale and haughty, and more enraged than frightened, trod with a firm step, casting about her looks of disdain. She preceded the King's sister, Madam Elizabeth, who leaned on the arm of Bigot of St. Croix, Minister of Foreign Affairs. The lady sustained herself with difficulty, and hid her face, bathed with tears, in her handkerchief. Then in order followed the Marchioness of Tourzel, the governess of the King's children, on the arm of Major Hervilly, one of the King's officers; and finally, behind her, the beautiful Princess Lamballe, the intimate friend of the Queen, accompanied by another seigneur of the court.

Profound was the silence that fell over the Assembly. Louis, who so far had alone kept his hat on, now removed his National Guardsman's head-gear and said in a snappish voice that revealed at once fear and surly anger:

"I have come here to escape a great crime. I think I am safe among you, gentlemen?"

"You may count, Sire, on the firmness of the National Assembly. Its members have sworn to die in the defense of the rights of the people and the authorities recognized by the Constitution."

Representative Bazire rose to speak: "I propose that Louis XVI and his family be invited to occupy the logotachygraphes' room, which is within the Assembly, but without the precincts of its deliberations."

The proposal was adopted. The royal family and its suite left the hall in order to reach the reporters' booth, the entry to which was in one of the corridors. Soon the King and his followers reappeared in the room assigned to them, which was separated from the chamber of the Assembly by an iron grating, Louis XVI being placed at the right, the Queen at the left, the Dauphin between them; and behind these three the other persons of the royal suite. No sooner had the King seated himself than he received from the hands of Major Hervilly some bread, a plate holding a fowl, a knife and a fork. Placing the plate on his knees, Louis commenced to dissect the pullet and devour it with avidity, obedient to the mandates of that formidable appetite peculiar to the house of Bourbon.

Outside, in the deputies' chamber, Roederer, the legal attorney of the Commune, had appeared at the bar, and, at the invitation of the president, was speaking:

"I am come, gentlemen, to inform you of what is going on in Paris. I was with the King this morning, up till the time when Carousel Place and the surrounding streets were invaded by the Sections in arms and dragging their cannon. Seeing a large number of the National Guard fraternizing with the people, I counselled the King and the royal family to abandon the palace and place themselves under the protection of the National Assembly. The people know that the King is here. The attack on the Tuileries being now objectless, it is to be hoped that it will not be entered upon, and that there will be no shedding of blood to be deplored."

Hardly had Roederer pronounced the words when the detonation of an artillery discharge shook the windowpanes of the chamber. The fight at the Tuileries was on! The first discharge was answered by a rapid fire of musketry, broken every now and again by the thunder of a new cannonade. Stupor seized the Assembly and the galleries. It was a fresh royalist act of treason.

The almost incessant boom of artillery and rattle of musketry bore evidence to the warmth of the engagement. It is impossible to picture the anxiety, the heaving agitation of the chamber and the people in the hall. Among the latter, exasperation reached the last pitch. They broke into threats, into curses against Veto, against the Austrian woman. "Down with the King!" "Down with the Queen!" rang the cry.

Of a sudden the cannonade burst into still wilder fury. The reverberations of the artillery fire were so violent that several windows in the hall were shivered to bits. But soon the volleys slackened; they became less and less lively and frequent; then one heard only gunshots, rare, desultory, far between; and then one heard—nothing.

Victory, evidently, not a suspension of hostilities, had terminated the battle. Clearly, also, the victory had been a decisive one. But who were the conquerors, the inhabitants of the Sections, or the Swiss regiments? Terrible alternative! Under the spell of this incertitude the tumult, at its height some minutes before, fell of itself. A poignant load weighed upon every heart, choked every voice, paralyzed every movement; a mournful silence held sway over the house. If the insurrection were victorious, it was done for Louis XVI and the monarchy! Marie Antoinette by her attitude and facial expression revealed her belief—she was confident the royal troops had won the day.

The uncertainty was not long in being dispelled. A deputation of members of the new Commune of Paris presented itself at the bar of the Assembly. It was attended by citizens bearing a banner with the device "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

The head of the deputation spoke:

"Citizens, we are the victors! After prodigies of heroism, the people have taken the Tuileries! Long live the Nation!"

The majority of the Representatives rose in their seats, and all repeated with enthusiasm:

"Long live the Nation!"

The joy, the patriotic exaltation of the galleries bordered on delirium. The session previously so agitated was now resumed amid relative calm. All doubt as to the triumph of the people being laid, the deputies went back to their places; the president tapped his bell, and said:

"I beg the members of the Assembly, as well as the public in the galleries, to refrain from further interruption. The graver the circumstances, all the more should we preserve calmness and dignity in our deliberations. The delegate of the Commune has the floor."

"Citizen legislators," resumed the latter, "in the name of the victorious people, we have come to demand of you the deposition of Louis Capet." All eyes were turned towards the booth where Louis XVI sat with his face in his hands. "To-morrow we shall bring to the Assembly the records of this memorable day of the tenth of August, 1792. This record should be sent to the forty-four thousand municipalities of France, that it may arouse their national pride!" (Applause.) "We announce to you that Petion, Manuel and Danton are still our colleagues in the Commune. We have named Citizen Santerre commander of the armed force of Paris."

Seeing the delegate was through, President Morlot announced to the Assembly: "During the invasion of the Tuileries by the people, a box of jewels was found in the Queen's apartment. A citizen, wounded in the attack, has just thrown it on the table."

This lofty act, so free from all thought of pillage or petty personal gain, stirred the admiration of the Assembly, and prepared the way for others of similar stamp. "I propose," said Bazire, rising, "that the Assembly decree that the Swiss citizens and all other foreigners residing in Paris are placed in the safekeeping of the law and in the hospitality of the French people!"

The motion was carried unanimously, amidst the echoing applause of the galleries.

Several of the combatants from the Tuileries, covered with dust, now appeared at the bar. One of these, in the uniform of the National Guard, his forehead bound in a bloody bandage, held in one hand his gun, and with the other dragged after him a Swiss soldier, pale and overcome with terror. The unhappy fellow's red uniform was in ribbons; he seemed ready to swoon. The wounded citizen, leaning on his weapon, drew close to the bar and said with emotion:

"Legislators, we come to express to you our indignation! Long has a perfidious court trifled with the French people. To-day it has drawn our blood. We penetrated the palace only over the corpses of our massacred brothers. We have taken prisoner several Swiss soldiers, wretched instruments of tyranny! Some of them have thrown down their arms. As to us, we shall use toward them only the arms of generosity; we shall treat them as brothers."

At ten o'clock that evening, when the illumination of the lamps had long replaced the light of day, the National Assembly, having been in continuous session since the night of August 9, took a recess of an hour.

At eleven o'clock, when the Assembly reconvened, the reporters' lodge was still occupied by the royal family. Louis XVI was crushed. His flaccid lips, his fixed and sunken eyes, announced his complete mental prostration. Marie Antoinette, on the contrary, seemed to have preserved all the energy of her character. Her eyes were red and dry; but her glance, when she occasionally allowed it to travel about, bore still its look of hateful disdain and defiance.

The Dauphin slept on the knees of Madam Elizabeth, who bent her pale brow toward the child. Dames Tourzel and Lamballe were silent and dazed.

Almost as soon as the session was reopened, a citizen presented himself at the bar:

"Legislators, the Swiss soldiers arrested during the day have been placed, according to the orders of the Assembly, in the building of the Feuillants. They have been, like us, the victims of royalist treason; we must save them."

From the gallery Mailhe called out: "I have just come from addressing the people. They are disposed to listen to the language of justice and humanity. I ask that the Swiss be admitted within these precincts, and that they be kept here till all danger to them has passed, and till they can be taken to a place of safety."

The large space reserved behind the bar for visiting deputations was suddenly filled with patriots, who brought with them Swiss soldiers, pale and trembling, and several of them wounded. What touching and admirable episodes took place in this pell-mell of gratitude and generosity, which embraced the combatants on both sides! Vanquished and vanquishers fraternized! The Assembly as one man rose spontaneously at the spectacle, and gave utterance to its enthusiasm by cheers.

When the first transports of emotion were past and silence had again settled down upon the Assembly, one of the patriots who brought in the Swiss advanced towards the bar, saying:

"Citizen President, one of these brave soldiers, who speaks French, asks the floor, in the name of his comrades, to explain their conduct."

A young Swiss sergeant stepped forward and addressed the vast audience as follows:

"Had the King and the royal family remained at the palace, we would have allowed ourselves to be killed to the last man in their defense. That was our duty as soldiers. But having learned of the departure of the King, we refused to fire on the people, in spite of the orders, in spite of the threats, even, of our officers. They alone are responsible for

the blood that has flowed. It was one of them, and one of the gentlemen of the palace who were the first to fire from the steps of the grand staircase at the moment that we fraternized with the people from the Sections. The latter cried out 'Treason!' fired back in return, and the fight was on. Victory rested with the people."

A new announcement was now made by the president. "They have just brought in," he said, "eleven cases of silver plate rescued from the flames at the Tuileries by the brave citizens who hastened to check the fire. They have also brought several bundles of papers discovered in an iron cupboard, a secret cupboard fashioned in the wall of the King's apartment." (Profound sensation.) "These papers, no doubt of the highest importance, shall be turned over to the proper committees."

When the president announced the discovery of the papers in the Iron Cupboard, Louis XVI seemed unmanned by the shock. His face grew ashen; his first look was shot at the Queen; even she, in spite of her iron will, shuddered and became paler than her royal spouse. What secrets that cupboard contained!

And now was to come the climax of that moving drama, whose precipitate progress, whose impassioned and unexpected catastrophe surpassed anything the imagination could invent or dream of. Time seemed to march with a dizzying haste during that session of two nights and a day—the night of the 9th of August and the day and night of the 10th.

The second night was near its close. A committee in extraordinary had gone to entreat of the Commune of Paris, on that day of August 10, whether the palace of the Luxembourg could not be appropriated as a residence for the King and his family. At the time it was adopted, this measure was in full accord with the hesitant disposition of the majority of the Assembly, who wished only to decree the suspension of the King's powers. But the attitude of the people, victorious and fully armed, happily made its weight felt within the Assembly. The choice of Danton as Minister of Justice testified to the sudden change of mind on the part of the majority of the popular Representatives. They admitted the necessity for the deposition of the royal person. Louis XVI was held prisoner, under accusation of high treason.

But what part of Paris could serve as his prison?

CHAPTER VIII.

REPRISALS.

Sublime was the picture thus presented by the 10th of August, 1792, a picture in which the heroism of the combatants blended with their disinterestedness, and with their generosity to their enemies.

Alas, why was it fated that, so shortly after, the wretched days of the 2nd and 3rd of September should present so sad a contrast! Inexorable was the law of reprisal!

Pitiless became the anger of the people when it saw its trust violated, its hopes blasted; when it saw its generosity towards its enemies only confirm their high-handedness, and encourage them to new transgressions. Such were the experiences that brought about the occurrences of the 2nd and 3rd of September, known as the Prison Massacres—a pitiless popular retribution.

Petion, Mayor of the Commune of Paris, speaking at the bar of the Assembly, once said:

"The people demands justice on its enemies; legislators, it looks to you!"

In those words of Petion's is contained almost entirely the secret of the days of September. The expectations of the people were deceived. The courts proved themselves unworthy of their trust by absolving proven criminals. Then the people, as highly angered as it had before shown itself magnanimous, took justice into its own hands.

The circumstances which produced the formidable explosion were many. After the victory of the 10th of August—a victory the consequences of which were the deposition of Louis XVI, his imprisonment in the Temple, and the convocation of a National Convention to proclaim the Republic and institute proceedings against the former King—Paris calmly awaited the accomplishment of these great events. Everyone confidently expected the conviction of the accomplices of Louis XVI by the national High Court at Orleans. The High Court acquitted the prisoners, despite their guilt, and among them the Count of Montmorin, the old Minister of Foreign Affairs, who had aided the flight of Louis. The High Court also acquitted the Prince of Poix, a high counter-revolutionist, and Bakman, a colonel of the Swiss, who was one of the instigators of the resistance by the soldiers, and hence, a part author of the carnage at the Tuileries.

The prisons, meanwhile, were filled with suspects, declared royalists, and refractory priests, taken red-handed in the incitation of civil war—all guilty on the first count. It was also learned that in the interior of the prisons themselves existed establishments for turning out false notes, which were put in circulation through channels of communication between the prisoners and their friends outside. The collusion between the imprisoned nobles and priests on the one hand, and the counterfeiters, their companions in captivity, on the other, was indisputable.

Emboldened by the acquittal of the conspirators, the counter-revolution reared its head again in Paris and in the provinces. Each day brought from without news more and more alarming. Part of the west and south, lied to by the nobility, goaded to fanaticism by the clergy, was on the verge of rebellion. Rumors were rife that the Assembly had

sent the King's trial minutes to a Convention, not daring itself to pass upon the fate of Louis XVI; that the allied army would be upon Paris before the 20th of September, the date set for the opening of the new Assembly. These predictions were, in fact, on the point of fulfilment. On September 1st, Paris learned that the Prussian army had crossed the frontier; Longwy was taken; the enemy had invested Verdun; the fortified place, left designedly by Louis XVI almost without defense, was unable to resist; from this city the allied army could in three days arrive in Paris!

Judge of the excitement among the people of Paris!

The royalists only awaited the favorable moment to unchain their vengeance on the capital. All these causes combined could do no less than let loose a whirlwind. And that is what happened on the terrible days of September 2nd and 3rd. The following are extracts from my journal, which I wrote almost hour by hour, as these sad events unrolled themselves.

September 2, about eleven in the morning, I heard the sound of a signal gun, to which were quickly added the rapid clanging of the tocsin and the roll of drums. The news of the taking of Longwy by the Prussians had spread through Paris the previous night, and had thrown the people into consternation.

I left my ironsmithy and hastily donned my uniform of the National Guard, in order to assemble with my Section of the Pikes. I was about to go to Victoria's room, where I supposed she was, as usual, busy sewing, when I saw her come in from out-of-doors.

"I was about to go in and tell you that I was bound for my Section," I said to her. "What is forward in Paris?"

"The great day of reprisals has dawned at last," replied my sister shrilly; "O, age-long martyrs of the Kings, the nobles, and the clergy! O, shades of our fathers, of our mothers! Daughters and sons of Joel, rejoice. The hour of vengeance has sounded! Ah, for centuries your sweat, your tears, your blood have flowed! Martyrs of the Kings, priests and nobles, the tyrant issue of a conquering race, at last upon your torturers has descended the day of expiation, the day of retribution!"

"Sister," I cried, shuddering for very fear, "what mean you?"

But Victoria, the victim of a sort of ecstatic hallucination, continued without seeming to hear me: "Does not the blood of slaves, of serfs, of vassals, despoiled, exploited, tortured, immolated by thousands, by seigniory and nobility since the Frankish conquest, cry 'Vengeance!'? Does not the blood of the Arians, massacred by thousands by Clovis's hordes at the word of the priests of Rome, cry 'Vengeance!'? Does not the blood of the Vaudois, of the Albigensians, massacred by thousands by Simon of Montfort's bandits, at the voice of the priests of Rome, cry 'Vengeance!'? Does not the blood of the Reformers, massacred by thousands by the Valois and the Guises, cry 'Vengeance!'? And the Protestants hanged, broken on the wheel, drawn and quartered by the soldiers of Louis XIV, the Grand Monarch? Just God! if all that blood had flowed in a single day, the land of the Gauls would have become one crimson sea! If they should heap together the bones of our fathers, our mothers, the victims of royalty, nobility and clergy, the charnel-pile would graze the heavens!"

Victoria's savage eloquence, the light in her glowing eyes, her darksome beauty, which at the moment gave her the aspect of the goddess of Vengeance, wove over me a sort of fascination. The frightful enumeration of the victims of the Kings, the nobles, and the Romish Church, the memory of the martyrs whom we wept in our own family for so many centuries, the general exasperation, which in that moment I shared, against the murderous plots of our eternal enemies, carried away my reason, and while the spell lasted, I, too, believed in the justice of reprisal, and answered:

"You speak true, sister, you speak true. Too long has the vengeance of heaven spared these scoundrels. Let now the sword of the people fall upon them!"

"Aye, brother, justice shall not be less terrible for having been delayed! Retribution will recall to life none of the dead we mourn; but our enemies, annihilated or struck with terror, will hesitate to create new victims! In avenging the past, we safeguard the future. The instinct of the people can be trusted—its history is ours! It does not know the details of its age-long martyrdom, but it feels itself the representative of martyrs; it is conscious of being the living legend of the miseries and tortures of generations past. It is in their name that it will judge and execute."

Before I could reply, one of my companions in arms, a workman like myself, the son of our neighbor Jerome, and like myself belonging to the Section of the Pikes, called to me, without: "John, hear you not the drum? They have just posted placards in the street that the nation is in danger. Longwy is taken! The Prussians are marching upon Paris. They are sounding the assembly everywhere—come, come, let us to our place in the fray."

Fearing I should be lacking in duty should I further delay joining my Section, I bade my sister farewell and left our dwelling. My comrade and I directed our steps towards Vendome Place, the Section's assembly-ground.

It were useless to attempt to portray the thousand aspects presented by the multitude that packed the street corners and the crossings; for it was in these places that were posted by preference the placards issued by the patriot press or the clubs, as well as the decrees, issued almost hourly by the National Assembly, or by the Commune of Paris, elected by the insurgent Sections on the night of the 9th of August.

How could one hope to describe the aspects, so diverse, presented by those surging masses, or convey an idea of the tumultuous sentiments of the population?—now dumbfounded and seemingly crushed by the approach of grave public danger; now shrieking maledictions and cries of death against the royalists and the foreign despots; and again, carried away by a burst of patriotism, shouting: "To the frontiers!" All Paris oscillated in turn between terror, hatred and blind vengeance.

A reading of the placards and decrees alone can explain the downheartedness, the fury, and the recurring ferocious appetites of the delirious crowd. The following placard is from the *Courier of the Departments*, published by the Girondin Gorsas:

PLAN OF THE ALLIES AGAINST PARIS.

More than two hundred Royalist chiefs, scattered about in the different centers of France, have their rendezvous.—They hold the signatures of numerous persons who are ready to join the armies of the allied Kings when they shall have cleared the frontier.—The combined armies will march on the fortified towns as if to lay siege to them; but will take only such as will open their gates.—The Duke of Brunswick will combine with his army those corps of the French forces which are scattered along the frontier, while the King of Prussia will advance at the head of his troops, swelled by the counter-revolutionists of the interior.—They will march first upon Paris.—They will reduce the city by starvation. No consideration, not even the danger of the royal family, will change the following dispositions:—The inhabitants, of Paris will be led into the open country. They will be sorted out. THE REVOLUTIONISTS WILL BE PUT TO DEATH.—As to the others they will be disposed of later.—Perhaps they will follow the system of the Emperor of Austria, not to spare any but the women and children. In case of unequal forces, they will set the cities on fire; for, according to the expression of the allied Kings, DESERTS ARE PREFERABLE TO PLACES INHABITED BY A REVOLTED PEOPLE.

To arms, citizens! The enemy is at our gates!

Another poster stuck on the walls of the city read:

TO ARMS, CITIZENS!!!

Citizens:

The enemy will soon be under the walls of Paris!

Longwy is taken!

Verdun can hold out but a few days. Its defenders appeal to the people.

The citizens who defend the citadel have sworn to die sooner than surrender it. They make for you a rampart with their bodies. It is your duty to succor them.

Citizens!

This very day, immediately, let all friends of liberty gather under its flag!

Let us assemble in the Field of Mars, and let an army of sixty thousand men be formed without delay.

Citizens!

Let us march on the enemy, either to fall under their blows or to exterminate them under ours!

The Commune of Paris decrees:

ARTICLE 1. The Sections shall give to the State the men ready to set out.

ARTICLE 2. The Military Committee shall sit in permanence, to receive enrolments.

ARTICLE 3. The alarm gun shall be fired, the tocsin shall ring, night and day.

CITIZENS, THE NATION IS IN DANGER!
TO ARMS!

"Save Paris! save France! Else, woe is us!" repeated the imploring voices of women, whose cries and moans mingled with the clamor of the alarm bell.

At that moment there advanced, through the crowd which made way for him, a municipal officer bearing a banner, and followed by several drummers beating the charge. They preceded a troop of volunteers of all ages and conditions, singing the Marseillaise, that sacred hymn of the Revolution. At the end of each stanza they waved their pikes, their guns, their sabers, their caps, their hats, crying:

"To arms, brothers! To the Field of Mars! And to-night, off for the frontier!"

The majority of the citizens, who, after reading the decree of the Commune, also cried "To arms!" fell in line with the volunteers. Among them I beheld a man in the prime of life, his face radiant with civic ardor, embrace his wife and little daughters who accompanied him, and, his eyes filled with tears, exclaim—"Adieu! I go to defend you!"

I was still thrilling under the impression produced by this patriotic act, when I heard someone read, in a loud voice, this fragment of a placard, posted, they said, by order of the ministry:

"—Citizens of Paris, you have traitors in your midst. Ah, but for them, the strife would soon be over!"

"Who are the traitors?" the word went 'round. "Who are they, if not the royalists, hidden in the two hundred dens mentioned by Gorsas—if not the priests and the monks?"

"And our fathers, our husbands, our sons, our brothers, are enrolling in mass to run to the frontiers!" cried a woman, in terror. "Who will defend us against the fury of the enemies within?"

"The royalists will let slip upon Paris the counterfeiters and the brigands shut up with them in the prisons!"

"Mercy of God! While we are at the front, these wretches will pillage our shops, assault our daughters, slaughter our wives. No, no, it shall never be!"

"Can we go away and leave behind us our women, our children, the old men, exposed to the rage of our enemies? What shall we do?"

"The *Friend of the People* tells us what to do!" cried a voice in the crowd. "Long live Marat. To the lamp-post with

the aristocrats! Here is what it says:

"'*The Friend of the People* to the Parisians:

"'Folly! Folly! It is useless to proceed with law against the counter-revolutionaries!

"'People, march in arms to the Abbey!

"'Drag out the traitors, the Swiss officers, and their accomplices, the priests, the Jesuits, the monks—let them feel the edge of the sword!

"'People, strike your enemies with terror; otherwise you are lost!'"

"We approve the advice!" shouted several voices in response. "Legal justice absolves the guilty. Let us replace the judges, and strike the culprits. To the Abbey!—to the Abbey!"

Frightened at the turn things were taking, and dreading the consequences of the assent given to Marat's appeal, I attempted to fend off the massacre of the prisoners. Raising my voice above the tumult, I addressed myself to the speaker:

"Citizen, it is true there are great criminals in the Abbey; but all the prisoners are not guilty in the same degree. Are there not some imprisoned merely as suspects? Are you sure that among them there are none innocent? And, with such doubt on your mind, would you kill all? No, citizen, such a crime would defile the Revolution!"

My intervention seemed for a moment to have recalled the throng to less barbarous sentiments. But just at that instant there arrived a panting workman, who jumped on a curbstone, exclaiming:

"Citizens—I come from the Assembly—I bring you serious news!"

"Silence!—Let us listen!"

"When the committee-men of the commune read their decrees to the Assembly, Vergniaud cried out: 'I thank Paris for its courage and energy; now one may say the country is saved!' He called Longwy, which had surrendered to the Prussians, a city of cowards. Hearing the refrain of the Marseillaise he said 'There is enough singing of Liberty—we must defend it. It is no longer Kings of bronze that must be torn down—it is the despots of Europe! Down with the Kings!' And he, Vergniaud, closed his address to the Assembly with these words: 'I demand that the Assembly, at this moment more a military body than a legislative, send at once, and every day hereafter, twelve delegates to the entrenched camp in the Field of Mars, not with empty discourses to exhort the citizens to work, but to ply the pick-ax with their own hands. The time is past for orating. We must dig the graves of our enemies. Our enemies are both in front of and behind us, citizens; in front of us the Prussians, behind us the royalists, the priests, their lay communicants, and the brigands in the prisons!'"

And the workman proceeded with his report of the occurrences in the Assembly:

"When Vergniaud left the platform, Roland, the Minister of the Interior, asked the floor to inform the Assembly of some very important matters. 'The Vendée,' he said, 'spurred on by the dissident clergy, has risen in several places, and patriots have been massacred. One portion of the south, under the instigation of the priests and the former nobles, is the breeding-ground of a vast conspiracy, with the Count of Saillant at its head. He has declared himself "the lieutenant-general of the army of the Princes."'"

Before the crowd had recovered from the stupefaction into which it was thrown by these words the speaker continued:

"After Roland, Lebrun, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, announced that twenty thousand Russians were advancing on us through Poland and Germany, at the same time that a Russian fleet, proceeding from the Black Sea, was to pass through the Dardanelles and land at Marseilles. At this Danton became sublime! 'Everything stirs, drives on, burns, to a combat,' he exclaimed. 'Verdun is not yet in the hands of the enemy. The garrison has sworn to slay those who mention surrender. Part of the people is rushing to the frontiers; another part is digging entrenchments; another army will defend the city at the point of their pikes. Citizen Representatives,' continued Danton, 'we ask of you to concur with us in directing this heroic movement of the people. Whosoever refuses to serve in person or to give up his arms, let him be punished with death. All who are not with us are against us.' At these last words pronounced by Danton, the Assembly rose with enthusiasm—" added the orator on the curb. "'That bell which now clangs is not a signal of alarm!' Danton cried. 'No! It is the signal for the charge against the enemies of the country. To whip them we must dare, and dare, and dare again—and France is saved!'"

An electric thrill ran over the tossing multitude as these words of Danton's were told it—heroic words accompanied by the tintinnabulations of the tocsin, the prolonged echoes of the five-minute alarm gun, the distant roll of the drums, and the strains of the Marseillaise, chanted in chorus by the column of volunteers. The massive energy of Danton seemed to seize upon every spirit; it roused to its highest pitch their sacred love of country, and reawakened the ardor of vengeance. In that supreme moment, the prison massacres were considered by the population, bourgeois and artisans alike, as a measure of public safety, a Spartan measure which many of the citizens deplored, but which they regarded as a fatal necessity, as a question of life and death for their families, for France, for the Revolution.

Bill-posters were now attaching to the walls the new decrees rendered by the Commune of Paris, which had now declared itself a permanent body. The first of these was conceived as follows:

THE COMMUNE OF PARIS DECIDES AND DECREES:

ARTICLE 1. All horses fit for service are required at once to be turned over to the citizens who depart for the front.

ARTICLE 2. All citizens shall hold themselves in readiness to march at the first call.

ARTICLE 3. Those, who by reason of age or infirmity are unable to join the march, shall deposit their arms with their Sections, to equip those more fortunate citizens ready to go to the front.

ARTICLE 4. The ramparts shall be closed.

Paris, September 2, 1792,

COULOMBEAU.

The last paragraph, ordering the closing of the ramparts, caused a shudder not unmingled with savage joy to shoot through the crowd. Through all minds flashed the thought: "The Commune orders the ramparts to be closed in order to prevent our enemies within from escaping. The work of justice will be the easier!"

Another decree which was posted, read:

THE COMMUNE OF PARIS

Decrees:

1.º Enlistment shall go on in the Sections, in the theaters, in the churches and in the public places.

2.º Foreign citizens shall enrol at the City Hall.

3.º The Department of Paris shall furnish at once sixty thousand men.

4.º The armorers, iron-workers and blacksmiths shall report to the Military Committee how fast they can turn out guns, pikes, swords, etc.

5.º All leaden coffins shall be melted up for bullets. The retired soldiers will take charge of this work.

Paris, September 2, 1792,

COULOMBEAU.

On this terrible day, everything converged to throw the population into a somber vertigo. There was not an event which did not drive fatally onward to the massacres in the prisons.

"Long live the Nation! Death to the traitors!" rose the cry.

The delegates of the Luxembourg Section declared to the Commune that they had adopted and recorded in their minutes the resolution "That it was urgent to purge the prisons before marching to the front." Three committee-men were sent to notify the Commune of this decision. The Sections of the Julian Hot-Baths, the Blind Asylum, and Ill-Counsel took the same action. The crowd about me echoed the cry:

"To the prisons! To the prisons!"

"Exterminate the rogues!"

"Purge the prisons!"

"Down with the black caps!"

"Death to the aristocrats!"

I sank into a stupor of despair. There was room for doubt no longer; public opinion was pronouncing itself for the mass extermination of the prisoners. The Sections were despatching their delegates to the Commune to notify it of the urgency of the move. The Commune, through Tallien's organ, approved the massacre; finally, Danton also approved it, Danton, the Minister of Justice, elected by the Assembly. How could I stem such a tide? Still I tried, not without the knowledge that I thereby risked my life; for in moments of popular impulse and enthusiasm, to pronounce oneself in opposition to the general opinion is to court being taken for a traitor. Nevertheless, I leaped upon a bench hard by, and cried in a voice vibrating with all the anguish of my heart:

"Citizens, in the name of the country, in the name of the Revolution, hear me!"

My paleness, my tears, my supplicating accents impressed the crowd; silence was given me, and I continued:

"Citizens, suppose that we all, patriots here present, were incarcerated by our triumphant enemies. Our enemies rush into our prison, surprise us without defense, without means of escape, and massacre us all! Would that not be a cowardly, a horrible deed? Would you commit a like atrocity?"

Outcries, hisses and curses drowned my voice.

"He is a wheedler!"

"A traitor!"

"A royalist in disguise!"

"Death to the traitors!"

I believed my last hour was come. Thrown down from my bench, I was surrounded, seized, mauled back and forth by the crowd in its fury. My uniform was torn to shreds. A sword was already raised over my head when some patriots, interposing between my adversaries and me, tore me from the hands that grasped me, protected me with

their own bodies, and pushed me under the arch of a carriage-gate, which they slammed upon me. I fell battered and almost fainting; and soon I heard the throng disperse, crying:

"Long live the Nation!"

"To the prisons, to the prisons!"

"Death to the royalists!"

So, indeed, it occurred. The massacre was carried out.

CHAPTER IX.

"TO THE FRONT!"

The porter of the house in which I had thus compulsorily found asylum, a house neighboring on my own, gave me, together with his wife, his solicitous care. Both knew me by sight as a child of the quarter. I recovered little by little from my commotion. The porter offered me a jacket to replace the ruined tunic of my uniform. Never shall I forget the words the worthy people uttered as I bade them good-bye, thanking them for their attentions.

"What the devil, my dear neighbor! Between you and me, you were on the wrong side, this time!" said the brave fellow, who from his door-sill had taken in the whole scene. "Eh! Without a doubt, you were in the wrong, although you did it out of your good heart! My God! I also have a good heart, and, such as you see me, I couldn't cut the head off a chicken. Nevertheless, I say to myself: Those who, at this moment, have the courage to purge the prisons, are saving the country and our Revolution, by preventing our enemies from letting loose a civil war upon France, and joining themselves to the out-landers to combat us. Alas, it is indeed hard to be driven to it, but 'Necessity knows no law.' It is either kill or be killed. In such a case, each for his own skin!"

"Goodness me, yes!" put in the portress, a debonair matron, taking up her knitting again. "And then, whose fault is it? The nobles and the priests haven't stopped for three years conspiring with Veto and the Austrian woman. They loose the Prussians and Huns upon our poor country. God! Listen, you, neighbor—we are getting tired, and it is high time that, one way or another, this all be put an end to."

"My wife is right. And then, do you see, neighbor, when the Sections, and even the Commune and Monsieur Danton, everyone, in fact, says it is necessary to purge the prisons, one must believe that so many persons would not agree on one and the same course, were it not at bottom just, or at least necessary."

I have cited these good people's words because they are a faithful expression of the general sentiment on the subject of the massacres.

On leaving the house where I had found a refuge, I set out, not for my Section, to join my comrades of the Guard as I had at first intended; but, acting on the subsequent call of the Commune to all the armorer, blacksmith and iron-worker artisans, who were to take in hand the manufacture in haste of the greatest possible number of arms, I turned my steps toward the National Assembly, where the Military Committee sat in permanent session. I hoped that the number of workmen in these trades who reported would be over-sufficient for the turning out of the arms; in that case I was resolved to leave the next day for the army. Two motives impelled me to that resolution. First, my duty to my country; second the profound chagrin into which the aberration of my sister Victoria had thrown me. At that very moment, doubtless, she was—frightful thought—assisting at the massacre in the prisons, calm and terrible as the goddess of Retribution. Moreover, I had received, two days earlier, a letter from Charlotte Desmarais. She was living still at Lyons, with her mother; she assured me of her affection, of her unshakable constancy, and added that, in view of the perils with which the allied arms threatened the country, my duty as a citizen was marked out for me; she would support with firmness the new trials that would await her should I go to the front. Unhappily, I could not enrol. The number of mechanics skilled in iron working would hardly suffice for getting out the arms; by a decree of the Assembly, rendered on September 4, it was forbidden to them to leave Paris.

Behold the spectacle that I was to witness on my way to the Assembly—a spectacle moving in its very simplicity:

In the middle of Vendome Place was raised a tent, supported at each corner by a pike surmounted with a red bonnet. Under this tent, municipal officers, girt with the tricolor scarf, were receiving the enlistments of citizens. Two drums, piled one on the other, served as table. On the upper drum lay an ink-well, a pen, and the register in which were inscribed the names of the volunteers. Each of these received a fraternal embrace from one of the councilmen, and departed amid the cheers of "Long live the Nation!" uttered by the crowd which filled the place. Day without equal in history! Strange day! in which love of country, heroism, civic devotion, and the exaltation of the holiest virtues of the family, were intermingled with the thirst for vengeance and extermination. I heard uttered here and there about me, here with savage satisfaction, there with the accent of indifference or the resignation born of painful necessity: "They are going to execute the conspirators and purge the prisons." "Death to the priests and nobles!"

Into the tent of the municipal officers I saw a distinguished-looking old man enter. His five sons accompanied him. The youngest seemed about eighteen; the eldest, aged perhaps forty, held by the hand his own son, hardly out of his boyhood. These seven persons, completely armed and equipped out of their own purse, carried on their backs their soldiers' knapsacks. The old man acted as spokesman, and addressed one of the officers:

"Citizen, I am named Matthew Bernard, master tanner, No. 71 St. Victor Street, where I live with my five sons and my grandson. We come, they and I, to enlist; we leave for the frontier."

The wife of the brave citizen, his daughter, a young girl of seventeen, and his son's wife, awaited them outside. On the countenances of the three women was legible neither fear nor regret; the tears that shone in their eyes were tears of enthusiasm.

"Farewell, wife! Farewell, daughter and daughter-in-law! We depart assured of your safety. The prisons are purged," said the old man in a voice calm and strong. "We have none now to fight but the Prussians on the frontier. Adieu till we meet again. Long live the Nation! Long live the Republic! Death to the priests and the aristocrats!"

In the midst of the procession of recruits, I heard the snapping of a whip, and these words, shouted out in deep and joyous tones:

"Make way, citizens, make way, please! Oh, hey! Alright, Double-grey! Alright, Reddy!" And soon I saw drawing near, through the crowd which fell back to give him passage, a man in the hey-day of his strength, with an open and martial countenance, clad in a great-coat and an oilskin hat. He rode a grey horse, and led by the bridle a bay, both harnessed for the carriage. Across the crupper of one of the animals were slung a saddle-bag of oats and a bale of grass tied with a cord; the other horse carried a valise. The great-coat of the rider was drawn-tight at the waist by the belt of a cavalry saber that hung beside him. I remarked with surprise that the white leather of his sword-tassel was red, as if wet with blood.

"Citizen officers," called the rider without descending from the horse he rode, and which he reined in on the threshold of the tent, "Write as a voluntary recruit James Duchemin, stage driver by occupation and formerly an artilleryman; I have sold my coach to pay my expenses on the way. I am off to the frontier with my horses Double-grey and Reddy, of whom I make an offering to the country, asking only the favor not to be separated from them and to be enrolled with them in a regiment of field artillery. You'll see them do famously in the harness when they're hitched up to a four-pounder. So, then, citizen officers, write us down, my horses and me. I have just lent a hand to the patriots who are working down there, at the Abbey," added the stage driver, carrying his hand to the blood-reddened saber. "The business is done. The prisons are purged;—now, to the front!"

The day was nearly over when I arrived at the Assembly to put myself at the disposal of the Military Committee. While awaiting my turn for enrolment, I wandered into the Assembly galleries. I was anxious to know whether the massacre in the prisons was known to the popular Representatives. I then learned that the Assembly, informed as to the occurrences at the Abbey, at La Force, and at the Chatelet, had sent to these places, with instructions to oppose the carnage, a commission composed of Citizens Bazire, Dussaulx, Francis of Neufchateau, Isnard and Lequino.

Soon several of the commissioners entered the chamber, accompanied by Tallien, a member of the Commune, who took the floor and said:

"Citizens, the commissioners of the Assembly are powerless to turn aside the vengeance of the people, a vengeance in some sort just, for, we must say it, these blows have fallen upon the issuers of false notes, whom the law condemns to death. What excited the vengeance of the people was that they found in the prisons none but recognized criminals!"

I left the Assembly chamber and returned to take my place in the line and pass before the Committee. The Committee was presided over, that day, by Carnot the elder, an officer of genius, and one of the greatest captains of the time. I had myself inscribed as an iron-worker, and received the order to appear next morning at daybreak, at the green-house of the Louvre, where they were setting up the forges and work-benches for the fashioning of the munitions of war.

While awaiting Victoria, at our lodging, I busied myself with recording in my journal the various events of the day. One in the morning sounded; my sister had not returned. Up till now, I had felt no anxiety for her; only those who would attempt to disarm the popular anger, only those, on that day, ran any danger; and Victoria partook of the general sentiment of Paris on the subject of a mass extermination. But suddenly there flashed back to my mind Jesuit Morlet and his tool Lehiron. I knew the hatred entertained by the reverend Father for my sister. These thoughts threw me into deep anxiety. The Jesuit Morlet and Lehiron were capable of any crime; and on this unlucky day, when blood flowed in torrents, nothing would have been easier than for the wretches to make away with Victoria. Faithful to his hope of seeing the Revolution besmirch itself or lose itself in excesses, Abbot Morlet would not fail to be on hand to urge on the carnage of the prisoners; he could easily, under a new disguise, repair to the prisons with Lehiron and his cut-throats, and, on encountering my sister, point her out to their weapons.

The gloomiest of apprehensions were raised in me by these reflections. My alarm increased from minute to minute. There was, alas, no way to still it. My anguish had almost reached the breaking point when I heard hurried steps on the stair-landing. I ran to the door. It flew open. Victoria uttered a cry of joy, threw herself into my arms, pressed me convulsively to her breast, and broke into tears. Then, between her sobs, she murmured in a voice choked with joy:

"Brother, my poor brother, I find you again! God be praised!"

As her emotion subsided, Victoria acquainted me in the following words with the source of her alarm:

"Just now, on my way here, I met, ten steps from the house, our neighbor Dubreuil. On seeing me he stopped, looked at me an instant with an expression of surprise and grief, and said, 'Are you coming to see John?' 'Surely,' answered I. 'Alas, poor John harangued the crowd this morning at this very place; he spoke against the massacre in the prisons; they took him for a traitor, and the crowd, in its temper—' and our neighbor buried his face in his hands and did not finish. I understood everything. Yielding to the goodness of your heart, desiring to oppose popular justice in its course, you had paid for the attempt with your life!—such was my first thought. For an instant I stood motionless with stupor, my soul in a whirl. I felt I should go mad. Then I ran to our door. 'Brother, brother!' I cried. 'Whence your alarm, mademoiselle?' the porter asked me; 'Monsieur John is upstairs since ten o'clock.' My heart

bounded with joy;—but I was not completely reassured till I saw you."

I recounted to my sister the cause of our neighbor's mistake in thinking I had lost my life in the attempt to intervene in favor of the prisoners. And I followed by confiding to Victoria the fears which her own prolonged absence had caused me.

"True," Victoria answered, "the Jesuit did appear once at the Abbey Prison with Lehiron and some of his brigands. But they soon saw that that was not the place for them, for at the Abbey there was no pillaging, there was no assassination. We judged and condemned the guilty; we freed the innocent."

"Alas, and in the name of what law did you condemn the ones, and acquit the others?"

"In the name of Eternal Justice, which smites the wicked and spares the good."

I heard Victoria in a sort of daze. "And even if," exclaimed I, "a semblance of justice did preside over the carnage, by what right did these men constitute themselves the accusers, judges and executioners of the prisoners?"

"Brother, by what right did the jurors who assisted at the sessions of the revolutionary tribunal instituted on August the 17th of this year, declare the accused innocent or guilty?"

"They exercised a right conferred on them by the law."

"Then the law confers in certain cases, and on citizens elected by the people, the right to judge or to absolve?"

"In certain cases, yes; and the present case is not of their number."

"John, those are the subtleties of a lawyer. Listen to what passed before my eyes: The people elected by acclamation and installed in the prison a revolutionary tribunal of eleven jurors. The prisoners were brought before them. Then—I saw everything, I heard everything, and I swear before God, aye, on my soul and conscience, that all those who were sentenced deserved the death. My mind is clear, my thoughts calm. Hear what I have to tell you, then you shall pronounce between those who glorify the events of September and those who condemn them:

"Three carriages bearing priests accused of having fomented civil war, were driving towards the Abbey. As the vehicles approached the prison, one of the priests, who was braving the crowd with the violence of his discourse, was cursed by it. In a passion he raised his cane and struck one of those who insulted him over the head. The crowd, exasperated, followed the vehicles into the Abbey and massacred all the priests in them."

Victoria gasped for breath and continued:

"It was at this moment that I entered the prison. Almost at the same time as I, Manuel, the attorney-at-law for the Commune, arrived. The people called on the guards to deliver the prisoners to them. Manuel asked to be heard. He began by reading a decision of the Commune, which declared:

"'In the name of the people, citizens, you are enjoined to pass judgment on all the prisoners in the Abbey Prison without distinction; with the exception of Abbot Lenfant, whom you shall bestow in a safe place.

"'At the City Hall, September 2, 1792.

"'Signed, Panis, Sergent, administrators.'

"Having read the decree, Manuel continued:

"'Citizens, your resentment is just. Wage, if you will, war without let upon the enemies of the public weal! Fight them to the death; they must perish. But you love justice, and you would shudder at the thought of imbruing your hands with innocent blood. Cease, then, from throwing yourselves like tigers upon men, your brothers.'"

Victoria, after accentuating this fact, went on:

"A court elected by those present and presided over by Maillard, convened in the registrar's office; one enters the place by a grating communicating with the interior of the prison, and leaves it by a door opening on the prison courtyard. It was in the latter place that the justiciaries awaited the condemned, to execute them. Maillard laid before him the prison register; this gave the charge against each inmate, and the cause of his arrest. A warder, as each prisoner's name was called, went to fetch him. He was led before the tribunal, which proceeded in this wise:

"For instance, they brought in a Knight of St. Louis, an ex-captain of the King's Huntsmen. The accused, formerly the seigneur of several parishes, enjoyed still a large fortune. His name was Journiac of St. Meard. Here he comes before the tribunal. He gives his name and surname. 'Are you a royalist?' asks Maillard. And as, at that question, St. Meard seemed troubled, Maillard adds: 'Answer truthfully and without fear. We are here to judge not opinions but their consequences.' The Chevalier of St. Meard, a firm and loyal man, replies: 'I am a royalist, I mourn the old regime. I believe that France is essentially monarchist. I have never concealed my regrets. I have a naturally satirical spirit, and I have published in several miscellanies, adhering to my opinion, several mocking verses against the Revolution. Those are the principal facts charged against me. As to the rest, I have here papers which will, happily, make clear to you my innocence.' And St. Meard drew from a portfolio several sheets. They were carefully examined. Some witnesses, brought there by the merest chance, were heard for and against the accused. His defense, worked out in much detail, occupied over half an hour, and ended with these words: 'I mourn the old regime; but I have never conspired against the new. I did not flee the country; I regard as a crime the appeal to foreign arms. I hope I have proved to you, citizens, my innocence, and I believe that you will set me at liberty, to which I am much inclined both by principle and by nature.' The jurors conferred in a low voice, and in a few seconds Maillard rose, removed his hat, and said aloud, 'Prisoner at the bar, you are free.' Then, addressing three patriots armed with pikes and bloody swords, Maillard added, 'Watch over the safety of this citizen; conduct him to his home.'—"

"Ah," I broke in, experiencing a mingled sensation of compassion and horror, "the heart of man is an abyss—an abyss—one's reason is lost in trying to fathom it!"

"That is how things were conducted at the Abbey," proceeded Victoria. "After examination and free defense I saw set at liberty Bertrand La Molleville, brother of the minister; Maton La Varenne, a lawyer; Abbot Solomon Duveyrier; and the Count of Afry, a colonel in the Swiss regiments, after he had proven an alibi from Paris during the events of the 10th of August."

And Victoria completed the account of the things she witnessed while the prisoners were being judged:

"I told you, brother, how they acquitted the innocent; now I shall show you how they performed sentence on the guilty. Let me take the case of Montmorin, the double traitor absolved by the Orleans High Court. That scandalous acquittal was one of the causes of to-day's events. The people, tired and irritated at seeing the criminals pass scatheless under the sword of the law, has done justice to itself, by striking them! Montmorin, brought before the court, showed himself haughty and arrogant; a contemptuous smile contracted his lips. 'You are Citizen Montmorin? The crimes of which you are accused are notorious. What have you to say in your defense?' Maillard asked the former minister. 'I refuse to reply; I do not recognize your right to sit upon me,' retorted Montmorin. In vain Maillard urged him to speak; the prisoner maintained an obstinate silence. 'Take the accused to La Force,' ordered Maillard, after with a look consulting the jurors, all of whom gave, by an affirmative nod of the head, their approval of the sentence of the Count of Montmorin."

"But Maillard had just ordered the prisoner to be taken to La Force?"

"A conventional phrase, to spare the condemned up to the last moment the agonies of death. 'Take the accused to La Force,' or 'Release the accused,' were the formulas for the supreme penalty. They opened before them the door that gave on the courtyard; the door closed on them, and the justiciaries performed their office."

"Strange contradiction—pity and ferocity!"

"Misled by the words pronounced by Maillard, Montmorin quoth in a supercilious voice, 'I do not go on foot; let them call a coach.' 'It awaits you at the door,' responded Maillard. Montmorin was pushed into the courtyard, where they ended him. Bakman, the Swiss regimental colonel, also acquitted by the High Court of Orleans, underwent the same fate as Montmorin; also Protot and Valvins, both counterfeiters; Abbot Bardy, a monster who had cut his own brother to pieces, and—but we can content ourselves with these examples."

Victoria sank into somber silence; I pressed her hand compassionately, and passed to my own room to seek in repose forgetfulness from this wretched day.

CHAPTER X.

ROYALTY ABOLISHED.

Tallien, in his account of the times, traces the events leading up to these September days; he marks among the causes of the public indignation the scandalous acquittals of the Orleans High Court, and the approach of the foreign armies, after the capture of Longwy and Verdun. Then he proceeds:

"At the same time, a criminal exposed in the public place had the temerity to cry on the scaffold, 'Long live the King! Long live the Queen! Long live Lafayette! Long live the Prussians! To the devil with the Nation!' These utterances provoked the anger of the people, and the wretch would have perished on the instant had not the attorney of the Commune shielded him with his own body, and had him taken back to prison to be turned over to the judges. In the course of his examination he declared that for several days money had been scattered profusely in the prisons, and that, at the first opportunity, the brigands there held in durance were to be armed in the service of the counter-revolutionists!

"Moreover, no one is ignorant that it was in the prisons that the false notes put in circulation were forged; and, in fact, during the expedition of the 2nd of September, there were found in the prisons plates, paper, and all the necessary apparatus for issuing the notes. These articles are in existence now, and are deposited in the archives of the courts....

"Soon thousands of citizens were assembled under the banners of liberty, ready to march. But before their departure, a simple and natural reflection occurred to them:

"'At the very moment that we march against the enemy,' they said, 'when we go to shed our blood in defense of the country, we do not wish to leave our fathers, our wives, our children, our old folks, exposed to the onslaughts of the reprobates shut up in the prisons. Before setting out against the foreign enemies, we must first wipe out those in our midst.'

"Such was the language of these citizens, when two refractory priests whom they were taking to the Abbey Prison, hearing some seditious cries, offered insults to the Revolution. The rage of the people was at white heat....

"The Swiss, the assassins of the people on the 10th of August, imprisoned to the number of some three hundred, were set free and incorporated in the national battalions....

"Such were the circumstances which preceded and provoked the events of September, events unquestionably terrible, and which, in time of peace would demand legal vengeance, but which, in a period of agitation, it is better to draw the veil over, leaving to the historian the task of appreciating this period of the Revolution, which, however,

had many more uses than one thinks."

To wind up the portrayal of this redoubtable evolution, I take this extract from a speech of Robespierre's:

"They have spoken to you often of the events of September 2. That is the subject at which I am impatient to arrive. I shall treat it in an absolutely disinterested manner....

"The general council of the Commune, far from exciting the events of September, did its levellest to prevent them. In order to form a just idea of these occurrences, one must seek for truth not alone in calumnious orations in which they are distorted, but in the history of the Revolution. If you have the idea that the mental impulse given by the insurrection of August 10 had not entirely subsided by the beginning of September, you are mistaken. There is not a single likeness between the two periods....

"The greatest conspirators of August 10 were withdrawn from the wrath of the victorious people, who had consented to place them in the hands of a new tribunal. Nevertheless, after judging three or four minor criminals, the tribunal rested. Montmorin was acquitted, the Prince of Poix and other conspirators of like importance were fraudulently set free. Vast impositions of this character were coming to light, new proofs of the conspiracy of the court were developing daily. Nearly all the patriots wounded at the Tuileries died in the arms of their brother Parisians. Indignation was smouldering in all hearts. A new cause burst it into flame. Many citizens had believed that the 10th of August would break the thread of the royalist conspiracies, they considered the war closed. Suddenly the news of the taking of Longwy hurtled through Paris; Verdun had been given up, Brunswick with his army was headed for Paris. No fortified place interposed between us and our enemies. Our army, divided, almost ruined by the treasons of Lafayette, was lacking in everything. Arms had to be found, camp equipments, provisions, men. The Executive Council dissimulated neither its fears nor embarrassment. Danton appeared before the Assembly, graphically pictured to it its perils and resources, and besought it to take vigorous measures. He went to the City Hall, rang the alarm bell, fired the guns, and declared the country in danger. In an instant forty thousand men, armed and equipped, were on the march to Chalons. In the midst of this universal enthusiasm the approach of the out-land armies reawakened in every breast sentiments of indignation and vengeance against the traitors who had beckoned in the enemy. Before leaving their wives and children, the citizens, the vanquishers of the Tuileries, desired the punishment of the conspirators, which had been promised them. They ran to the prisons. Could the magistrates halt the people! for it was a movement of the people; not, as some have ridiculously supposed, a fragmentary sedition of a few rascals paid to assassinate their fellows. The Commune, they say, should have proclaimed martial law. Martial law against the people, with the enemy drawing nigh! Martial law after the 10th of August! Martial law in favor of the accomplices of a tyranny dethroned by the people! What could the magistrates do against the determined will of an indignant population, which opposed to the magistrates' talk the memory of its own heroism on August 10, its present devotion in rushing to the front, and the long-drawn-out immunity from punishment enjoyed by the traitors?...

"They protest that innocent persons perished in these executions; they have been pleased to exaggerate the number of these. Even one, no doubt, is too many, citizens! Mourn that cruel mistake, as we have for long mourned it! Mourn even the guilty ones reserved for the law's retribution, who fell under the sword of popular justice!"

The volunteers, who in those September days enrolled in multitudes, were sent first to the intermediary camps, where they received the rudiments of military training. Thence they were sent to the army. Their courage saved France and inaugurated the victories of the Republic.

Thanks, O, God! To-day I have seen the triumph which crowns fifteen centuries of struggle maintained by our oppressed fathers against their oppressors; by slaves, serfs, and vassals against Kings, nobles and clergy; by the descendants of the conquered Gauls against the descendants of the Frankish conquerors.

Gaul was a slave—I see her sovereign! Her casqued and mitred tyrants are cut off.

The new National Convention assembled at the palace of the Tuileries, and went into session on Friday, September 21, 1792, at quarter past twelve.

Petion presided; the secretaries were Condorcet, Rabaud St. Etienne, Vergniaud, Camus, and Lassource.

Couthon took the floor, and exhorted his colleagues: "Citizens, our mission is sublime! The people has reposed its confidence in us—let us approve ourselves worthy of it!"

"There is one act which you can not put off till to-morrow, without betraying the will of the nation," declared Collot D'Herbois. "That is the abolition of royalty."

"Certes," assented Abbot Gregory, "no one intends to preserve the race of Kings in France. We know that all dynasties are but broods of vampires; we must reassure the friends of liberty; we must destroy this talisman, whose magic power is still capable of stupefying so many. I ask, then, that by a solemn law, you consecrate the abolition of royalty."

The whole Assembly rose with a spontaneous movement, and with cheers acclaimed the motion of Gregory, who continued:

"Kings are to the moral order what monsters are to the physical. Courts are the smithy of crimes and the fastness of tyrants. The history of Kings is the martyrdom of nations. We are all penetrated with this truth—why further discuss it? I ask that my motion be put to a vote, after it shall have been drafted with a preamble comportable to the solemnity of the decision."

"The preamble of your motion, citizen, is the history of the crimes of Louis XVI," said Ducot.

The president rose and read:

"THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DECREES:

"ROYALTY IS ABOLISHED IN FRANCE."

Shouts of joy, cries of "Long live the Nation! Long live the Republic!" rang from every throat, members of the Convention and spectators in the galleries alike. The tumultuous rejoicing lasted for several minutes.

The session adjourned.

The members of the Convention passed out to cries of:

"Long live the Nation!"

"Long live the Republic!"

"Down with Kings and nobles!"

CHAPTER XI.

BOURGEOIS TURNED SANS-CULOTTE.

It was the evening of December 10, 1792. Monsieur Desmarais sat talking with his wife in the parlor of their dwelling. The attorney, elected to the Convention in September, no longer was content to affect patriotism in his acts and words; his very appearance now breathed a sans-culottism of the deepest dye. Thus he, once so precise about his person, shaved but once a week; his hair, now powderless, was clipped close like a Roundhead's; he wore a carmagnole jacket, hob-nailed shoes, wide pantaloons, a distinctive sign of the sans-culottes, and a red-checkered handkerchief rolled around his neck, after the style of Marat. In one of the corners of the parlor, now without mirrors or curtains and almost stripped of furniture, reposed a large square deal box, whose cover bore the words in large penciled characters: "Breakable. Handle with care." The chest seemed to be built with more care and solidity than is usual with packing-cases. Its cover, instead of being merely nailed, was fastened with hinges; a strong lock held it shut. Madam Desmarais, arrived from Lyons a brief half hour before, had not yet removed her traveling garments. Her face breathed anxiety. Her husband's features were pale and glowering; he seemed worked up, agitated. His wife continued the conversation:

"You understand, my friend, that, frightened at the rumors which were rife in Lyons on the subject of the triumph of a royalist conspiracy—that Paris was given up to fire and blood, the Convention dissolved, its members exposed to the greatest dangers—"

"It is incomprehensible to me what object anyone could have in propagating such sinister rumors," replied Desmarais. "We are on the tracks of a royalist plot, built, for a pretext, upon the trial of this unfortunate King; but the plot can not but miscarry. Paris seems seized with vertigo since August 10!"

"However that may be, my friend, frightened by these rumors, I set out for Paris. Besides, it costs me too much to live far from you in these terrible times. The reasons for our separation were the hope of allaying the passion of our daughter for that young Lebrenn, and your lively desire to shield me from the spectacle of the insurrections, the popular passions which were about to sweep over Paris. But our principal aim has not been attained. Charlotte persists in her determination to remain unmarried or to wed that ironsmith. She writes to him and receives his letters. So, then, whether she be at Paris or at Lyons, she will be neither nearer nor further from the scene of her love-affair. And finally, by the very fact that you are exposed to dangers of all sorts, my place is beside you, my friend. I have, then, resolved to leave you no longer. I also am much alarmed on my brother's score. Here it is more than a month that I haven't heard from him. Can you tell me what has become of him?"

"I know that he was denounced as a suspect; he probably has remained in Paris, where he is in hiding, and conspiring in favor of the monarchy. I do not in the least doubt it."

"What do you tell me! My brother denounced! My God! In these times such an accusation is a thing of terror—it may lead to the scaffold!"

"No doubt. But why doesn't he consent to resign himself, as I have, to howl with the wolves, and roar with the tigers?"

"Poor Hubert," replied Madam Desmarais in tears. "In the midst of the mortal dangers which he runs, he thinks of my birthday; he sends me a token of his brotherly affection." And the attorney's wife, casting her eyes towards the box in the corner, added, "Dear, good brother! How sensible I am of this new proof of his affection!"

"If he truly loved you, he would not risk causing you the greatest chagrin, and compromising me into the bargain!"

"My friend, I can not listen to reproaches against my brother, when he is exposed to such grave perils—"

"And whose fault is it, if not his own, due to his own violent and obstinate character? He abhors, says he, the excesses of the Revolution! Alas, I also execrate them—yet I feign to applaud them. That will at least do to insure our repose and steer clear of the guillotine. Thus, to-morrow, the members of the Convention will hale before the bar the unfortunate Louis XVI, he will be examined in due form, they will give him his trial, and he will be condemned to death. And well, I shall vote for death."

"O, my God!" murmured Madam Desmarais in cold fear. "My husband a regicide!"

"But how can I escape the fatal necessity?"

"Let the fatality fall, then!" answered Madam Desmarais mournfully, her voice broken with sobs.

"Let us go on," said advocate Desmarais after a long silence, during which his agitation slowly got the better of itself, "let us go on. Our daughter is then still infatuated with this Lebrenn?"

"She loves Lebrenn as much as, if not more than, before. He informed her in one of his last letters that he had been promoted to certain duties in the Commune of Paris, and she glories in his advancement."

"In truth, the workingman has been elected a municipal officer. They even proposed to him, such is his influence in the quarter and in the Jacobin Club, to run as candidate for the Convention, but he declined the offer. For the rest, his position with the Jacobins has put him in touch with several leading spirits of the Revolution—Tallien, Robespierre, Legendre, Billaud-Varenne, Danton, and other rabid democrats."

"Have you renewed your relations with the young man since the day you refused him our daughter's hand?"

"No; we have met several times at the Jacobins, but I have avoided speaking with him. He has imitated my reserve. For the rest, I must do him this justice—he has always expressed himself in favorable terms concerning me, true to his promise, that, however little reliance he placed in my uprightness and the sincerity of my convictions, he would hold his opinion secret until my acts themselves denounced me. Well, my acts and speeches have been, and will be, in conformity with the necessities of my position. But, too much of this Lebrenn;—I have told you that your unlooked-for return surprised me, but that it chimed in with my recent projects. I have in view for our daughter a marriage to which I attach great importance, for I would become, by the alliance, the father-in-law of a man destined to count among the most influential personages of the Revolution. This future son-in-law is very young, and remarkably good looking; he belongs to the upper bourgeois, even bordering on the nobility. He is, in fine, the intimate friend, the pupil, the devoted supporter, the right arm of Robespierre. This young man, who has already made his mark in the Assembly in two speeches of immense influence,—is Monsieur St. Just."

"Alas, my friend, in Lyons I heard tell of this young man. His name excites the same execration as that of Robespierre and Marat among the royalists, and even among the moderate republicans of the complexion of the Girondins. Have you considered that?"

"It is precisely because of the aversion which he inspires in the royalists, the Girondins, and the moderates, that I have fixed my eyes upon St. Just. One of our common friends, Billaud-Varenne, is to make, this very day, overtures to my young colleague on the subject of this marriage, which will be so much to my advantage."

"My friend, all that you say causes me a surprise and bewilderment that puts my mind in a whirl. You own to experiencing great regret at entering on the path of the Revolution; and, by a strange contradiction, you speak of marrying your daughter to one of the men whom honest folks hold most in horror."

"No contradiction there, at all. Facts are facts. I am unhappy enough to have for brother-in-law a mad-cap counter-revolutionist. Hubert is a denounced man, and at this very hour, no doubt, is intriguing against the Revolution. All this may compromise me most perilously. Marat has his eye on me. Now, if Marat penetrates my innermost thoughts, I am in great danger. The influence of St. Just, once my son-in-law, would save my head."

Gertrude the serving-maid interrupted her master by entering the room with an air at once of mystery and affright, and saying to him in a startled voice:

"Monsieur, madam's brother is here."

"Hubert here!" cried Desmarais with a start. "I don't want to see him! Tell him I'm out!"

"Alas, sir, your brother-in-law said to me that he was pursued by the police, and that they were hard on his tracks."

"Great God!" murmured Madam Desmarais faintly. "My brother!"

"Let him get out of here!" cried the attorney, pale with terror. "Let him get out this instant!"

"You repulse my brother, when he is in danger of his life, perhaps!" exclaimed Madam Desmarais indignantly. And running to Gertrude she demanded, "Where is my brother?"

"In the dining room, taking off his cloak—" But interrupting herself she exclaimed, "Here is Monsieur Hubert, now!"

In fact, it was none other than Hubert himself who appeared in the parlor door. He was laboring under strong emotion; he received his sister in his arms and embraced her effusively.

Advocate Desmarais, a prey to the keenest anxiety, was as yet uncertain as to how his troublesome brother-in-law was to be received. In a whisper he interrogated Gertrude:

"Do you think the porter recognized Monsieur Hubert?"

"With his slouch hat pulled over his eyes, blue glasses on, and his chin hidden in the collar of his great-coat, Monsieur Hubert was unrecognizable."

The attorney pondered a few seconds, and continued his conversation with Gertrude: "You have a key to the little garden gate? Go open it, and leave it ajar. In ten minutes run to the janitor with a great air of alarm and tell him that the person who just asked for me was a robber, that you just surprised him with his hand in the drawer of the dining-room buffet; that he took flight as soon as discovered, that he ran down stairs in a hurry, and that he probably made good his escape by scaling the garden wall. You understand all I've told you? Execute my orders precisely, and not a word on my brother-in-law's presence."

"It shall all be done as you wish."

"Not a word of all this to Jeanette or Germain. Let no one into the parlor for any reason whatsoever, and do not come in yourself until I ring for you." Then Desmarais added, as one who had a brilliant idea, "For greater safety, I'll bolt the door, Go!"

Gertrude went out, and Desmarais cautiously bolted the door of the parlor.

"To see you again brother, perhaps at the moment of losing you forever!" sobbed Madam Desmarais addressing Hubert; "the thought is misery to me."

"Reassure yourself, sister. I know how to baffle the pursuits of which I am the object. I have thrown off the scent the spies who dogged my steps. And certes, they will never come to seek me in the house of a member of the Convention. I ask asylum of your husband till midnight only. At that hour I shall quit his house."

"Ah, I swear, that do I, that you will have quit it in ten minutes!" retorted the attorney, going over slowly to his wife's side, at the same moment that Hubert, perceiving the wooden packing-case, said to his sister:

"Ah, there is my box!"

"Poor brother," began Madam Desmarais, interrupting the financier. "In the midst of your anxieties, you still remembered my birthday. How can I tell you how touched I am at this proof of your affection!"

"I deserve no thanks, my dear sister. The case is not intended for you; it contains some precious objects which I wish to save from the domiciliary visits they make upon suspects."

"Compromising papers, no doubt!" gasped Desmarais, aside. "Such an object to drop upon me!"

"I thought these things would be safer here than anywhere else, that is why I sent them in the case," continued Hubert; "but for reasons useless to tell you, your servant and the porter must transport it at once to a house at an address I shall give you."

"I shall go at once to tell our men," said Madam Desmarais, moving toward the door. But the lawyer stopped her with his hand, and said coldly:

"Madam, you shall not go out!"

"Pardon, my dear brother-in-law, my not yet having pressed your hand, you whose hospitality I shall share for a few hours," spoke up Hubert, stepping to meet the lawyer; "but it was so long since I saw my sister, that my first movement was to run to her, and—"

"Citizen Hubert," broke in the attorney, pale and trembling between rage and fear, "the house of a Mountainist of the Convention shall not serve as the refuge of traitors."

"Good God!" Madam Desmarais murmured, clasping her hands in fright.

"What, brother-in-law, I ask you for shelter for a few hours, you, my relative, you, erstwhile my friend, and you dare drive me from your door?"

"Citizen Hubert, the enemies of the Republic are my enemies; I shall treat them as political enemies when they fall into my hands. Out you go!"

"Such greetings from you!" stammered Hubert, dazed.

"Brother," cried Madam Desmarais, "do not believe what my husband says! He is incapable of committing such an act of infamy. It was only a few moments ago that he was cursing the excesses of the Revolution."

"Wretch!" shrieked Desmarais, seizing his wife by the wrist. "Will you hold your peace!" Then, turning to his brother-in-law, "Citizen Hubert, if you do not leave this building on the instant, I shall send for the patrol of the Section, and have you arrested."

"Ah!" cried Hubert with indignation. "I come to ask a relative for a few hours' refuge, and the coward, for fear of being compromised, wishes to send me to the scaffold!"

As Hubert pronounced these last words, Gertrude rapped at the door and called in a quaking voice:

"Open, open! The commissioner of the Section, in his scarf of office, is here with the mounted police. He is coming upstairs."

Hubert drew from his coat pockets a brace of double-barreled pistols, cocked them, and said in a low voice:

"I shall sell my life dear; but, by the thousand gods! my first bullet will be for you, my coward and traitor brother-in-law!"

Advocate Desmarais leaped to the door and drew back the bolt. His wife, struck with a sudden inspiration, and displaying, in the terror which seized her, an unwonted strength, dragged her brother into her bed-chamber, which opened on the parlor, slammed the door after her, and shot the bolt into its socket.

CHAPTER XII.

HOWLING WITH THE WOLVES.

While Hubert was thus perforce following his sister to safety, Desmarais did not notice his brother-in-law's disappearance; for the lawyer, at the moment, was leaving the parlor to meet the commissioner. Contrary to his expectations, he did not find the officer in the ante-room, and was compelled to go as far as the stair-landing, where he encountered him and accompanied him back to the parlor.

The commissioner was a man of cold and rigid physiognomy; in his suite were some gendarmes of the Republic, and several police agents. Bowing to the commissioner, the advocate said:

"Citizen, if I had a son a traitor to the nation, I would myself give him up to the public powers. I would follow the example of Brutus the Roman." Then stopping short and casting about him looks of stupefaction, he added: "But where has my brother-in-law gone to?"

"That is for me to ask you, Citizen Representative of the people," rejoined the commissioner. "This disappearance is strange!"

"I commence to see! My wife has let out her brother by her bed-chamber; the rear staircase descends to the court, and from the court the rascal will gain the garden!"

The advocate flung himself against the bedroom door, and beating upon it with both fists, cried breathlessly, "God be praised, the traitor will not escape us!"

"Go tell our people to redouble their watchfulness," the commissioner ordered two of his men, who went out quickly. Just then the sleeping room door fell beneath the blows of the lawyer. The chamber was empty.

Suddenly one of the two agents burst in out of breath, crying, "Treason! Our man has escaped! Just now two women, one of whom was enveloped in a long furred pelisse, wearing a hat with a heavy veil, appeared at the carriage gate, where two gendarmes were posted. One of the women said: 'I am Madam Desmarais; I am going out with my daughter.'"

"A lie! for my daughter is here and could not have left her room!"

"Pursue the fugitives," said the commissioner to some of the men around him; then, turning back toward Desmarais, he continued, in a tone of suspicion: "Citizen Representative, this escape seems to me cleverly planned; but there is still something else to your charge," indicating the deal chest. "In the name of the law, I summon you to tell me the contents of that case."

Remembering that Hubert had told his sister he had used the pretext of a birthday present to her to remove some precious articles from domiciliary visitation, the attorney was staggered by the question. But driven by the logic of his hypocrisy further and further along the path in which he thought lay his safety, the miserable man recovered himself with an effort, and said firmly to the commissioner: "Citizen, before replying to your question about the chest, I ask the arrest of my wife, as an accomplice in the escape of a conspirator."

"I have no warrant for the arrest of Citizeness Desmarais. I shall refer the matter to the attorney for the Commune."

"As to the chest, the object of your interrogation, I answer that it belongs not to me. It was sent here by my brother-in-law several days ago. It should contain, according to what has been told us, a birthday present for my wife; but I hasten to add that I have every ground for believing that Citizen Hubert, taking advantage of my confidence, has sought to conceal from investigation certain compromising papers, by sending them to me in that box. I learned of this circumstance only by certain words let fall by my brother-in-law just now, when I threatened to cause his arrest. I have nothing else to add."

"Lift the cover off the box," ordered the commissioner.

Several gendarmes thrust their bayonets between the cover of the chest and the lock, which yielded to their pressure. The case flew open. Advocate Desmarais threw an unquiet look into its interior, which was filled to the brim with daggers, pistols, and boxes of cartridges. Among these were several packages of proclamations issued by the royalist insurrectionary committee.

Despite his profound dissimulation and the extraordinary command he exercised over himself, Desmarais could not conceal the fright into which he was thrown by the exposure of the contents of the chest. But curbing his anxiety by a powerful effort, he feigned indifference, and tossed back into the box a copy of the proclamation, which he had hastily read.

The commissioner seated himself by a table, drew out an inkhorn, and began to write.

All at once Madam Desmarais appeared at the door of the parlor, pale, fainting, hardly able to keep her feet. Nevertheless in her face could be read the joy she felt over her brother's escape, and as she entered she said, raising her eyes to heaven:

"Blessed be Thou, my God! He is saved!"

At the sight of his wife Desmarais leaped with rage, ran to her, seized her roughly by the arm and cried in a voice that betrayed the extent of his terror:

"Citizeness Desmarais, you are guilty of a crime against the nation. I call for your imprisonment."

Madam Desmarais looked at her husband in amazement, unable, at first, to grasp the import of his words. Just at

this moment Charlotte, informed by Gertrude of what was taking place, entered the room. She was in time to hear the last words of the advocate; she ran to Madam Desmarais, clasped her in her arms, and exclaimed:

"Great heaven! Imprison mother! Is it you, father, who thus threaten her!"

"Leave the room," retorted the lawyer, accompanying the words with an imperious gesture. "Leave the room, my girl. Your presence is not needed."

"I, leave the room, when you threaten mother? Never! Where she remains, I remain."

"My child, be reassured," replied Madam Desmarais in an undertone, giving her daughter a look of intelligence which included the commissioner. "Your father is not speaking seriously. Everything will come out to our satisfaction."

These words, which might have been heard by the commissioner, still further exasperated the lawyer, who, under the double goad of his hypocrisy and trepidation, cried: "Citizeness Desmarais, in making yourself the confederate in the escape of a criminal, you have exposed yourself to carrying your head to the scaffold!"

At these words Charlotte uttered a piercing cry, and fell upon the neck of her mother, whom she still held in a tight embrace. But the latter, firmly persuaded that her husband was playing a role to conjure away the dangers which surrounded him, again said to her daughter, in order to calm her anguish:

"But, poor child, know that your father is forced to talk this way in the presence of a commissioner of police."

Overwhelmed by so many emotions, Madam Desmarais forgot this time to lower her voice sufficiently as she spoke to her daughter. Her words fell with distinctness on the ears of her husband, standing near the commissioner of the Section, who was still occupied in writing his report. False and cowardly men, when in the grip of fear, are capable of any act of brutality to protect their own lives. So it now was with Desmarais; for, leaden pale with fright, he said to himself:

"I am lost! The commissioner heard my wife's words." Then, addressing the magistrate: "Citizen, I have called upon you for the arrest of Citizeness Desmarais, my wife."

"And I have already told you, citizen," rejoined the commissioner, "that I have no warrant for her arrest."

"My dear girl," whispered Madam Desmarais to her daughter, "your father insists on my arrest, knowing that he will not obtain it; be at ease."

"Since, then, you refuse to arrest my wife, citizen commissioner, I call upon you to leave here two of your men to keep watch on Citizeness Desmarais until her case is settled."

"I consent to leave two agents at your disposal for the surveillance of Citizeness Desmarais, since you insist upon it," agreed the magistrate. Then, rising and passing the pen to the advocate, he continued: "Please sign the record of this seizure of arms, ammunition, and proclamations which has just taken place in your dwelling."

"I wish to read the record carefully before I sign it, citizen commissioner; we may not agree on the wording of the document."

"I shall wait while you read it," the magistrate replied. And while the attorney made himself acquainted with the contents of the record, the commissioner approached Madam Desmarais, and said with a good-natured and meaning smile: "You are not frightened, citizeness, at the rigor of your husband?"

"Sir," replied Madam Desmarais hesitantly, not knowing whether to distrust the officer or not, "my husband's conduct does in truth seem to me a little strange."

"Eh! by heaven! that's very simple. Alas, in these unhappy times, honest men are often obliged to wear certain masks."

"It was thanks to your generous intervention that my brother owes his safety."

"Have a care, madam, that my men do not hear you; they are not all *sure*. But I have a last word of advice to give you: Try to warn monsieur, your brother, to leave Paris as soon as possible, and by the St. Victor barrier."

"Ah, monsieur, what goodness!"

"I know that Monsieur Desmarais affects of necessity opinions far removed from his heart. Have no fear, then, madam; I caught his meaning when he asked for your arrest. So I am going to give you two jailers, the best men in the world. Adieu, madam, keep the secret for me, and count on my devotion;" and the magistrate added, half aloud: "One must howl with the wolves."

As the commissioner moved away, Madam Desmarais said to her daughter joyfully, "What an excellent man! Thanks to him my brother will perhaps be able to leave Paris to-night without danger. What gratitude we all owe him!"

"By the St. Victor barrier, mother; doubtless, that barrier is less closely watched than the others. But how can we convey to uncle this precious information? There is the difficulty."

"He gave me the number of a place, the home of one of his friends, where I might address a letter. I shall go write it at once, and Gertrude shall carry it."

These various undertone conversations, and especially the conversation of his wife with the commissioner, put Desmarais on the griddle. But, obliged to pay all his attention to the police record, he could do no more than throw, from time to time, a hurried glance upon the speakers. He finally concluded the reading of the report, and having no fault to find with its contents, he signed it, saying once more, as he handed it back to the commissioner:

"I would remind you, citizen, that I request the arrest of Citizeness Desmarais, and in the meanwhile, I insist that two of your agents remain here at my disposition."

"I have just issued orders to that effect. I leave you two men who will know how to perform their duty in every respect. Adieu, citizen; I shall not forget your request, nor the *good example* you present to the patriots in asking the arrest of Citizeness Desmarais. This very day Citizen Marat shall be enlightened by me on your patriotism."

With these words, which bore a double significance, the commissioner bowed low to Madam Desmarais and her daughter, marched out with his men, who carried with them the chest of arms, and said to two of the agents who accompanied him:

"You are to remain outside the parlor at the orders of Citizen Desmarais;" and added in a lower tone: "Keep watch around the house; follow the young woman who will go out."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HOWL RINGS FALSE.

At the same instant Madam Desmarais was saying to herself:

"Let me hasten to write to my brother that he may even to-night quit Paris, by the St. Victor barrier." And, rushing to her husband as the double doors of the parlor swung to, she exclaimed joyfully:

"Ah, my friend, what a fine fellow that commissioner is! He does like you—he *roars with the tigers and howls with the wolves*!"

"What!" exploded the lawyer, taken aback. "Do you mean to say—?"

"I mean this worthy man understood that in demanding my arrest, poor friend, you were only playing a role. Not so, Charlotte?"

"Oh, yes! For he said to mother, 'In these times of revolution, honest men are obliged to wear a mask.'"

"And I made answer," continued Madam Desmarais, "that, in fact, you were obliged to *howl with the wolves*, as you have so often repeated to me to-day."

"Wretched woman!" screamed the lawyer, as he sprang at his wife, his fist raised in a paroxysm of rage.

"Father, recollect yourself, for pity!"

A moment later Desmarais's fury gave way to prostration. His features were overspread with an ashen pallor, he reeled, and had barely time to throw himself into an arm-chair, mumbling as if his senses had forsaken him—"I am lost!—The guillotine!"

Madam Desmarais and her daughter flew to the advocate's side, raised his inert head, and made him breathe their salts. Hardly had he come to himself when Gertrude entered and announced:

"Monsieur Billaud-Varenne asks to speak with monsieur, on a very urgent matter."

The announcement of the visit of his colleague seemed to reanimate the lawyer. A glow of hope shone in his almost deathly countenance. He rose abruptly, saying:

"Billaud must have seen St. Just. If he accepts my proposition, I am saved!" Then, in a curt, hard voice he addressed his wife: "Retire to your apartment, madam; I have to talk business, grave political business, with Citizen Billaud-Varenne."

Followed by her daughter, Madam Desmarais went out, and her husband ordered Gertrude to show Citizen Billaud-Varenne into the parlor. As the maid left, the two police agents placed on watch were seated near the parlor door.

"Come now, let's compose ourselves," muttered the advocate, mopping the perspiration which beaded his brow. "Billaud-Varenne is another sort of monster, and perhaps more dangerous than Marat. What answer will he bring me? If St. Just consents to be my son-in-law, I have nothing more to fear! If not—ah! What a hell!"

Billaud-Varenne entered. The Representative of the people was not a monster, as the advocate had christened him; but a man of inflexible convictions and rigid probity, besides being the possessor of some fortune. He did not touch, any more than Lepelletier St. Fargeau, Herault of Sechelles, and other wealthy citizens, the compensation allowed to a Representative. Gifted with natural eloquence, always sanguine, there was no patriot more devoted to the Revolution than Billaud-Varenne. He wore a short-haired black wig, and a maroon suit with steel buttons; like Robespierre, St. Just, Camille Desmoulins and other Jacobins, he carried dignity even into the care of his person and his clothes.

"Eh, well, colleague," quoth Billaud-Varenne on entering, "what am I to surmise by this visit of the Section commissioner, whom I just met leaving your rooms?"

"Confess that it is a spicy incident to find, in the house one of us Mountainists a deposit of royalist poniards!"

"That is very easily explained: You receive a case from the depot, you don't know what is in it—nothing simpler."

"Do you think, my dear colleague, that it seemed so simple to the commissioner?"

"He could know nothing to the contrary. But, between ourselves, you exhibited extreme rigor towards your wife."

"You know that also—?"

"I know that you applied for her arrest, and that you demanded two watchmen, whom I found out there, in the ante-room. The precaution seems to me excessive."

"You disapprove of this measure, you, Billaud-Varenne, you, man of iron?"

"I disapprove of your whole procedure. My dear colleague, there are painful duties to which one resigns himself; but there are useless harshnesses which one does not call down upon his dear ones. That is my way of looking at it." Without noticing, or without seeming to notice, the uneasiness which his last words produced in Desmarais, Billaud-Varenne proceeded:

"But, let us speak of the object of my visit. I am just from the Jacobins, where I saw St. Just. He was highly sensible of the honor of the advances I made him on your part, on the subject of his marrying your daughter; but he refused to contract any union whatsoever."

"He refuses!" gasped Desmarais, pale with consternation. "Is not the refusal perhaps revokable?"

"St. Just never turns back on a determination once taken."

"But, at least, I may know the cause of his declination? Answer my question, my dear colleague."

"St. Just would have been happy to enter your family, he told me, if Mademoiselle Desmarais had looked favorably upon his court; but he thinks that under the grave circumstances in which we now find ourselves, a man of politics should remain free from all bonds, even those of the family, in order to consecrate himself wholly to public affairs. He wishes to hold himself ready for all sacrifices, even that of his life."

"Perhaps St. Just deems my daughter has not been brought up in principles of civic duty sufficiently pure. Had he regarded me as a better patriot, his answer would have no doubt been different?"

"Of a truth, my dear colleague, you are a singular fellow. In the Constituent Assembly, you voted with the extreme Left; at the Jacobins, I have heard you propose and support the most revolutionary motions; you vote with us of the Mountain; and yet you seem to fear lest we suspect the sincerity of your convictions!"

"And why, then, should I fear that anyone doubted my sincerity?"

"My faith, you must answer that question yourself!"

"Oh, then the answer is easy, my dear Billaud: The Revolution is, and should be, a jealous, distrustful, exacting mistress to those devoted to her; and I continually fear not having done enough, and being accused of lukewarmness." Then, anxious to escape from a subject that embarrassed him, and to hide the cruel disappointment occasioned by St. Just's refusal, Desmarais added, "What is new to-night at the Jacobins?"

"A speech of hardly a quarter of an hour in length, but which created an incalculable impression upon its hearers."

"On what subject?"

"Louis XVI's penalty."

"And the speaker was—?"

"A young man whom I am proud to number among my friends, for his modesty equals his patriotism and merit. He is a simple iron-worker. We wished to nominate him for the Convention; he refused our offer, but consented to accept municipal office."

"John Lebrenn!"

"Precisely. He was the orator in question."

"He is my pupil, my dear pupil!" returned Desmarais. "It is I who put him through his revolutionary education."

"This young man, ardent, generous, yet tender and delicate as he is by nature, has but one rule of conduct—eternal justice and morality. He is a lofty soul. Marat and Robespierre both congratulated him upon his speech, which concluded with these words:

"'Louis XVI was born kind, humane, and graced with parts, and behold what corrupting, subversive, detestable influences lurk in the very essence of kingship. It has turned this man, so happily made up, into a traitor, a perjurer, a murderer, a parricide who has unchained against his mother country the arms of foreigners and emigrants. Ah, citizens, in judging, in condemning this guilty one of high rank, it is less the man than the King and still less the King than royalty itself that you smite. The ax that will strike off the head of Louis XVI will decapitate the monarchy, that dynasty of a foreign race imposed on Gaul for so many centuries by violence and conquest.'"

"That's superb!" exclaimed the lawyer. "That's fine! Lo, the fruit of my lessons!"

"Your pupil closed by ably contrasting with the days of September the judicial condemnation of Louis Capet: 'Before August 10 the crimes of Louis XVI were notorious; they merited death,' quoth Lebrenn. 'Suppose the people in its fury had taken summary justice on the guilty one. Suppose he had been stricken down during the insurrection.

Compare that death, almost furtive, half veiled by the murk of battle, with the august spectacle which the Convention is now about to offer to the world, before God and man! A people calm in its sovereignty, judging and condemning, in the name of the law, the criminal who was its King. To the dagger of Brutus we shall oppose the sword of Justice! The tyrant shall be smitten in the name of all, in the public place. He shall pass from the throne to the scaffold. May in like manner the heads of all tyrants fall!'"

"That is immense!" again exclaimed Desmarais. "I am proud of my pupil."

"And what enhances your pupil's worth, my dear colleague, is that his modesty is equal to his patriotism. Robespierre, mounting the tribunal after Lebrenn, commended his discourse with the words: 'This young man has just spoken to us in the language of the philosopher, the historian, the statesman. He is a simple workman, who toils ten hours a day at his rough trade of iron-worker to supply his wants.' These words of Robespierre's signalized the ovation received by Lebrenn at the Jacobins. And now I take my leave of you, my dear Desmarais, reiterating my regret at having failed in the mission you entrusted me with to St. Just. Moreover, he will probably tell you himself to-morrow at the Convention how sensible he was of your tenders, and for what reasons he feels constrained to decline them."

"I should have been happy to have for son-in-law a man as eminent in talent as for patriotism. I have firmly made up my mind not to give my daughter to anyone but a republican of our stripe, dear colleague."

"But now I think of it," interjected Billaud-Varenne, stopping and coming back a few steps, "you desire for son-in-law a republican eminent alike for his love of country and his talent? Is that your desire?"

"It is my most ardent wish!"

"Well, then, my dear Desmarais, you have that son-in-law under your hand—your pupil, Citizen John Lebrenn! The young man has lived close beside you, you must be acquainted with his manners and his private character. Mademoiselle Desmarais, reared by you in austere principles, ought, allowing for her personal inclinations, which should always be respected, to welcome such an aspirant to her hand. John Lebrenn is young, and of attractive appearance. So that, if such a marriage were pleasing to your daughter, would it not be an act calculated to draw toward you everyone's affection, for having begun the merging of the classes? Everybody would applaud the marriage of the daughter of the rich bourgeois, of the advocate of renown, with the simple artisan. What think you of the idea, my dear colleague?"

"You shall soon know," replied advocate Desmarais after a moment's reflection, during which he vainly racked his brains for an avenue of escape from the meshes of his own duplicity, now closed in upon him. Then he ran to the table, seated himself, seized paper and pen, and dashed off a few lines, while he said silently to himself:

"The danger admits of no hesitation. The sacrifice is consummated. After Billaud-Varenne's utterances on the 'merging of the classes,' I can no longer hang back. He is interested in Lebrenn; he will inform the boy of the proposal he just made to me; he will learn that John and my daughter have loved each other for four years and more. It will then be clear to Billaud-Varenne that my only reason for opposition to the union is my repugnance to giving my daughter to a workingman. I shudder for the consequences! Such a revelation, coming on the heels of Hubert's escape and the discovery of the depot of royalist arms and proclamations in my house, is capable of leading me straight to the guillotine!"

While indulging in these reflections, Desmarais indicted the following letter to John Lebrenn:

> My dear John:
>
> I await you at once, at my home. My daughter is yours, on one only condition, which I expect from your loyalty in which I have absolute confidence.
>
> That condition is:
>
> *Never to mention to anyone, and particularly not to Billaud-Varenne, that you loved my daughter four years ago.*
>
> I await you.
>
> Fraternal greetings,
>
> DESMARAIS.

The letter written, Desmarais rang. Gertrude appeared and the lawyer said to her:

"Carry this letter immediately to Citizen John Lebrenn, and wait for an answer."

"Yes, monsieur," answered the maid, and went on her errand.

"My dear colleague, excuse me for an instant, and I shall see whether my wife and daughter can receive us."

Thus left alone, Billaud-Varenne gave himself up to reflection. "There is a rat here somewhere," he mused. "Why does Desmarais wish to present me to his wife and daughter? Truly there are strange shifts in this man's conduct. He continually forces upon me a vague mistrust, and yet his vote, his speech, and his deed have always been in accord with the most advanced revolutionary principles. Whence comes this constant fear, which everything awakens in him, of being taken for a traitor? Just now he seemed shocked and startled at the idea which came to me to propose Lebrenn as his son-in-law. Does the bourgeois *sans-culotte* want to be a bourgeois *gentleman*? Does the rich lawyer fear he will debase himself in giving his daughter to a workman? And finally, what an absurd affectation of stoicism for him to call for the arrest of his wife because she yielded to the respectable sentiment of sisterly tenderness! Has he not constituted himself her jailer? Do these exaggerations mask treason or only extreme cowardice? Is Desmarais a traitor or lily-livered? or traitor and coward combined? After all, what matters it? He is an instrument, he is

popular, eloquent, subtle, well-listened to in the Assembly. But, in times of reaction, traitors and cowards who by their exaggerations on one side have attained a certain popularity, become no less exaggerated the other way, and, in the desire to save their heads or 'give pledges,' send in preference their old friends to the scaffold. Desmarais may someday, if my distrust be well grounded, blossom forth into one of these furious reactionists. Lest that be the case, the proof of treason once at hand the evil must be cut out at the root." Punctuating his last words with a gesture of terrible significance, Billaud-Varenne added: "At any rate, let us await facts before forming a final judgment. Marat's penetration never fails, and he has his eye on our dear colleague."

Billaud-Varenne's soliloquy was cut short by the return of Desmarais, flanked by his wife and daughter. The latter seemed sweetly moved by the confidence her father had just made her, touching his determination in the matter of her marriage with John Lebrenn. Madam Desmarais, on the contrary, was under the influence of mournful thoughts, by reason of the events in which she found her brother involved, the fate of whom caused her no slight anxiety; she was at much pains to restrain her tears.

The member of the Assembly, bowing with kind and respectful courtesy to the wife of his colleague, spoke first:

"I regret, madam, that it is at a moment so sad to you that I have the honor of being presented; but I hope, indeed I am certain, that my dear colleague will not prolong much more your captivity, but will deliver you from your guardians."

"Citizen Billaud-Varenne, it shall be as you desire. I shall send away the agents charged with keeping guard over Citizeness Desmarais. Jailers in our hall go ill with a day of betrothal."

"What say you, citizen," ejaculated Billaud-Varenne. "A day of betrothal?"

"The letter I wrote just this instant, was destined to my pupil Lebrenn. I announced to him, very simply, that I offered him the hand of my daughter."

"Your procedure is indeed worthy of praise."

"And now, my daughter," continued Desmarais solemnly, "answer me truthfully. Before your departure from Paris for Lyons, you often saw here our young neighbor Lebrenn. What is your opinion of the young citizen?"

"I think that there is no soul more lofty, no character more generous, no heart better than his. He is a young man of worth."

"You consent to wed him?"

"I consent with all the greater willingness, father, because, unknown to you and mother, I have for a long time loved Monsieur John Lebrenn, the valiant iron-worker. I even believe that my affection is returned."

"The young girl is charming in her grace and candor," thought Billaud-Varenne. "What a strange falling out! These two young people love each other in secret! In very truth, it is a romance, an idyll!"

"What, my daughter, you love our young friend, and he loves you!" cried the lawyer, putting on an air of great surprise. "And you hid your love from me? How comes it that you and our friend John made a mystery of the love you felt for each other?"

The return of Gertrude interrupted the colloquy.

"Well! What answer did our young neighbor make to my letter?"

"Citizen John Lebrenn is absent. The porter told me that on leaving the club of the Jacobins, he came to change his clothes, putting on his uniform of municipal officer, in order to go to the Temple Prison, where he is to mount guard to-night over Louis Capet. I brought the letter back. Here it is."

"Ah, I regret this mischance, dear colleague," said the lawyer; "especially now that I am aware of the love of these two children for each other. I would have been overjoyed to have you witness the happiness for which you are in part responsible."

"I share your regrets, dear colleague," replied Billaud-Varenne; then, smiling, after a moment's thought: "It remains with you to grant me a compensation for which I shall be very grateful. Entrust to me this letter, which I will have delivered, this very evening at the Temple, to our young friend."

"Ah, sir, how good you are," said Charlotte quickly, blushing with emotion. "Thank you for your gracious offer."

"Here is the letter, dear colleague. As much as my daughter, I thank you for your cordial interest," added the lawyer, handing over the missive; while he said to himself: "Billaud-Varenne is incapable of opening a letter confided to him and addressed to John Lebrenn. He will not see him to-night; I need, then, fear no indiscretion on the boy's part, and it is for me now to inform John, as soon as possible, of my projects and the conditions I impose upon him for his marriage."

"Adieu, madam, adieu, mademoiselle," Billaud-Varenne was saying to the two women, as he bowed to each; "I shall carry with me at least the certainty that this evening, begun under such sad auspices, will end in domestic joy."

Madam Desmarais, overwhelmed with apprehensions of her brother's fate, could only reply sadly as she returned the bow, "I thank you, monsieur, for your good wishes."

"Till to-morrow, dear colleague," said the lawyer, going with Billaud-Varenne as far as the door of the parlor; and then he added in an undertone, "If, as I have no doubt, John Lebrenn marries my daughter, would it not be timely to mention the marriage in the journal of our friend Marat?"

"I promise you, colleague, to speak of it to Marat; he will consider the matter," responded Billaud-Varenne with a

touch of irony; and he muttered to himself: "Affectation again. This bidding for popularity once more arouses my suspicions."

"Citizens," said the lawyer to the two agents of the Section commissioner posted outside the door, "you may withdraw. Fraternal greetings." And addressing Billaud-Varenne, he repeated: "Till to-morrow, dear colleague."

"Till to-morrow!" returned the latter. "I shall go at once to the Temple, and within the hour, John Lebrenn shall have your letter." After which the member of the National Convention once more added, to himself:

"Positively, I think Marat must keep his eye on Desmarais; he seems to me a hypocrite who will well bear watching."

END OF VOLUME I.

THE SWORD OF HONOR

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THE SWORD OF HONOR

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The Foundation of the French Republic

A Tale of The French Revolution

By EUGENE SUE

Volume II

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH BY

DANIEL DE LEON

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THE BOURGEOIS REVOLUTION
(Continued.)

CHAPTER XIV.

JESUIT CAMPAIGNING.

While these events were taking place at the abode of advocate Desmarais, a royalist cabal was in full swing in St. Roche Street, on the fourth floor of an old house built at the rear of a courtyard. An ex-beadle of the parish, devoted to Abbot Morlet, and generously feed from the strong-box of the clerical and aristocratic party, received the conspirators in his lodge, consisting of two mansard buildings huddled together. A secret issue, contrived in the bottom of a pantry, communicated from the rear-most of these two buildings with the garret of the neighboring house, which was also kept by royalists. In a corner of the garret opened a trap which gave access to a *cachette*, as they were called in those times, a hiding-place large enough to hold four beds, and sufficiently supplied with air and light through a section of drain-pipe running up along the chimney which formed one of the sides of the perfectly contrived refuge. In case of a sudden descent upon the home of the ex-beadle, the latter, warned by the porter, who was in his confidence, would give the alarm to the refugees sheltered with him; these then decamped by the secret issue and gained the cachette, where they were doubly secure; for even if the trap in the pantry were discovered, one would suppose the fugitives to have escaped by the staircase of the neighboring house. There were in Paris a

number of these places, designed for refractory priests, ex-nobles, and suspects, who conspired against the Republic.

So on this night in question, the royalist cabal was met at the home of the ex-beadle. The Count of Plouernel was there, and his younger brother, the Bishop in partibus of Gallipoli; also the Marquis of St. Esteve, that insufferable laugher, who four years before had attended the supper given by the Count to Marchioness Aldini; and Abbot Morlet. The members of the cabal were seated in camp chairs about a clay stove; all were dressed like bourgeois, and wore their hair without powder. The Marquis alone was frizzled like hoar-frost; he had on an elegant coat of purple cloth with gold buttons, and purple trousers to match; his stockings of white silk were half hidden by the legs of his jockey-boots. Good humor and joviality were written all over his countenance, as expansive as if that very moment he were not staking his head. The Bishop of Gallipoli, the junior of the Count of Plouernel by several years, was dressed as a layman; both he and the Marquis, for a long time emigrated, had recently succeeded in crossing the frontier and regaining Paris, where they lay in concealment, like a great many other aristocrats returned from abroad. The face of Jesuit Morlet was still, as always, calm and sardonic; he wore a carmagnole jacket and red bonnet.

Eleven o'clock sounded from the Church of St. Roche.

"Eleven o'clock," quoth the Count of Plouernel. "We were to have been all met at ten; and here we are only four at the rendezvous. There are twenty members on the committee. Such negligence is unpardonable! The absentees are incurring grave responsibility."

"Their negligence is all the more reprehensible seeing that we must act to-morrow; it is to-morrow that the King is to be taken to that den of knaves, known as the Convention," added his brother the Bishop.

"Our friends must be kept away by some serious obstacle," continued Plouernel. "Gentlemen can not be suspected of cowardice."

The Marquis let loose a peal of laughter. "Gentlemen! And that money-changer, that Monsieur Hubert! That blue head! At first I would not be one of the party, when I learned I had to sit with that bourgeois. But after all, he bears the name of the great St. Hubert, patron of hunters! Hi! hi! And so, out of regard for his patron, I admitted the clown!"

"For God's sake, Marquis," broke in Plouernel, "put a bridle on your hilarity. Let us talk sense. This Monsieur Hubert is a determined clown, and very influential among the old grenadiers of the battalion of the Daughters of St. Thomas."

"Hi! hi! hi!" shrieked the Marquis, "a battalion of girls given the title of St. Thomas, who had to touch in order to believe! Hi! hi! hi! Bless me, Count, I could teach that battalion an evolution which would amuse us. Load and empty! Hi! hi!"

"No one else is coming; we are wasting precious time. Let us take counsel," put in Jesuit Morlet, sourly. "The porter is to whistle in case of alarm. At that signal, my god-son, on the watch on the second floor, will come up to warn the beadle, and we shall have time to flee, or to gain the cachette through the pantry. Let us take account of the state of affairs—"

"This double-bottomed pantry reminds me," struck in the uproarious Marquis, "of a certain gallant adventure of which I was once the hero. I'll tell it to you—"

"Devil take the bore! Give us a rest with your stories," quoth the Count.

"Marquis, why did you return to France? Answer categorically," said the Bishop to him.

"Idiot! To save my King! To snatch him out of the hands of the Philistines!"

"And is it thus that you pretend to save him, by interrupting our deliberations with your buffoonery? With jests out of season?"

"But you are not deliberating on a thing! You're sitting there like three sea-storks! Hi! hi! hi! You're not going ahead with the business any more than I am."

"The giddy fellow is correct," said Morlet, for once taking the Marquis's side. "We shall never finish if we do not introduce some order into this. I shall take the chair, and open the meeting."

"You—take the chair—my reverend sir? And by what right?" was the reply of the Bishop of Gallipoli.

"By the right which a man of sense has over fools like the Marquis; by the right which my age gives me. For I am here much older than any of you."

"So be it; preside," said Plouernel.

"If it is only a question of the precedence of age, I yield," said his brother.

"Oh, and I also! Hi! hi!" cried the Marquis, holding his sides.

"By heaven, Marquis, we shall have to toss you out of the window!" impatiently shouted the Count.

"Shut your heads, one and all of you," commanded Abbot Morlet. "I shall put the case to you in two words. To-morrow Louis XVI will be conducted from the prison of the Temple to the bar of the Convention. The occasion seems favorable for rescuing the King during the passage. Here is the means proposed. Five or six hundred resolute men, armed under their cloaks with pistols and poniards, will meet at different places previously agreed on, and locate themselves in isolated groups along the route to be taken by the King; they will mingle with the crowd, affect the language of the sans-culottes, and propagate the rumor, designedly launched several days ago, that the majority of the Convention is resolved to spare the life of Capet, and that the people must take justice into its own hands. Our agents will strive thus to inflame the people; during the passage of the King they will cry, 'Death to the tyrant!' At

those words, the signal agreed upon, they shall resolutely attack the escort with pistols and daggers. It is our hope that, favored by the tumult, we may be able boldly to seize Louis XVI, and carry him off to some safe retreat prepared in advance. Our men will then march to the Convention and exterminate its members; this being successfully accomplished, proclamations already in print will be placarded over Paris calling all honest men to arms against the Republic. A part of the old elite companies of the National Guard, all the royalists and constitutionalists of Paris, the Emigrants who have been arriving for a fortnight—all will respond to the call to arms, and conduct the King to the Tuileries. Numerous emissaries will be sent at once into the west and south, and to Lyons, all of which places are ready to rise at the voice of the nobles and priests in hiding there. Civil war will flare up at once in several parts of the kingdom. The foreign armies, demoralized by their defeat at Valmy, are now beating an offensive retreat to the frontier; it is hoped that, through the civil war and the consequent chaos, the allies will regain the advantage they had at the opening of the campaign, advance on Paris by forced marches, and inflict terrible chastisement upon it. This culmination, prepared with a long hand—the only way to save the King—was about to occur just before the September massacres. The massacres had their good and their bad side."

"You dare to say there was a good side to that carnage? Your language is odious!" interrupted the Bishop.

"The massacres of September had a good side and a bad side," calmly reiterated the Abbot. "Here is the bad: The most active chiefs in the conspiracy, detained as suspects in the prisons, whence they were carrying on their plots, were killed; the royalists of Paris and the provinces, struck with terror, lay low and ceased their activity. It took three months to knit together all the threads of the conspiracy which had been snapped by the death of its leaders. The September massacres had also the bad aspect for us that they were combined with an outburst of patriotism. The volunteers, flocking in mass to the front, changed entirely by their bedevilled fury the previous tactics of the war. The Prussian infantry, the best in Europe, was overcome by the mad-caps—there is danger lest it may long remain in the panic into which it was thrown by the bayonet charge of the volunteers at the battle of Valmy."

"Blue death! my reverend sir, you would best hold your tongue in matters of war, of which you know nothing!" the Count of Plouernel impatiently declared. "I served in the Emigrant corps which stormed the position of Croix-aux-Bois at the battle of Argonne; I was at the side of the Duke of Brunswick in the affray at Valmy; and I say that if the Prussian infantry was beaten down by these bare-feet, who precipitated themselves upon us like savages, it is now recovered from the panic, and asks nothing better than to avenge its disgrace. Yes, and let a war come, a real war, a great war, and the allies will make a butchery of these undisciplined hordes. The Prussians will feed fat their vengeance!"

"And I in turn tell you, that in this matter you are completely off your base," was the Abbot's unmoved rejoinder.

"By heaven, my reverend sir!" flared back the Count, "measure your terms!"

And the giggling Marquis cried, "Plague on it, Abbot, all you need is a switch to give us a flogging! Hi! hi! hi!"

"And in your case in particular, Marquis, it would fall where it was deserved. But to continue, I come now to the good, the excellent side of the September massacres."

Again the mere mention of such a possibility was more than the Bishop could contain himself under. "It is impossible," he broke in, "to sit still and hear it said in cold blood that that abominable carnage produced any good results."

"Monseigneur," was Morlet's reply, "it does not at all become you to discredit events in which you did not participate. Disguised as a charcoal burner, and with my god-son as a chimney-sweep, I saw these massacres at close range. Do you remember, Count, what I told you over the supper-table, four years ago, the evening the Bastille was taken: The ferocious beast must get the taste of blood to put it in the humor of slaying? Well, so it was. And, to make the blood flow, I rolled back my sleeves to the elbow, and set to work! So I say again, the massacres of September held this much good for us, that they aroused general horror throughout Europe and exasperated the foreign powers, even including England, which was until then almost neutral, but is now become the soul of the coalition. Even in Paris, this execrable hot-bed of revolution, where, it must be admitted, the massacres were, in a moment of vertigo, accepted by all classes of the people as a measure of public safety, they now inspire unspeakable horror! The revolutionists themselves are divided into two camps—the patriots of the 10th of August, and the Septembrists—a precious germ of internal discord among the wretches. All in all, there is good, much good for us, in the days of September. The terror evoked by them will come to the assistance of the present plot. Everything is prepared; the posts are assigned, the depots of arms established, the proclamations printed. Lehiron, a knave for any trick, if you grease his palm well, is in charge of the band of make-believe sans-culottes which is to assail the King's escort. I can answer for his intelligence and courage; he awaits his final orders next door. Finally, this very evening, and in spite of the careful guard kept about him, Louis XVI is to receive from his waiting-man Clery word of the project, merely that the prince may not be frightened at the tumult, and that he may follow with confidence those who give him the pass-word, 'God and the King! Pilnitz and Brunswick.' That, then, is how matters stand. A plot has been framed, it is on the eve of being carried out. Now, I put this question: Is the time ripe for action?"

Mute with astonishment, the Count, the Marquis and the Bishop stared blankly at one another. The Count was the first to break the silence:

"How is that! You give out the details, the agencies, the object of the plot, the execution of which is fixed for to-morrow, and still you seem to be in doubt as to whether action should be taken?"

"I ask deliberation on these two plain propositions: First, would it not be more opportune to await the day set for the execution of Louis XVI—his condemnation is not a matter of doubt—and only then attempt our stroke, in the hope that the horror of regicide will add to the number of our partisans? And secondly,—it is I, on my own initiative, on my own responsibility, who propose this grave question—would it not be more expedient, in the manifest interest of the Church and the monarchy—simply to allow Louis to be guillotined?"

The Jesuit's proposal, as strange as it was unexpected, threw his hearers into such amazement that they were

struck dumb anew, and sat with their mouths hanging open. Three taps at the door, given like a preconcerted signal, were heard in the stillness.

"It is my god-son," whispered the Jesuit; and in a louder tone, he added: "Come in!"

Little Rodin was togged out in a red jacket and bonnet the same as the prelate. He saluted the company.

"What news, my child? What have you to tell us?" inquired his preceptor.

"Gentle god-father, there is a man down below, with the porter, disguised as a woman. He gave the pass-word, but the porter, not recognizing him, replied that he knew not what he was after with his jargon. Scenting a possible spy, the porter sent his wife up to me on the second floor, to warn me of what had happened."

"Doubtless it is one of our men, obliged to take refuge in disguise," began the Count.

"It is more serious than that," the Bishop dissented. "How are you to make sure he is one of us?"

"A man tricked out as a woman!" exclaimed the Marquis. "Is this carnival time?"

"You know all our people by sight?" asked Morlet of his god-son.

"Yes, dear god-father. When I've seen a person once, I do not forget him. The Lord God," and he crossed himself, "has blessed His little servant with the gift of memory, which he has so much use for."

"Go down to the porter's lodge," returned his dear god-father. "Examine the personage in question. If you recognize him, tell the porter to let him come up. If not, come back and let me know."

"Yes, good god-father, your orders shall be followed to the dot!" responded little Rodin, sliding out of the door, while the Bishop asked, dubiously:

"But may not that child make a mistake? Meseems the errand is poorly entrusted."

"My god-son is a prodigy of cleverness and penetration," returned the Abbot.

The interrupted topic of discussion was immediately resumed by the Count.

"I refuse to sit under a chairman," said he, "a priest, a subject of the King, who has the sacrilegious audacity of bringing up for consideration the abominable question, Is it, yes or no, expedient to allow Louis XVI to be guillotined?"

"Such abomination would seem incredible," chimed in the Bishop, "did one not know that the Society of Jesus often preaches regicide."

"The Society of Jesus has preached, has counseled regicide whenever it became important to suppress Kings *ad majorem Dei gloriam*—to the greater glory of God! The church is above monarchs," retorted the representative of the Society.

"A capital pleasantry!" put in the Marquis. "Here we are met to advise on measures to save the King, and the priest proposes to us to let them clip his head! The idea is brilliant!"

At this moment little Rodin returned, and reported to the Jesuit:

"Good god-father, in the person rigged out as a woman I have recognized Monsieur Hubert."

"Let him come in," ordered the recipient of the information.

Still in Madam Desmarais's hat and fur cloak Hubert entered the room. At the sight, the Marquis greeted him with a roar of laughter. Pale with rage, Hubert threw at his feet his feminine head-gear, dashed off the cloak which hid his vest and grey trousers, rushed at the Marquis, and, shaking his fist under the latter's nose, cried:

"You shall give me a reason for your insolence, you pigeon-house tenant!"

But the Count of Plouernel and his brother the Bishop interposed between the two, and succeeded in calming the financier's irritation, explaining to him that the Marquis was a hare-brain, and should not be taken seriously. Apparently bent upon proving his reputation, the Marquis cried out:

"Pardon, dear sir, hi! hi! or, rather, dear madam! Ah, ah, ah! if you knew what a winsome face you had! Pardon me, I am all upset over it—it is too much for me. Ah, ah, ah! Oh, the idea! I shall die of bottled-up laughter if you don't let me give vent to it!"

Suiting action to word, the Marquis went off into another roar of hysterics. Hubert's violent nature was about once more to get the better of him, but once more was it appeased by the solicitations of the Count and his brother. At last he cooled down sufficiently to make known to the company the secret of his transfiguration, and how he owed his life to his sister's devotion. During these confidences, the laughter of the Marquis gradually died out.

"Then, that part of St. Honoré Street where you have just missed arrest, dear Monsieur Hubert," said the Count, "will to-night be watched by the police, and I may, on leaving here, fall into their hands. For the refuge where I have hidden myself since my return to Paris is situated close to the St. Honoré Gate. The wife of a former whipper-in in the King's Huntsmen is giving me asylum. From the window of my garret I can see the house of this Desmarais, your brother-in-law; whom I now regret not having allowed to die under the cudgels when I had him flogged by my lackeys."

"You live near the St. Honoré Gate, you say, Count? What is the number of the house, if you please?" asked the Abbot with a start.

"Number 19; the entrance is distinguished by a small gate-way."

"You could not have chosen your refuge worse! I am glad to be able to warn you of your danger. At No. 17 of that same street live two members of the Lebrenn family, John the iron-worker, and that beautiful woman whom you knew under the name of Marchioness Aldini. Be on your guard, for if these people came to know where you were hidden, they would not let slip the opportunity to wreak on you the hate with which they have pursued your family for so many centuries."

"Now that that fool of a Marquis has become almost reasonable, let us resume the course of our deliberation," replied the Count, thanking Morlet for his information; and addressing Hubert: "When you came in, the priest was having the presumption to propose for our consideration the question whether it would not be wiser to postpone the projected stroke until after the King was sentenced, instead of to-morrow, as we purpose."

"Any such delay would be all the sadder seeing that this very evening a case of arms, containing also several copies of our proclamation, was seized in my brother-in-law's house. The Committee of General Safety thus has by this time the most flagrant proof of a conspiracy. So then, I say, we must make haste. Yesterday and day before I saw several officers and grenadiers of my old battalion, who are very influential in their quarter. They await but the signal to run to arms. The bourgeoisie has a horror of the Republic."

"Confess, Monsieur Hubert, that it would be better for the bourgeoisie to resign itself to what it calls 'the privileges of the throne, the immunities of the nobility and clergy,' than to submit to the tyranny of the populace," rejoined Plouernel.

"Monsieur Count, a few years ago you administered through the cudgels of your lackeys a good dressing down to a man whom I have the unhappiness to possess for brother-in-law. I, in his place, would have paid you back, not by proxy, through hirelings, but in person. Now, great seigneur that you are, what would you have done in that case?"

"Eh! My God, my poor Monsieur Hubert! If I did not, in the first moment of anger, run you through the body with my sword, I would have been under the obligation of asking for a lettre de cachet and sending you to the Bastille."

"Because a man of your birth could not consent to fight a bourgeois?"

"Certainly; for the tribunal composed of our seigneurs the Marshals of France, to which the nobility refers its affairs of honor, would have formally prohibited the duel; and we are bound by oath to respect the decisions of Messieurs the Marshals. For the common herd we have nothing but contempt."

"It seems to me we are wandering singularly astray from the question at stake," interposed the Bishop. "Let us come back to it."

"Not at all, Monsieur Bishop," retorted Hubert. "We must first of all know what we are conspiring for. If we are conspiring to overthrow the Republic, we must know by what regime we shall replace it. Shall it be by an absolute monarchy, as before, or by the constitutional monarchy of 1791? Well, gentlemen of the nobility, gentlemen of the clergy, what we want, we bourgeois, we of the common herd, whom you despise, is the constitutional monarchy. Take that for said."

"So that the bourgeoisie may reign in fact, under the semblance of a kingdom? We reject that sort of a government," sneered Plouernel.

"Naturally."

"Whence it follows that you wish to substitute the bourgeois oligarchy, the privilege of the franc, for our aristocracy?"

"Without a doubt. For we hold in equal aversion both the old regime, that is, the rule of unbridled privilege, and the Republic."

"Let us come back to the subject," snapped Jesuit Morlet. "The bourgeoisie, the nobility, the clergy—all abominate the Republic. So much is settled. Let us, then, first attend to the overthrow of the Republic; later we may decide on its successor. Let us decide immediately whether we shall or shall not delay the execution of our plot of to-morrow—the first question; and the second, which, to tell the truth, ought to take precedence over the other—whether it would not be better after all, in the combined interests of the Church, the monarchy, the nobility and the bourgeoisie, simply to let them, without any more ado, send Louis to the guillotine!"

The Jesuit's words were again received with imprecations by the Bishop and Monsieur Plouernel, while the Marquis, finding the idea funnier and funnier, burst into irrepressible laughter. Hubert, greatly surprised, but curious to fathom the Abbot's purposes, insisted on knowing the reasons on which he based his opinion. Accordingly, when silence was restored, the Jesuit commenced:

"I maintain, and I shall prove, that the sentencing and execution of Louis XVI offer to us precious advantages. This sovereign—I leave it to you, Count, and to you, Monsieur Hubert—is completely lost, both as an absolute King, because he lacks energy, and as a constitutional King, because he has twenty times striven to abolish the Constitution which he pledged himself to support. So much is self-evident and incontestible. Accordingly, the death of Louis XVI will deliver us from the unpleasant outcome of an absolute King without vigor, if absolute royalty is to prevail; and will spare us a constitutional King without fidelity to his oath, if constitutional royalty wins out. That settles the first and extremely interesting point. Second point, the execution of the King will deal a mortal blow to the Republic. Louis XVI will become a martyr, and the wrath of the foreign sovereigns will be aroused to the last notch against a rising Republic which for first gage of battle throws at their feet the head of a King, and summons their peoples to revolt. The extermination of the Republic will thus become a question of life and death for the monarchs of Europe; they will summon up a million soldiers, and invest vast treasuries, coupled with the credit of England. Can the outcome of such a struggle be doubted? France, without a disciplined army; France, ruined, reduced to a paper currency, torn by factions, by the civil war which we priests will let loose in the west and south—

France will be unable to resist all Europe. But, in order to exasperate the foreign rulers, to excite their hatred, their fury, they must be made to behold the head of Louis XVI rolling at their feet!"

"Reverend sir, you frighten me with your doctrines!" was all the Count of Plouernel could say. With a paternal air the Jesuit continued:

"Big baby! I am through. One of two things: Either to-morrow's plot works well, or it works ill. In the first case, Louis XVI is delivered; the Convention is exterminated. A thousand resolute men can carry out the stroke. But afterwards? You will have to fight the suburbs, the Sections, the troops around Paris, which will run to the succor of the capital."

"We shall fight them!" was Hubert's exclamation.

"We shall cut them to pieces! Neither mercy nor pity for the rebels!" cried Plouernel.

"We shall have the bandits from the prisons set fire to the suburbs at all four corners! A general conflagration!" suggested the Bishop.

"And these worthy tenants of the suburbs," giggled the Marquis, "seeing their kennels ablaze, will think of nothing else but to fire in the air, to check the flames. Hi! hi! hi! The idea is a jolly one!"

Morlet the Jesuit again brought the conversation back into its channel. "Monsieur Hubert," he said to the banker, "at what number do you estimate the energetic bourgeois who will take part in the fight?"

"Five or six thousand, old members of the National Guard. I can answer for that number."

"I am willing to concede you ten thousand. There are ten thousand men. And you, Count, how many do you think there are of the returned Emigrants, the old officers and soldiers of the constitutional guard of Louis XVI, and finally of the ex-servitors of the King and the Princes—coachmen, lackeys, whippers-in, stable-boys and other menials, who form your minute-militia?"

"I figure on four thousand—or less," replied the Count.

"Let us say five thousand. Add them to Monsieur Hubert's ten thousand National Guards, and we have a total of fifteen thousand men. Now, although Paris has vomited to the frontiers since September fifty thousand volunteers, how estimate you the number remaining of these sans-culottes and Jacobins of the suburbs, the Sections and the federations, and finally the regiments of infantry, cavalry and artillery which are republican?"

"There are fifteen thousand men, about, troops of all arms, not in Paris, but within the constitutional limits, that is, within twelve leagues of the capital," Hubert answered.

"These troops could reach Paris in one day's march. There you have fifteen thousand men in trained and equipped corps, cavalry, infantry, and artillery, devoted to the Republic and the Convention; troops equal in number to your fifteen thousand insurgents. We can number the Jacobin population of the suburbs and the Sections, and the hordes of the federations, at thirty thousand—scamps, armed with pikes or guns, and provided with cannon as well! Now, suppose the King liberated, and the members of the Convention exterminated. You then find yourselves face to face with a regular and irregular army of forty-five thousand determined villains, while you number only fifteen thousand men, without artillery, and extremely ill provided with supplies."

"A brave man doesn't count his enemies—he attacks them!" exclaimed Hubert.

"We shall have for auxiliaries the foreign armies," interjected Plouernel, "and the civil war in the west and south."

"Let us not be carried away by fancies. We are considering a levy of defenders which must be made to-morrow, in Paris; we are considering a fight which will be over in one day, in the capital," returned Abbot Morlet, coldly.

"If we are beaten in Paris, we shall retreat to the revolted provinces! We shall be new food to the civil war!" cried the Bishop.

"The mitre weighs too much for your head, monseigneur," retorted the Jesuit. "Retreat to the provinces, say you? But if the insurrection is defeated, how are you going to slip through the hands of the victors in the fray? All or nearly all of you will be massacred or guillotined."

"Eh!" cried the Count, in a rage, "our friends the foreigners will avenge us! They will burn Paris to the ground!"

"And the King? He will have been, I suppose, delivered by a bold sortie. But the insurrection worsted, he will be retaken and will not escape death."

"Well, we shall avenge him by a civil and a foreign war," was the lame solution of the problem proposed by the Count.

"Let us proceed," continued the Abbot. "Since, taking your own figures, it is a hundred to one that, even if you succeed in snatching Louis from his jailers for an instant, he will not fail to be retaken and have his head shorn off, what will your insurrection have availed you? Let the good populace, then, tranquilly trim the neck of this excellent prince. His death will be the signal for civil war, for the foreign invasion, and for the stamping out of the Republic. Do not uselessly endanger your lives and those of your friends; they can, like you, render great service at the proper moment. Accordingly, I sum up: the interests of all—bourgeoisie, nobles and clergy—will best be served by letting Louis XVI be guillotined with the briefest possible delay. I have spoken."

The inflexible logic of the prelate made a keen impression on his auditors. He spoke sooth in regard to the certain defeat of the royalist insurrection, and in relation to the redoubled fury into which the death of Louis would throw the rulers of the surrounding monarchies. Nothing, indeed, could be more formidable than their concerted efforts and activity against the Republic—impoverished, torn by factions and almost without trained troops as the latter

would be. But the Jesuit suspected not, was unable, despite his profound cunning, to conceive, what prodigies love of country and the republican faith were soon to give birth to.

"By the Eternal! my reverend sir," at last cried the Count, "why, then, have you approved of our projects, why have you put at our service Lehiron and his band of frightful villains after his own pattern, to help undertake the affair?"

"Firstly, because I might have been mistaken in my conjectures—*Errare humanum est*—to err is human. A man of sense is not obstinate in his error. Secondly, and this is supreme to me, I have received from the General of my Order, at Rome, these instructions: '*It is important to our holy mother the Church that Louis XVI be crowned with the palm of martyrdom*.' So that, having tested the danger and uselessness of an uprising, I declare point-blank my determination not to take the least part in it; I declare that I shall withhold from it whatever means of action I can in any way control; in short, I shall oppose it in all possible manner, licit and illicit. On the which account," concluded the Jesuit, rising and bowing, "I shall now withdraw, so please you, my humble reverence from your honorable company. I have nothing more to do here."

The Abbot moved impassively toward the door, only replying to the looks of wonder on every face with the words, "I have said."

But Hubert blocked his passage, and cried: "Miserable cassock, hypocrite, cock-roach! Would you be also capable of denouncing us?"

"I am capable of everything to the end of preventing an act reprobated by the General of my Order. The General of the Jesuits has spoken; all must obey him—even Kings, even the Pope. Silence and obedience are the words!"

So saying, and profiting by the stupor into which his audacity and self-possession threw the other conspirators, the Jesuit left the room.

"We are off, god-son," he said to little Rodin when he had descended to the second floor. "Come, my child; other cares call me elsewhere."

"Me also," responded the boy, blessing himself and rising. "I am ready to follow you, good god-father. Command. To hear you is to obey."

CHAPTER XV.

THE KING ON TRIAL.

As already recounted, John Lebrenn, in his capacity as municipal officer, was charged on the night of December 10, 1793, with the task of watching over Louis XVI, detained, with his family, at the Temple. Occupying a room before the chamber of the ex-King, Lebrenn felt for the prisoner a sort of compassion, as he reflected that this man, not without his good inclinations, and endowed with certain undeniable domestic virtues, had been pushed by his position as King to wrongful acts which were about to bring down a terrible punishment upon his head.

Louis submitted to his confinement with mingled carelessness and resignation, rarely displaying either annoyance or anger at the rigorous surveillance of which he was the object; he hoped that the penalty pronounced against him by the Convention would not exceed imprisonment until after the peace, and then banishment. For his wife, his sister, and his son and daughter, he showed great solicitude; one proof of the inherent sin of royalty, which could transform a good husband, a good brother, and a good father—a man without malice in his private life—into an execrable tyrant, capable of every transgression.

The curtains which screened the glass door separating the ante-chamber from that occupied by the fallen King accidentally falling apart in the middle, they revealed to John Lebrenn Louis XVI pacing up and down the room, although his usual bed-time had long sounded. The King seemed to be in a state of agitation which accorded ill with his apathetic nature. On the morrow he was to appear at the bar of the Convention; and during the day he had learned from Clery, his man-in-waiting, who, due to his secret connection with the royalists, was informed of their moves, that a plan was afoot to snatch him from his escort on the way from the Temple to the Convention. Quite likely to turn his mind from these thoughts, he opened the door leading into the room guarded by John Lebrenn, in order to speak with him. The countenance of his watchman seemed to inspire some confidence in the prisoner; perhaps he remarked on the young man's features an expression of compassion, easy to confound with the respectful interest of a subject for a prisoner King. He stepped into the room of his guard. Not out of respect for the King, but out of commiseration for the captive man, the soldier rose from the camp cot on which he had been sitting. Louis addressed him affably, as follows:

"My friend, I am not disposed to sleep, to-night. If you will, let us talk together, that my sleeplessness may be rendered less irksome."

"Willingly, Sire," replied Lebrenn.

This was the first time since his captivity that Louis XVI heard one of his captors address him by that title 'Sire.' They called him habitually 'citizen,' or 'monsieur,' or 'Louis Capet.' Seeking to read the inner thoughts of the man before him, Louis resumed, after a moment's silence:

"My friend, I do not think I am mistaken in believing that you pity my lot? I have been calumniated, but the light

will break some day, perhaps soon: thank God, I still have friends. I know not what it is that tells me you are one of those faithful and devoted subjects of whom I speak."

"Sire, I am too loyal to leave you a single instant in error. I do not accept the designation of 'subject,' Sire! I am a citizen of the French Republic."

"Enough, monsieur; I was mistaken," bitterly replied Louis. "Nevertheless, I thank you for your frankness."

"My words were dictated by my dignity, first of all; next, by my pity for the misfortunes, not of the King, but of the man."

"Sir," cried Louis XVI haughtily, "I require no one's pity; the commiseration of heaven and my conscience are enough. Let us stop there."

"Sire, I did not seek the honor of this conversation; and, should it continue, it is well that you be under no illusion as to my sentiments towards royalty. The Revolution and the Republic have no more devoted soldier than myself. Now, Sire, I am at your service."

Louis XVI was not utterly lacking in sense; his first resentment past, he admitted to himself that the conduct of this municipal officer was all the more praiseworthy, inasmuch as while declaring himself a revolutionist and a republican, he nevertheless treated a captive King with respect.

"I was rude just now, I am sorry for it," he said at length. "Hoping for a moment to discover in you a faithful subject, I found myself face to face with an enemy. The disappointment was great. Still, let us talk a little on this subject of your hatred for royalty. What harm have this royalty, this nobility, this clergy, against which you rail, done to you and your like?"

"I could, Sire, reply to you in a few words, by facts and not by railings. But I wish not to wound your preconceived ideas, and above all to avoid giving you cause to make a sad comparison. This, Sire, is the third time, in the course of fourteen centuries, that a descendant of my family encounters one of the heirs of the monarchy of Clovis; and that under circumstances—"

"Doubtless the circumstances were intensely interesting. What were they? You pique my curiosity."

"Sire, the circumstances are sinister. It would be painful to me to give you cause to draw the sad comparison between your present position and that of the princes, your predecessors."

"Tell me that part of your legends, Monsieur Lebrenn. My curiosity is highly excited, and my confidence in a brighter future will not be dimmed by your recital."

"To obey you, Sire, I shall. It was in the year 738 that one of my ancestors, named Amael, a soldier of fortune and companion to Charles Martel, found himself in Anjou, at the Convent of St. Saturnine. My ancestor was commissioned by Charles Martel to keep prisoner in the convent a poor boy of nine, the only son of Thierry IV, the do-nothing King, named Childeric. The child soon died, thus extinguishing, in the last scion of the Merovingians, the stock of Clovis who had covered Gaul with ruins.[11] Two centuries and a half later, in 987, at the palace of Compiegne, another of my ancestors, the son of a forester of the royal domain, found himself alone in the chamber of Louis the Do-nothing with that prince; he saw him of a sudden faint, become deadly pale, and writhe in agony. He apostrophized the dying King thus: 'Louis, last year Hugh the Capet, Count of Paris, had your father Lothaire poisoned by the Queen his wife, a concubine of the Bishop of Laon. Louis, you are about to die of poison which your wife, Queen Blanche, has just given you. She has promised Hugh the Capet, her accomplice, to wed him during the coming year.' And so it was; the last of the Carlovingians dead, Hugh the Capet espoused his widow and had himself enthroned King of France.[12] There, Sire, that is how royal dynasties are founded and ended."

"These are strange chances, Monsieur Lebrenn," replied Louis XVI. "One of your ancestors charged to watch the last prince of the dynasty of Clovis; another ancestor sees perish the last scion of the monarchy of Charlemagne; and this night you are to watch over me, whom you probably consider as the last King of the dynasty of Hugh Capet. You will soon perceive your error."

"Sire," returned John Lebrenn, "you insisted on knowing the occurrences of which I just spoke, in connection with a question you put to me—"

"Aye, Monsieur Lebrenn; and in spite of the strangeness of the circumstances with which you have just made me acquainted, I repeat my question. What harm have royalty, nobility and clergy ever done to you and yours, that you should hate them so?"

"To begin with, Sire, we know upon what crimes hang the rise and fall of dynasties; consequently we are unable to love and respect a royalty imposed upon us by conquest. All monarchies have had a similar origin. The Count of Boulainvilliers, in this very century, established and demonstrated that the land of the Gauls belonged of fact and of right to the King and the nobility, by the grace of God and the right of their good swords: the Gauls were a vanquished race."

For several seconds Louis did not speak. Then he began brusquely, "Triumph in your hate, monsieur; you are here as the jailer of the descendant of those Kings whom you and your fellows have abhorred for ages."

"The circumstance which has placed me near you, Sire, is of too high an order of morality to evoke in me a sentiment so miserable as that of sated hatred."

"What, then, is the feeling which you do entertain, monsieur?"

"A religious emotion, Sire; such as is bred in every honest heart by one of these mysterious decrees of eternal justice which, sooner or later, manifests itself in its divine grandeur and seizes the guilty ones, in whatever rank they may be stationed."

"So, monsieur, you make me a party to the evil my forefathers may have perpetrated upon their subjects?"

"Monarchs are rightfully regarded as parties to the crimes of their ancestors, the same as they pretend to be masters of the people by virtue of divine right and the conquests of those ancestors. All inheritance carries with it its responsibilities as well as its benefits. You surely would not dispute that, Sire?"

"To-morrow rebellious subjects will arrogate to themselves the right to summon their King before them to trial," murmured Louis, without noticing Lebrenn's question. "The will of heaven be done in all things; it will punish the wicked, and protect the just."

As Louis pronounced these words, the porter of the Temple entered the room, saying, as he handed John the letter from advocate Desmarais, "Citizen officer, here is a letter just brought for you by Citizen Billaud-Varenne, who enjoined me to take it to you at once."

"Good night, Monsieur Lebrenn," said the King; and turning to the porter: "Send me my waiting-man Clery, to help me make my toilet. I wish to retire."

Louis XVI returned to his room, while John Lebrenn, greatly surprised to recognize Desmarais's hand-writing on the envelope which Billaud-Varenne had sent him, quickly tore it open, his heart, in spite of himself, beating loud against his ribs.

The missive read, Lebrenn for a moment thought he was dreaming. He hesitated to pin any faith to such unlooked-for good fortune, the realization of his dearest hopes. In vain did he seek to penetrate the motive for the singular condition placed by the lawyer upon his marriage. Examined in turn from the viewpoint of duty, of honor and of delicacy, the condition seemed to him on the whole acceptable; he simply bound himself for the future to a discretion from which he had not, in the past, varied a hair's breadth.

Why attempt to paint the ineffable felicity of John Lebrenn? The night passed for him in a flood of joy.

In the morning he was one of the municipal officers charged to conduct Louis XVI to the bar of the Convention. Towards nine o'clock Chambon, Mayor of Paris, accompanied by a court clerk came to deliver to the King the order to appear before the Convention.

A two-horse coach awaited Louis at the door of the great tower, within the precincts of the Temple. Generals Santerre and Witenkoff were stationed on horseback beside the windows. Louis climbed into the vehicle, and seated himself on the rear seat, beside the Mayor of Paris; John Lebrenn and one of his colleagues in the Municipal Council occupied the front. As soon as the carriage issued from the courtyard of the Temple, the King realized, by the mass of military force with which his route to the National Convention was hemmed in, that the Committee of General Safety had been informed of the royalist intrigue, and had taken steps to make impossible any sudden assault calculated to carry off the prisoner.

While Louis was on his way to the Convention, that sovereign assembly, already two hours in session, was calmly and with dignity transacting public affairs. The trial of the ex-Executive was, no doubt, of prime importance, but to have changed its order of business, or to interrupt it without cause before the appearance of the accused, would have given the Convention almost the appearance of intimidation before the act which it was about to consummate in the teeth of the allied Kings of Europe. The countenances of the various factions presented singular contrasts. The galleries were filled with patriots, who, in common with the Mountain and the Jacobins, saw no safety for the Republic and the Revolution save in the condemnation of Louis XVI to the penalty of death.

The dark and rainy sky of that December day sent its lightning flashes across the windows of the vast hall. The members of the Right and the Swamp seemed weighed down by painful preoccupation; the Mountainists alone were unmoved. One of the latter was speaking to certain articles of a decree introducing some exceptions into the law on Emigrants, when a low rumor running through the chamber heralded Louis's approach. The Mountainist called for order and continued his discussion. The question was put to a vote and carried. Only then did the president, rising in his place, say to the Assembly:

"I wish to inform the Assembly that Louis Capet is at the door. Citizen Representatives, you are about to exercise the right of justice; the Republic expects of you firm and deliberate action; Europe's eyes are turned upon you; history will record your actions; posterity will judge you. The dignity of your session should correspond to the majesty of the French people; the latter is about, through your instrumentality, to give a lesson to Kings and a fruitful example for the emancipation of nations. Citizens in the galleries, forget not that justice presides only over calm deliberations."

Then, addressing the ushers:

"Bring in the accused."

Generals Santerre and Witenkoff advanced to the bar, leading the deposed King between them by the arms; they were followed by Mayor Chambon, and by John Lebrenn and his colleague. Several chairs were arranged near the bar. Louis XVI removed his overcoat, placed it across the back of his seat, took off his hat, and sat down, with his hat on his knees. His large, bulging eyes wandered here and there over the benches of the members with childish curiosity. Then his face took on its usual expression of apathy; his eyelids drooped, his loose lip fell down over his fat and retreating triple chin; he settled himself as best he could in his chair and seemed lost to his surroundings.

The bustle caused in the chamber and galleries by Louis XVI's entry, died out little by little, and Defermont, president of the Convention, took up the examination of the accused on the facts charged against him.

I have just attended the examination of Louis Capet. His answers, hypocritical, evasive, or spun out of the whole cloth; his denials in flat contradiction to verified facts; his obliviousness to all decency, to all dignity, if not as a King,

at least as a man, aroused in all present, as they did in me, only pity for this prince who had neither the courage to confess nor the nobility to repent his crimes, but who resorted for his defense to the weapons of the vilest criminal, denial and falsification.

CHAPTER XVI.

LEBRENN AND NEROWEG.

Night had fallen. Half an hour after his return from the Temple, John Lebrenn was awaiting in silence the result of his sister's consideration of the letter written him by advocate Desmarais the previous evening, and also one from Charlotte received during the day.

Seated at her work table, which was lighted by a small lamp, Victoria hung thoughtfully over the two letters.

"Sister," at last said John, "are you more keen-sighted than I in solving the reason for the condition set by Desmarais upon my marriage?"

"Nay, I also am at a loss for an explanation," replied Victoria; "but I suspect some cowardice in the mystery. You often see Billaud-Varenne, he never told you, so far as I know, that he was in close connection with Charlotte's father. And yet I read in Desmarais's letter that he begs you to keep from Billaud-Varenne the secret of your love for his daughter. Doubtless you could easily clear up the matter by seeing Billaud-Varenne and asking him about his relations with Desmarais."

"Would that not be failing in the discretion which Charlotte's father imposes upon me an a condition for my marriage?"

"Not at all. He asks you to keep from his colleague the secret of your love for his daughter. Nothing more. On that subject, my dear brother, you can still be as reserved in your talk with Billaud-Varenne as you have been in the past."

"That is so. I shall go and see him this very evening; I am certain to find him at home. At any rate, does not the condition, placed by Charlotte's father upon our marriage, seem to you, as it does to her and me, acceptable on the score of honor?"

"Surely, brother. And moreover, have you not always guarded with delicacy this secret which Desmarais now asks you to keep? How will it embarrass you to engage yourself upon your honor to continue holding it a secret? In no wise. As to the motive for the condition, what matters it? Go at once to Monsieur Desmarais's; Charlotte, poor child, is counting the hours, the minutes till you come."

"Ah, Victoria," cried John, his breast heaving and his eyes filled with tears, "I can hardly believe my good fortune! To marry Charlotte! To live with her and my beloved sister!"

"Me! To live with you and your wife? It is impossible! Think of the past."

"Victoria, I might once have hesitated to reveal to Charlotte the mystery of your life; it is no longer so, dearest sister. The conduct of my betrothed has proved to me the firmness of her character; I am as sure of her as of myself. She shall know all that has contributed to your sad life, and her dearest wish will be like mine, I am certain—to have you pass the rest of your days with us."

"I admit that your sweetheart's spirit is sufficiently lofty to rise above prejudice. But will it be the same with her family?"

"I answer to that, dearest sister, that there is nothing else for you to do but what I have just indicated. Have you not lived with our parents and with me since the day the Bastille was taken, when you came home to us? Have I not many a time spoken of you to Billaud-Varenne? If he is on intimate terms with Citizen Desmarais, is it not likely that he has spoken to him? In fine, for a last reason, the gravest of all, is it not known in the neighborhood that we live together? Charlotte's father, our neighbor, must be aware of the circumstance. Shall I resign myself to a falsehood, and say that you are not my sister? What would Charlotte and her father think then? What would that young and beautiful woman who shared my lodgings then be in their eyes?"

Victoria remained silent. She found, and, in fact, there was, no answer to John's arguments. The latter, triumphing in his brotherly love, rose, tenderly embraced his sister, and said:

"You see you are convinced of the necessity of my confidence to Charlotte. Now tell me, darling sister, which do you prefer, to live alone or with us?"

The young woman did not answer. Instead, her pale visage was bathed in tears, always so rare in her. After a moment, she pressed her brother to her heart, and murmured in a voice broken with sobs:

"Ah, do not fear that the sight of your good fortune will make my chagrin more bitter. On the contrary, perhaps I shall forget it in seeing you happy."

John tenderly embraced his sister, and set out for Billaud-Varenne's, whom he wished to see before his interview with advocate Desmarais.

Upon being left alone, Victoria pondered long the recent conversation with her brother. Then, lending an ear mechanically to the whistling of the winter's wind without, she bent over the little stove that warmed their humble quarters, and resumed her sewing. Suddenly the young woman uttered a cry of surprise, and jumped to her feet. One of the panes of the dormer window which looked out upon the roof fell with a crash, and as the fragments of glass jangled to the floor, a hand passing through the opening left by the broken pane forcibly shoved the lower sash of the window up in the casing. A great gust of wind filled the room, blew out the lamp, and out of the darkness a muffled, suppliant voice called to Victoria:

"Have pity on me. I am an Emigrant; they are searching for me. I have a hundred louis on me; they are yours if you save me!"

At the same time that the words were pronounced, Victoria heard on the floor the foot-fall of the fugitive, who had introduced himself by the window.

At the sound of the first words Victoria believed she recognized the voice that came from out the shadows. The young woman was frozen with astonishment.

"O, Providence! O, Justice the Avenger," she exclaimed. "It is *he*!" Then, transported with fierce joy, she ran in the darkness to the door, which she double locked, put the key in her pocket, and made sure that she had by her the double-barreled pistol she always kept ready and loaded since she became aware of the intentions of the Jesuit Morlet and Lehiron. These precautions taken, Victoria groped about on the bureau for a match, and held it to the stove-grate, while the fugitive, surprised at the silence maintained by the occupant of the garret, repeated again, believing it an irresistible argument to the mistress of so poor a dwelling:

"I am an Emigrant. You have a hundred louis to win by saving me. You have no interest in turning me over to my pursuers."

Victoria replied in a low voice, as she approached the lighted match to a candle on the bureau, "Draw the curtain before the window, lest the wind blow out my light."

The Emigrant hastened to execute the order. Victoria lighted the candle. Its light flooded the garret; and when the Count of Plouernel—for it was that self-same gentleman—turned around once more, he stood petrified at the sight of the woman he beheld before him. In spite of the poverty of her costume, he recognized—Marchioness Aldini! Her black eyes flashed; hatred contributed to her face so fearsome an expression that Plouernel shuddered as he gasped to himself:

"I am lost! Abbot Morlet told me that the Lebrenns dwelt near my refuge. Let me flee!"

He dashed to the door, expecting to open it and reach the stairway, but found it locked. In vain he tried to beat it down.

"Count," coldly said Victoria, in mocking accents, "know that this house is occupied by good patriots. The noise you yourself are making will give the alarm, and you will be arrested on the instant."

"Infamous creature!" shouted Plouernel, wild with rage, but ceasing to shake the door. Then, rapidly approaching Victoria he unsheathed a poniard which he carried concealed in his clothes; "You wish to deliver me to the scaffold. But I shall avenge my death before it occurs! Your life is in my hands."

"Be that as it may," replied the young woman, as she leveled her pistol at the Count's breast. The latter recoiled in terror. Still keeping Plouernel covered, Victoria went up to one of the partitions, struck it with her hand, and called out aloud:

"Neighbor Jerome, are you there?"

"Aye, citizeness," responded Jerome from the other side of the wall, "we are here, my son and I, at your service. We have just come in, and are getting supper."

"My watch is stopped. Do you know what time it is, neighbor?"

"Ten has just sounded from the ex-parish of the Assumption. It is late, neighbor. We wish you a good night."

Plouernel was fairly cornered. He could not think of escaping by the window and the roof—one movement by Victoria would send him rolling to the street below. To break down the door was no less perilous; the two speakers in the garret, and soon all the inhabitants of the house, would run to the young woman's call. And, finally, to attempt to kill her was an expedient as fraught with danger as the other two. He would have to brave two shots at close range and by a sure hand.

Victoria sat down in such a manner as to place her worktable between herself and the Count, and keeping the pistol still in her hand, said:

"Count of Plouernel, you are the head of one of those families which have the honor of tracing their origin back to the early times of conquest. The further you go back in the centuries the more crimes you take to your account, and the more terrible should be the punishment reserved to you. The representatives of these families will pay, like you, Neroweg, Count of Plouernel, the debt of blood."

Victoria was uttering these words in a voice of fierce exaltation when her brother John, who had another key to the door, suddenly entered. His sister's last words to Plouernel fell upon his ear. The Count, at the unexpected apparition of the young artisan, fell back defiantly, and involuntarily clapped his hand again to his dagger.

"John, lock the door," cried Victoria quickly. "This man's name is Neroweg, Count of Plouernel!"

The Count put on a bold front, and said, in an attempt to brazen it out with the young workman, who, he knew, shared the sentiments of his sister with regard to the sons of Neroweg: "Go on, citizen, do your business as purveyor

of the scaffold."

Unmoved by the insult, John cast a cold look in the Emigrant's direction and said to his sister:

"How comes the fellow here?"

"He was evidently fleeing from the men sent to arrest him. He climbed to the roof of the next house, and forced his way in by breaking the window."

"So," said John to the Count, "you are an Emigrant, and denounced? They want you for judgment?"

"The marauder has the impudence to question me!" answered the Count with a burst of sardonic laughter. "A switch for the rascal!"

"Count of Plouernel," returned John Lebrenn imperturbably, "I am of a different opinion from my sister on the nature of the punishment to be meted out to you. The Revolution, in abolishing royalty, nobility and clergy, has already chastised the crimes of the enemies of the people: The evil your race has done to ours is expiated. Count of Plouernel, the conquered have taken their revenge upon the conquerors, the nation has re-entered upon her sovereignty. The Republic is proclaimed; justice is done!"

"Blood of God!" exclaimed Plouernel, "the beggar has the insolence to grant me grace in the name of the people!"

"Count of Plouernel, your judges and not I will grant you grace, if you merit it," answered John, controlling himself under the goading flings of the Emigrant. "If it were for me to say, you would remain in France unmolested, like so many other ex-nobles. I would leave you in peace, I swear it before God! in spite of all the wrong your family has heaped upon mine. I would have pardoned you, Count of Plouernel, and I shall tell you why I would have shown myself thus clement: A century or more ago, one of my forefathers, Nominoë, said to Bertha of Plouernel, who loved him with a love as passionate as his own, 'I experience I know not what emotions at once sad and tender, in loving in you a descendant of that race which, from infancy, I have been taught to execrate. You are in my eyes, Bertha, an angel of pardon and concord. In you, I absolve your ancestors; instead of making you party to their iniquities, I transfer to them your virtues. You ransom the evil ones of your race, as Christ, they say, ransomed the world by his divine grace.'

"It is in memory of these words of my ancestor Nominoë," proceeded Lebrenn, "that I would have pardoned you, Count of Plouernel, in making you share, not in the crimes of your stock, but in the virtues of that young girl and in the qualities of another of your blood, a Protestant and republican in his time, Colonel Plouernel, the friend of the great Coligny and of my ancestor Odelin, the armorer of La Rochelle."

"You lie," cried the Count of Plouernel, furiously. "Never did woman or maid of the house of Plouernel dishonor herself with love for a vassal! As to Colonel Plouernel, a turn-coat and a Protestant, he is the shame of our family; as such, he may, indeed, have played the part of friend to a base plebeian."

"Accordingly, I would have pardoned, Count, the evil done by your family to mine," John Lebrenn continued unperturbed. "But though I have the right to show myself generous to my personal enemy, my duty as a citizen forbids me to furnish asylum to an enemy of the nation and the Republic, to a monarchist conspirator."

"O, the hypocrite!" exclaimed the Count. "All the while pretending a generosity which would be an insult to me, the clown wants to gratify his hatred by sending me to the scaffold!"

"I have told you that duty prevents my affording asylum to an enemy of the Republic; but I am not an informer, I would not deliver up even my personal enemy when he has sought shelter under my roof. Leave this place. Go down the stairs softly, and you may gain the street. The gate is not locked. If you were not under the shadow of a capital accusation, I would chastise you as you deserve for your insults. So, out of here! my ex-gentleman."

"Ah, miserable vassal," replied Plouernel, pale with rage. "You dare to threaten me!" And suddenly throwing himself upon Lebrenn, he dealt him a blow that crimsoned the side of his face.

"The fellow now belongs to me," grimly muttered John. He went to the corner where his tools lay, and arming himself with a bar of iron which he found there, tossed to the Count a sword which hung on the wall, saying, as he did so:

"Come, Count of Plouernel; take the weapon, and guard yourself!"

"John," shrieked Victoria in terror, "your bar is no match for his saber. You shall not expose your life so!"

Plouernel drew the sword from its sheath and prepared to defend himself, while Victoria, unable to intervene, shudderingly followed the duel.

"Son of the Nerowegs," cried John, brandishing his bar of iron, "my avenging arm is about to fall upon you."

"I await it," coolly replied the Count, putting himself on his guard. The robust iron-worker advanced upon his adversary, describing with his weapon a figure-of-eight so lusty, so rapid, and to which the vigor of his wrist lent such force that, encountering the sword at the moment when the ex-colonel was about to lunge, the iron bar broke down the latter's guard, and descended heavily upon his skull. Almost without losing a drop of blood, and without a single cry, the Count dropped in his tracks, and rolled upon the floor like an ox smitten with a sledge.

With a bound Victoria flung herself on her brother's neck, wrapped him in a convulsive embrace, and, suffocated with emotion, broke into tears, unable to utter a word. Partaking of his sister's emotion, John pressed her tenderly to his breast; but their embrace ended in a start as they heard a knock at their room door, and the voice of the porter calling: "Citizen John, if you are abed, rise! They are looking for an Emigrant in the house."

The porter had barely uttered these words when John and his sister heard a low moan from the Count of Plouernel. At the same moment the porter called still more loudly, once more knocking at the door.

"The wretch is not dead, and we can not give him up," said the workman to his sister, looking at Plouernel.

"Citizen John, awake!" it was the porter's voice as he redoubled his knocks. "Here is the commissioner of the Section."

"Who is knocking? Who's there?" answered the artisan, with a meaning gesture to his sister, and saying to her, softly: "I'll feign to be waking from a deep sleep. Help me carry the wounded man to your room; for it would be an infamous deed to give up a suffering enemy. I shall say that you are ill in bed, and they will not intrude upon you."

"It is I, James," replied the porter. "You sleep a sound sleep, Citizen John. This is the third time I have pounded at your door."

"Ah, 'tis you, Father James. I slept so hard I did not hear you. What do you wish?"

"The commissioner of the Section and his agents are after an Emigrant. They have already visited three floors; they will doubtless come up to your chamber, as a matter of form. They know well enough that you would never harbor an Emigrant in your place."

"Alright, Father James. I'll slip on my trousers and open the door in an instant."

While speaking, John had hustled off his cravat, his vest, and his cloak of municipal officership. He kept on only his pantaloons, and feigning to be but half dressed in his haste to get out of bed, opened the door at the moment that the commissioner of the Section, the same who the evening before had carried on the search at Desmarais's, appeared on the landing, followed by his agents and several gendarmes. The magistrate, a friend of Marat's, knew Lebrenn, and greeted him cordially:

"I regret, Citizen Lebrenn, that you have been awakened. You are one of those in whose abodes there is no reason for searches and seizures."

"No matter, citizen; come in, do your duty. I ask you only not to go into my sister's room. She is ill."

"I shall go neither into your sister's room nor yours, Citizen Lebrenn."

"Who is it you seek?"

"An ex-noble, the Count of Plouernel, formerly a colonel in the Guards. He was installed in a house next to this, in the rooms of an old huntsman of Louis Capet's; but warned, no doubt, of our approach, our ex-noble took to his heels. I first thought he might have escaped by the roofs; but after an inspection of them, I recognized that only a roofer, and an intrepid one at that, would have dared to risk his life on such a slope. To acquit my conscience I came, nevertheless, to inspect the attic of this house. So, good night, Citizen Lebrenn."

The magistrate shook the hand of the young man, who watched the commissioner proceed towards the attic, and then re-entered his own rooms and locked the door.

CHAPTER XVII.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.

The day following these events in the lodgings of John Lebrenn, Charlotte Desmarais was again talking with her mother in the parlor of their apartment. The latter, pale and downcast, and her eyes red with weeping, still trembled for the life of her brother, who, scenting the snare in the commissioner's advice to leave Paris by the St. Victor barrier, had remained snug in his refuge. The lawyer's wife was saying to her daughter:

"And so you are happy, very happy at your coming marriage, my child?"

"Oh, mother!" echoed the young girl, covering Madam Desmarais's hand with kisses, "nothing is now wanting to my happiness but to see you no longer sad."

"You know the reason for my sadness."

"Has not, perhaps, my marriage, to which you consented only reluctantly, added to the other causes of your sorrow?"

"Since you ask me, my dear daughter, I will admit that the ideas, or prejudices, if you will, in which I was brought up made me consider this match with a workingman a misalliance. I opposed it with all my might, up to the last moment. But—I confess it to you sincerely, my child—last night when your father announced to Monsieur Lebrenn that he granted him your hand, the young man showed himself so grateful, he expressed his joy in such eloquent terms, he evinced so much attention, so much deference, he spoke so touchingly of his sister, in short he showed himself so completely a man of heart and generosity, that my repugnance vanished. Your marriage now satisfies me at all points."

"What delight I feel, good mother, to hear you say so," responded Charlotte clasping Madam Desmarais around the neck. "John will be to you the tenderest of sons."

"He will, I doubt not, but—" added Madam Desmarais sorrowfully, "I can never share your happiness, dear child. I

know the uprightness of your spirit, the strength of your character; and I am going to make to you a serious and painful avowal: Your father has wounded me to the heart, he has lost my esteem and affection. It is impossible for me to live longer with him. You witnessed his conduct toward me, you heard his repeated denunciations."

"Alas," replied Charlotte, forcing herself to make excuses for her father, "it was only a shameful role he was driven to by necessity; be assured of that, good mother."

"No, it was not a role," answered the injured wife. "You must know the whole truth. Last night, after Monsieur Lebrenn's departure, when we were alone, your father said to me:

"'Madam, take this once for all, you and your miserable brother; you almost sent me to the guillotine to-day. God grant that the perils which I dread be fended off in the future by this marriage of my daughter to this—this Lebrenn.

"'We live, madam,' continued your father, 'in terrible times, and I am in such a position that, should it some day come about that I must either send others to the guillotine or face death myself, I would not hesitate to send even you before the revolutionary tribunal. Let these words always be present to your mind, madam, in regulating your conduct henceforth.'

"In these words your father wound up. Such, my child, was his language," concluded Madam Desmarais, burying her tear-bedewed face in her handkerchief.

Charlotte answered not. She was torn with inward struggle against the sad flood of ideas borne upon her by her father's hypocrisy. Brought up in an atmosphere of filial affection and respect, the young girl suffered at being compelled to lower her estimate of her paternal parent. But this last conversation of the lawyer with his wife left no more room for doubt as to his true character.

Having somewhat calmed her tears, Madam Desmarais went on:

"I have now, dear child, too much knowledge of your father's innermost nature. His presence is hateful to me. It would be impossible for me to live with him. Hence, my poor girl, we must part."

"We part!" cried Charlotte, passionately embracing Madam Desmarais and mingling her tears with her mother's: "And where will you go?"

"I shall go back to Lyons, to my cousin's; I have resolved upon that, since I can do nothing here, alas, to add either to your happiness or my brother's safety."

"Let us hope, mother, let us hope," said Charlotte through her tears, after a pause. "Perhaps there is a way for us not to separate, good mother, and also to save uncle. Ah, mother, happiness, and above all the desire to make others whom we love share our happiness, renders the mind quick to invent. Last night, after father and you consented to my marrying John, he and I were alone for a few minutes. Here is what he told me: Before coming here, he had gone to Monsieur Billaud-Varenne, and he learned from this gentleman that father had previously commissioned him to offer my hand to Monsieur St. Just. Thus John learned that father counted on finding in him a buffer against the dangers which he fears, and that this was the motive that led him, in default of Monsieur St. Just, to offer my hand to John. That does not matter; but John also learned from Monsieur Billaud-Varenne that he had said to father: 'Since you so greatly desire to marry your daughter to a good republican, why not give her to John Lebrenn? He is, you say, your pupil; he enjoys the esteem and friendship of the most eminent men of the Revolution.'"

"No doubt your father hoped, in marrying you to St. Just—"

"To build himself a powerful bulwark against possible danger. But Monsieur St. Just not having accepted the alliance, and Monsieur Billaud-Varenne proposing John, father feared to seem to despise a workingman should he refuse him my hand."

"And what opinion did John Lebrenn express of your father?"

"John said that father's conduct was lacking in straightforwardness, and added, 'I have never failed in frankness toward you, Charlotte. If it pleases you still to live with your father, I shall yield to your desires, and I shall keep ever hidden the slight esteem in which, unhappily, I am forced to hold him. But if it is in your thoughts not to dwell beneath the paternal roof after our marriage, I shall be more pleased with that resolution, as it will permit me not to be separated from my sister.' And in this connection, mother," added Charlotte with touching emotion, "John gave me a proof of confidence as honorable in him as in his sister. He recounted to me all that related to the unfortunate girl, but all under the seal of secrecy. If Mademoiselle Lebrenn has been the most unhappy creature in the world, because of certain terrible events, no one is now more than she worthy of the respect of all."

"Gertrude was speaking to me yesterday about Mademoiselle Lebrenn, and assured me that during the four years she has lived in our quarter, all agree in praising her conduct. My husband used this as a pretext for giving Monsieur Lebrenn to believe that if he formerly refused him your hand on the ground that his sister had been Louis XV's mistress, that obstacle no longer intervened, as by her virtuous conduct Mademoiselle Lebrenn had redeemed the past. Would not such deceit, without, alas, the other grievances I have against my husband, suffice to estrange us? Such is our situation."

"Mother," said Charlotte, interrupting Madam Desmarais, "I told you that John, while consenting to live with me at father's house, would much prefer for us to dwell by ourselves, with his sister. Ah, well, mother, as I can not feel for father the sentiments which hallow the paternal roof-tree, I have resolved to part from him after my marriage. And now, mother mine, what reason can you give for a separation between us two?"

"Dear child," answered Madam Desmarais, embracing her daughter in tears, "you grant my wish before I utter it. Much as I longed for it, I did not dare make the request of you for our living together; and even now I do not know whether I ought to accept. To live with you would be my most cherished desire; but Monsieur Lebrenn knows that I have constantly opposed his marriage, and perhaps it would not please him to see me in his home."

"Here comes John, mother," cried her daughter as Gertrude led the young man into the parlor. "He will take upon himself the task of reassuring you."

As soon as the maid had withdrawn, Charlotte said to her betrothed, who bowed respectfully to Madam Desmarais:

"My dear John, in case, after our marriage, it should not please me to live in my father's house, would it be agreeable to you for mother to come with us?"

"I shall answer you, Charlotte, in all sincerity," responded the young artisan. "I should be happy to have Madam Desmarais with us; all the more, seeing that since what passed between her husband and her after Monsieur Hubert's escape, it seems to me almost impossible that she could resign herself to inhabit any longer the home of her marriage." And he continued, to Madam Desmarais: "Believe me, madam; by my respect, by my filial attachment, I shall strive to make you forget what you have suffered; moreover, I promise to try to call a halt to the pursuit of your brother."

"Great God!" cried Madam Desmarais in accents of gratitude, "can it be possible!"

"I have some hope, due to my political relations, of success in what concerns your brother's safety."

"Ah, John!" said Charlotte, "you have divined my thoughts, anticipated my wishes; for just now, in trying to reassure mother on the score of uncle's fate, I dreamt of asking your assistance."

"And I, Monsieur Lebrenn, am doubly grateful for your generosity towards my brother, especially since you are not unaware that, even as I, he was ever obstinately opposed to your marriage with my daughter," added Madam Desmarais, with tears of happiness standing in her eyes. "Ah, whatever the result of your efforts, my gratitude towards you will be eternal, Monsieur Lebrenn. But, alas! how can you save my brother?"

"Write, madam, to Monsieur Hubert, that if he will promise, on his word of honor, to abstain henceforth from all intrigue, and to live quietly in Paris, I hope, due to my relations with the procurator of the Commune and several members of the Committee of General Safety, to be able to secure a suspension of the searches against him. I ask of him nothing which a man of honor can not accede to; I ask nothing which looks toward his dropping his opinions, nothing that engages him towards the Republic, except that he respect the established laws."

"Ah, uncle is saved, mother. This proposal is too straightforward for him not to accept. Let your heart rejoice."

"Ah, Monsieur Lebrenn, what generosity, what grandeur of heart! Will you pardon me for having so long misprised you?"

"John, for answer, embrace *our* mother," said Charlotte, gently pushing her betrothed toward Madam Desmarais. The latter held out her arms to the young workman, who clasped her in a hearty hug.

"Aye, aye, you will hereafter be for me the best of sons," replied she. "I owe to you forgetfulness from my sorrows, perhaps the life of my brother, and assuredly the happiness of my Charlotte."

"And now let us talk of our plans," resumed the young girl. "It is understood, mother, that when we are married, you are to live with us? We need not go back to that."

"That is my dearest wish."

"Since we are speaking of plans, Charlotte," put in John, "I should acquaint your mother and you of my intention to continue my trade of ironsmith. My employer, Master Gervais, has long proposed to turn his establishment over to me, for which I was to reimburse him by yearly payments to be agreed on by us. I am not of an age to enter upon another career from that I have so far lived by."

"But, my dear John," began Madam Desmarais, "as you speak of continuing your trade, I should tell you that my daughter has a dower—of considerable importance."

"That is something, I must declare to you, which I have never considered," John made answer. "Charlotte's dowry belongs to her, she is to use it as seems good to her. As to me, I am certain that neither you nor she will disapprove of my resolution to live by my own labor, as heretofore. The establishment, perfectly equipped, which I shall get from Master Gervais for thirty thousand livres, should bring me, good year or bad, five or six thousand livres steadily. The output of my forge will permit us, then, to live in some comfort, and allow me to pay off my master in a few years, according to the arrangements that we shall make."

"But, my dear John, my daughter's dower is more than 120,000 livres in good gold louis, snugly stowed underground in our cellar; not to speak of my personal fortune."

"Dear mother, permit me to interrupt you," returned John. "Your private fortune is yours, and Charlotte's dowry is hers; she and you may dispose of them as you will, and in acts of benevolence. I wish only to prove to you that my labor will suffice for the maintenance of our household, apart from your resources."

"I have always given you credit for delicacy, my dear John," replied Madam Desmarais.

"For which I thank you, dear mother. You now know that I wish to continue to live by my trade. For the rest, be easy," added the young workingman, smiling. "Neither Charlotte nor you will be deafened by the clang of my anvil. Master Gervais's shop is on Anjou Street, and a great courtyard separates it from a pretty house in the midst of a garden. The dwelling is at present occupied by Master Gervais, but as he purposes to go to live in the country, he will rent it to me. We shall be, my dear mother—you, Charlotte, my sister, and I—comfortably established in our little nest, which smiles in the shade of the garden about it. These are my plans, subject to your and Charlotte's approval; except, I repeat, my firm resolve to continue to live by the work of my forge."

"I, to begin with, am agreed to these projects of John's," said the young girl gaily. "The house, surrounded by its

garden, charms me before I see it. But do not be afraid, Monsieur John, that I shall fear to blacken my dress with the smoke of your forge; I shall also prove to you that I dread not being deafened with the thunder of your anvil. And you, mother, what have you to say to our projects? Do they meet with your approval?"

"I say that our John is honor, probity and delicacy itself," replied Madam Desmarais with welling emotion. "I say that I would live, if need be, in a garret, rather than be parted from you, my children. I say that now I am ashamed of the prejudices in which I have heretofore lived in regard to the men of the people. John teaches me to value them as they truly deserve."

"Ah, dear mother," was John's answer, "I understand, I overlook the prejudices of which you accuse yourself. What causes them, what even often justifies them, is the faults of so many of the disinherited, unhappy ones, who, sunk in misery, in ignorance, and abandonment, have fallen prey to the fatal vices that are nearly always engendered by these conditions. So, do you know what has been my motive in wishing to succeed Master Gervais in his smithy, where a score or so of apprentices are always employed? It is to form in our shop a sort of practical school of industrious, upright, and efficient workmen, jealous of their rights as citizens, but also imbued with a sense of their public duties. I hope to render still more fervent, still more glowing, their love for their country, and for the Republic. I wish, in associating them with my labors, to make them associated with the benefits thereof. I hope, in short, to watch with fatherly solicitude over my young apprentices. I shall choose orphans wherever possible, to the end of giving them a family, and bringing them up good republicans. I have not, have I, Charlotte, presumed too much upon you, in counting on your help for these poor boys?"

"Ah, count also on my co-operation, my dear John," exclaimed Madam Desmarais, her eyes filling with tears. "I now understand the grandeur, the usefulness, the holiness of the task which you impose upon yourself for the benefit of your apprentices and workmen. You seek to educate them; you charge yourself with the molding of their characters!"

Gertrude, entering at that moment, said to the young workman:

"Monsieur Desmarais knows that you are here, Monsieur Lebrenn. He asks you to wait for him. He will be in directly."

"Mother," said Charlotte sadly, "grievous as is the dissimulation, I believe there is every necessity for us not to inform father as yet of our resolve to live apart from him after my wedding."

"I am not of your opinion, my dear Charlotte," objected John, whose candidness would have suffered under the reticence. "At any rate, we have time to consider the matter. But it is necessary to decide, before Monsieur Desmarais comes in on how to convey to Monsieur Hubert the proposal I made to you, dear mother."

"Dear John," replied Madam Desmarais, "I have a secure means of communication with him. But should my letter indeed be intercepted, and your name be found in it, do you not fear to be compromised?"

"Should they seize your letter, it will not injure me in the slightest. The attempt I make is loyal. I accept proudly the responsibility attached to it, the same as, this very morning, I took upon myself the responsibility, still more serious on the face of it, of giving an Emigrant who had sought refuge with me the means, not of escaping justice—my duty would not permit that—but of leaving our house. Thanks to me, the ex-Count of Plouernel was able, without molestation, to gain a safe retreat."

"That great seigneur who once so shamefully outraged my husband?" cried Madam Desmarais in surprise.

"Monsieur Plouernel," Charlotte asked, "the descendant of that ancient family of warrior Franks which has done so much injury to your plebeian stock?"

"Precisely. By a strange fatality, he picked a fight with me last night. I thought I had killed him, but he was only stunned. This morning when Monsieur Plouernel had sufficiently regained his senses and strength, I conducted him to the threshold of our house. The porter, recognizing my voice, opened the street door to the Emigrant. Now let the justice of men be done; I can not denounce an enemy defeated and wounded."

At this moment advocate Desmarais stepped into the parlor, cordially tendering his hand to Lebrenn, and saying:

"Good day, my dear friend, my worthy *pupil*." Then passing to the young artisan a paper he held in his hand, the lawyer added: "Read that aloud, my dear John."

Charlotte's betrothed read as follows:

> "Citizen colleague:
>
> "I announce to you the marriage of my daughter, Charlotte Desmarais, to Citizen John Lebrenn, the iron worker.
>
> "The vows of the two as husband and wife will be received by the municipal officer of the Section of the Pikes, on the day that the head of Louis Capet the tyrant falls on the scaffold.
>
> "Fraternal greetings,
> "BRUTUS DESMARAIS.
>
> "December 12, year One of the
> Republic one and indivisible."

"That is a copy of the circular letter I have just addressed to my colleagues of the Convention, to invite them to your wedding with my daughter. What do you say to the phrasing of my missive, and especially to the time chosen for your wedding?"

"My God!" thought Madam Desmarais with a shudder, "the fate of Louis XVI aroused my husband's pity, and still he chooses the day of that prince's execution to marry our daughter upon. What abominable hypocrisy!" And Madam Desmarais left the parlor.

"You ask me, Citizen Desmarais, what I think of your letter of invitation, and of the time set for my union with Charlotte; I reply to you, in all sincerity, that I extremely regret that you chose the day of the execution of Louis XVI for our marriage."

"And I, father, hold with John."

"I suspect you, my daughter, of being a little royalist," replied the lawyer in a bitter-sweet tone; "and as to you, my dear pupil, I did not believe it necessary to remind you that the day a King's head falls into the basket is a festive day, a day of joy for all good patriots."

"Citizen Desmarais, did I sit in the Convention I would have voted for the death of Louis XVI, as a perjurer and a conspirer against the nation. But the day when the glaive of the law strikes the last of the Kings will not be a day of joy for the Republic."

"And what will it be, then, O my pupil? A day of mourning, perhaps?"

"For good patriots there will be neither joy nor mourning, Citizen Desmarais. It will be a day of deep and sober thought. Louis XVI is not a man, but a principle, representing the oldest monarchy in Europe. In striking Louis XVI, it is royalty that is beheaded. It is not a head that will fall to the scaffold, but a crown."

"My faith, my dear pupil, you have indeed out-reasoned your master. The death of the tyrant, in fact, causes patriots more than the delirium of joy, it causes a religious meditation, as you have so aptly said. But what is done is done. I sent off my circular this morning to all our friends in the Mountain; I can not now change the date of your marriage."

"Father," said Charlotte gravely, "John and I have awaited for years the day that would consummate our hopes; we would gladly consent to postpone still further the day that is to unite us, in order not to coincide with that of the death of the King, guilty though he be."

"Enough on that subject, my daughter, time presses. You, my pupil, will come to the notary's with me, if you please, to settle the terms of your marriage contract. Thence we shall hie us to the Convention, where I shall present you to my colleagues of the Mountain as my future son-in-law."

"I would say to you, Citizen Desmarais, that I do not intend to interfere in the making of the contract; that shall be drawn up as it pleases you."

"But you must know, my dear pupil, what dowry I settle upon my daughter!"

"That is a financial question in which I am not in the slightest degree interested."

"Ah, my children," returned the lawyer, in sepulchral tones, "what regret I feel at not being able to endow you as I would wish! But I have ruined myself in patriotic gifts. Save for this house and some little properties which amount to almost nothing, there remain to me in all only 850 louis, which I share with you, my children. This dowry is very small, my dear John, after that which you hoped to secure from your father-in-law."

"The thought of a dower never presented itself to me; be convinced of that, Monsieur Desmarais."

"I believe you, my dear pupil, expecting no less of your delicacy. But, apart from the 425 louis which I leave to you, you shall be lodged here, without expense to you; for we shall never part, my dear pupil. We shall be but one single family, and we shall also find room for your sister, who has so admirably lived down her past; for I no longer see in her the mistress of Louis XV, but the worthy daughter of the proletaire. And so, my dear John, it is indeed settled that neither you nor your wife shall leave me; I count on it, absolutely; it is for our peace and mutual happiness."

Charlotte was as indifferent as John to the figure of her dowry; but knowing through her mother that the settlement originally was to have been 120,000 livres, buried in the cellar of the house, the young girl was wounded by the secret calculations of her father, who, she thought (nor was she mistaken), in dowering her so niggardly expected to force John Lebrenn to take up his residence with him.

"I must thank you for your offer, Citizen Desmarais," answered John, "but I desire but one thing in the world, the hand of Charlotte. That I have obtained. All the rest is in my eyes but a bauble; it concerns me little, and troubles me not at all."

"Such delicacy does not surprise me, coming from you, my dear John. So you accept the terms of contract, as to the dowry? It is agreed?"

"Perfectly, and without objection."

"In that case, let us at once set about drawing up the marriage articles. The notary awaits us."

"Adieu, Charlotte. I shall at once see the members of the Committee of General Safety about your uncle," added John softly to his betrothed.

"Ah, if I had ever hesitated to leave my father's house," replied the young girl to her lover in like tones, "this last interview with him would have removed my scruples."

"Come, my pupil, let us go," said the lawyer, approaching the young couple. "Adieu, my daughter; tell mother that our dear John will dine here—the betrothal feast!"

"Till we meet again, father," answered the young girl, with a look of intelligence to John, who, accompanying his

future father-in-law, left the house.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE KING SENTENCED.

If there had ever existed any doubt as to the crimes of high treason charged against Louis XVI, the doubt vanished before the crushing proofs furnished against him during his examination. Deseze, Tronchet and Malesherbes, charged with the defense made their main plea on the royal inviolability guaranteed by the Constitution of 1791.

According to the defense of Louis XVI, and, indeed, according to the text of the Constitution itself, the King, even though he violated the Constitution, even though he betrayed the state, even though he led an invasion upon France, and at the head of foreign troops put the country to fire and sword, even then he incurred no penalty other than that of deposition. Such was the brief of the King's lawyers.

This theory, in which the absurd jostled the monstrous, was not judged worthy of a refutation by the Convention. Capet's accusers placed the question on a higher plane, by affirming and demonstrating the nullity of the Constitutional pact of 1791. Such was the opinion held by Robespierre, St. Just, Condorcet, Carnot, Danton, several Girondins, and, in fact, the great majority of the house.

In the name of justice, of right, and of reason, Louis XVI richly merited the verdict of guilty.

The sovereignty of the people being permanent, indivisible and inalienable, the Constitution of 1791 was radically null and void, in that it provided for the hereditary alienation of a portion of the people's rights, in favor of the ex-royal family. The Conventionists of 1793 were no more in love with the Constitution of 1791 than the Constituents of 1791 were with the monarchical, feudal and religious institutions which had weighed like an incubus on France fourteen centuries long.

A nation has the power, but never the right, to alienate its sovereignty, either in whole or in part, by delegating it to a hereditary family. Such an alienation, imposed amid the violence of conquest, borne out of habits of thought, or consented to in a moment of public aberration, binds neither the present generation nor those to come. Accordingly, the Constitution of 1791 being virtually null in fact, Louis Capet could not invoke the protection of that Constitution, which guaranteed the inviolability of the royal person, and limited his punishment to deposition in a few specified cases. Louis XVI was, then, legally brought to trial. By reconquering its full sovereignty on the 10th of August, the nation invested the Convention with the powers necessary for judging the one-time King. His crimes were notorious and flagrant; their penalty was written in the books of the law, equally for all citizens; he must, then, undergo the penalty for his misdeeds.

I, John Lebrenn, add here some further passages from my diary, relating to the trial, judgment and execution of Louis Capet.

JANUARY 15, 1793.—Having heard the defense submitted by Deseze, one of the attorneys for Louis XVI, the Convention put to a vote this first question:

"Is Louis Capet guilty of conspiracy against liberty and the nation, and of assault on the general safety of the State?"

The Assembly contained seven hundred and forty-nine members.

Six hundred and eighty-three replied:

"Yes, the accused is guilty."

The roll-call being completed, the president of the Assembly announced the decision:

"In the name of the French people, the National Convention declares Louis Capet guilty of conspiracy against liberty and the nation, and of assault on the general safety of the State."

The second question was:

"Shall the decision of the National Convention be submitted to ratification by the people?"

The members who voted for ratification by the people were two hundred and eighty-one; those against ratification, four hundred and twenty-three.

The president announced the result of the vote:

"The National Convention declares the judgment rendered on Louis Capet shall not be sent for ratification to the people."

JANUARY 17, 1793.—To-day and yesterday the sessions of the Convention were permanent, due to the gravity of the situation. The debate turned upon the third question:

"What shall be the penalty imposed on Louis XVI?"

I was present at the sessions wherein the elected Representatives of the people decided the fate of the Frankish monarchy, imposed on Gaul for fourteen centuries. It was not alone the man, the King, that the Convention decapitated—it was the most ancient monarchy in Europe. It was not only the head of Capet that the Republic wished defiantly to cast at the feet of allied Europe; it was the crown of the last of the Kings.

It was eight in the evening. In response to their names as the roll was called the members of the Convention mounted the tribunal one by one, and in the midst of a solemn silence cast their vote.

This evening, Thursday, at eight o'clock, while throughout the spacious hall one might have heard a pin drop, Vergniaud announced the result:

"The Assembly consists of seven hundred and forty-nine members; 15 are absent on committees, 7 because of illness, 1 without cause, censured; and 5 excused; number remaining, seven hundred and twenty-one.

"Required for an absolute majority, three hundred and sixty-one.

"Members voting for death unconditionally, three hundred and eighty-seven.

"Members voting for imprisonment, irons, or conditional death, three hundred and thirty-four.

"In the name of the people and the National Convention, I declare the penalty of death pronounced against Louis Capet."

JANUARY 19, 1793.—The question put by Mailhe, "Shall there be any postponement of Louis XVI's execution?" was discussed during the sessions of the 17th and 18th. At the end of to-day's session, the president put the question to a vote:

"Shall the execution of Louis Capet be postponed, yes or no?"

The vote resulted: for postponement, three hundred and ten; against, three hundred and eighty. The postponement was lost. Pale, and with grief impressed upon his features, Vergniaud again ascended the tribunal and in a trembling voice announced:

"The National Convention declares:

"Article first.—Louis Capet, last King of France, is guilty of conspiracy against the liberty of the nation and of assault upon the general safety of the State.

"Article second.—The National Convention declares that Louis Capet shall suffer the penalty of death.

"Article third.—Notice of the decree which condemns Louis Capet to death shall he sent to the Executive Council.

"The Executive Council is charged to notify Louis XVI of the decree during the day, and to have him executed within twenty-four hours.

"The mayors and municipal officers of Paris shall be enjoined to allow Louis Capet liberty to communicate with his family, and to call upon a minister of the denomination he may elect, to attend his last moments."

At three in the morning of Sunday, January 20, the meeting adjourned; and to cries of "Long live the Nation!" "Long live the Republic!" the multitude poured out of the galleries.

CHAPTER XIX.

EXECUTION.

Such were the memorable sessions of the National Assembly of the 15th, 17th, 19th and 20th of January, 1793.

Glory to the men of energy, to the inexorable patriots!

JANUARY 21, 1793.—The execution of Louis Capet took place to-day, Monday, the 21st of January, 1793!

My sister and I were present at the death of Louis. A vast throng filled the Place of the Revolution. The scaffold faced the avenue of the Elysian Fields, a short distance from the spot occupied by the statue of Louis XV.

At ten minutes past ten in the morning, a dull rumor, drawing nearer and nearer, announced the arrival of the condemned. My sister and I were not far from the scaffold, behind a line of Municipal Guards. We beheld a two-horse carriage draw up, accompanied by General Santerre and several officers of his staff. Claude Bernard and James Roux, an ex-priest, the municipal officers charged with guarding Capet, alighted first from the carriage, where Louis remained for two minutes' space with his confessor. Then, with firm tread, and supported by the executioners, he ascended the steps of the platform. He was clad in grey trousers and a soft white waistcoat; his purpled face betrayed intense excitement. Suddenly he stepped to the edge of the scaffold, and cried to the people:

"Frenchmen, I am innocent—"

At Santerre's command the roll of drums drowned the rest of the speech. Louis XVI cast a look of rage at the drummers, and cried to them angrily to desist.

The drumming continued. Louis Capet was turned over to Sampson, the executioner-in-chief, and his aides. A few seconds later, the sixty-sixth of these foreign Kings of Gaul had paid the penalty of his crimes, had expiated the wrongs of the monarchy of which he was the last incarnation.

The King's head, held up to the people by the headsman, was greeted with the shouts of the multitude.

No. 155 of Marat's journal terminates its account of the execution of Capet with the following reflections:

"The head of the tyrant has just fallen under the sword of the law; that same blow has overthrown the foundation of monarchy among us. I now believe in the Republic.... Not a voice cried for grace during the execution; a profound silence reigned about the scaffold. But when the head of Capet was shown to the people, from all sides rose the cries, 'Long live the Nation! Long live the Republic!' The execution of Louis XVI is one of those memorable events which mark epochs in the life of nations. It will have an immense influence on the fate of the despots of Europe and on those peoples who have as yet not broken their chains."

Robespierre, in a letter to one of his constituents (second trimester, page 3), penned the following appreciation of the consequences of the great political occurrence:

"Citizens, the tyrant is fallen under the sword of the law. This great act of justice has struck consternation to the hearts of the aristocracy, annihilated the superstition of royalty, and created the Republic. It imparts a character of grandeur to the Convention, and makes it worthy the confidence of France. The imposing and majestic attitude of the people in this solemn hour will cause the tyrants of earth more terror than even the death of their fellow. A profound silence surrounded the scaffold up to the moment the head of Louis XVI fell. That instant, the air shook with the unanimous shout of a hundred thousand citizens, 'Long live the Republic!' It was not the barbarous curiosity of men who came to feast their eyes on the death of a fellow-being; it was the powerful interest of a people, impassioned for liberty, and assuring itself of the fact that royalty had breathed its last.... Formerly, when a King died at Versailles, the reign of his successor was immediately ushered in to the tune of 'The King is dead, long live the King!' as if to make the nation understand that despotism was immortal. This time, a whole people, with a sublime instinct, acclaimed: 'Long live the Republic,' to teach a universe that tyranny had died with the tyrant."

May the same lot be reserved for all the Kings.

CHAPTER XX.

MARRIAGE OF JOHN LEBRENN.

Under date of January 26, 1793, the diary of John Lebrenn bears the record, without comment:

"To-day I espoused Charlotte Desmarais."

Despite the circular addressed by advocate Desmarais to his colleagues in the Convention, and in which he fixed as the date for his daughter's wedding the day of the tyrant's death, Charlotte, without regard for her father's very lively disappointment, and unmindful of his reiterated importunities, would not consent to be married until the 26th of January. With his habitual calculation, considering the union merely as a precaution, the lawyer had chosen Robespierre and Marat as witnesses to the ceremony; those selected by John Lebrenn were Billaud-Varenne and Legendre. The municipal officer of the Section received the vows of the young couple in his office on the evening after the Convention session of January 26. John Lebrenn had several days previously obtained from his old employer, Master Gervais, the deed of his smithy and the lease of the house. The preparations, the modest embellishments of his future home, were finished on the eve of his marriage.

After returning from the offices of the Section, the young couple received the pledges and felicitations of the witnesses, and presently were left alone with Madam Desmarais and her husband, who said to John:

"My dear son-in-law, I leave you an instant to go to look up my daughter's dowry and present it to you."

When Desmarais left the room, his wife addressed her daughter and new-found son:

"My children, this is the decisive instant. I would rather die than live any longer with my husband; but I tremble to think of the rage into which our resolution will throw him. Do not forsake me."

"Dear mother," responded Charlotte, "could you really think that of us? Is not our life bound up with yours?"

"Nevertheless, if he should oppose our separation? He would perhaps be in the right, my children?"

"Reassure yourself, dear mother," quoth John in his turn. "In the first place, the separation will relieve Monsieur Desmarais of one fear, that of being compromised by his relationship with Monsieur Hubert, your brother; who, unfortunately, as you tell me, has refused to accept the proposal made to him in my name."

"Alas, yes; my brother replied that he appreciated your offer, but that he considered it an act of cowardice to

remain passive; he wished to retain full freedom to combat the Republic."

"Alas," echoed Charlotte, with a sigh, "I deplore uncle's blindness, but I can not but pay homage to his strength of character."

"True enough, my dear Charlotte, Monsieur Hubert is one of those adversaries whom one admires while fighting. As I have several times told your mother, I hoped that struck especially by the attitude of the people of Paris on the 21st your uncle, who is a man of sense, would recognize how vain would now be any attempt against the Republic," observed John. "In that case, dear mother, Monsieur Desmarais, heretofore so terrified at the perils to which he believed himself exposed by his kinship with Monsieur Hubert, will no doubt see in your determination to leave him nothing but a pledge of his safety for the future, and will hardly dream of holding you back. At least, that is the way it appears to me."

At that moment the attorney returned, holding in his hands a little inlaid casket which he held out to the young artisan with a radiant air, saying:

"My dear son-in-law, I have found in my strong-box, besides the sum I mentioned, a hundred louis, which I add to my daughter's dower."

But seeing John Lebrenn repulse the proffered casket, the attorney added in great surprise: "Come, take the little chest, my dear pupil. It contains, in fine good louis, the dower I promised you, to which I have just added two thousand four hundred livres. Moreover, it is understood that in recompense for the slimness of the dower Charlotte, you, and your sister will lodge and board with me, without, to put it plainly, any expense to you. We shall live as one family."

"Citizen Desmarais," replied John, "before accepting the dower which you offer me and of which I have no need, it is our duty, my wife's and mine, to inform you of our plans. First of all, I shall continue in my station as an iron-worker."

"That is admirable, my dear pupil," exclaimed the lawyer with hastily assumed enthusiasm. "Far from blushing at your condition, far from seeing in the advantage afforded you by your marriage with my daughter an opportunity to renounce honest toil and to live in indolence, you choose to remain a workman. That is indeed admirable!"

"Citizen Desmarais, I hasten to disabuse you of a misunderstanding that exists between us. Upon mature consideration my wife and I have decided to dwell in our own house, completely separated from you."

"What do you mean!"

"I mean, Citizen Desmarais, that my former employer has sold me his establishment. Whence it follows that my labors and the care of my forge will oblige me, as well as my wife, to live elsewhere than here with you. I have, in consequence, hired the house previously occupied by my old master, and this very night my wife and I shall take possession of our new abode. The question has been considered and settled."

"Aye, father," added Charlotte. "Such is, indeed, our firm resolution."

At these words, pronounced by John Lebrenn and Charlotte in a voice that admitted of no reply, advocate Desmarais turned livid with rage and amazement. Forgetting now all his tricks of dissimulation, distracted with fear, and exasperated by what he took as an indignity on the part of his daughter and her husband, the lawyer cried to Charlotte, as he shook with anger and fright:

"Treason! Shameful treason! Heartless, unnatural daughter! This is the gratitude with which you repay my bounties to you? You would have the audacity to leave your father's house, would you! And you——" he added, turning tempestuously upon John Lebrenn, "and you, traitor, how dare you thus abuse my confidence, my generosity?"

"Not another word in that tone, Citizen Desmarais," interposed John. "Do not oblige me to forget the respect I owe the father of my wife; do not oblige me to tell you for what reasons your daughter—and her mother—have resolved to fix their abode elsewhere than with you."

"My wife! She also—would dare——" cried the lawyer, his rage redoubling till it almost choked him.

"Yes, monsieur, I also wish to leave you," replied Madam Desmarais. "You have treated me most cruelly, because my unhappy brother, a proscript and a fugitive, came to ask of you a few hours' shelter. You denounced me to the commissioner of our Section, adjured him to hale me away as a prisoner. You have even gone so far as to declare to me, 'If it were necessary, madam, in order to save my life, to send you to the scaffold—I would not hesitate an instant. Just now I must roar with the tigers; but then I should become a tiger.'"

"Hold your tongue!" shrieked the advocate, in a frenzy. "Do you wish to get my head cut off, gabbling like that before this man who perhaps awaits but the moment to settle me? Serpent that he is, whom I have warmed in my bosom!"

"Citizen Desmarais," replied Lebrenn, half in pity, half in disgust, "it depends upon you alone to put an end to your alarms, to the terrors by which you are assailed and of which those about you are the first victims. Cease to display in exaggerated form opinions which are at fisticuffs with your real belief. Renounce your public career. The weakness of your character, the uneasiness of your conscience, evoke fantasms before your eyes."

"It is a plot against my life!" continued Desmarais wildly. "They want to draw upon my head the fury of the Jacobins, and have me packed off to the scaffold. They want to be rid of me so that my dutiful daughter and son-in-law may play ducks and drakes with my fortune! But the old fox knows the trap! I shall stay at the Convention. My daughter and son-in-law may take themselves off, if they so wish; but as for you, Citizeness Desmarais, you shall not leave this house. The wife, according to the law, is bound to reside at the home of her husband."

"I will live with you no longer," resolutely replied Madam Desmarais. "A hundred times rather die!"

"Once would suffice, worthy wife! And it would be good riddance to a most abominable burden."

"Come, mother," said Charlotte, wroth at her father's brutal language. "Come. You shall not remain here another instant."

"Your mother shall stop where she is," cried the lawyer threateningly. "As for you, my daughter—as for you, my son-in-law—I shall denounce your execrable complot to my friends of the mad-men's party, to Hebert, to James Roux the disfrocked priest, to Varlet. Get you hence—I drive you from my house." Then seizing his wife by the arm, Desmarais added, "But not you. You stay!"

"You will please to allow my mother full control over her own actions, Citizen Desmarais," said Lebrenn calmly, and mastering his indignation. "Unhand her!"

"Get out of here, scoundrel!" retorted the attorney, still holding his wife by the wrist. "Get out of here, at once!"

"For the last time, Citizen Desmarais," quoth John Lebrenn. "Allow Madam Desmarais to follow her daughter, as is her desire. My patience is at an end, and I can not much longer tolerate the brutality I see here."

"Would you have the boldness to raise your hand against me, wretch!" replied the advocate, foaming with rage, and roughly wrenching his wife's arm. "Malediction on you both."

"Aye, I shall succor your wife from your wretched treatment," John answered; and seizing the lawyer's wrist with his iron hand as if in a vise, he forced the attorney to release his almost fainting spouse. She, on her part, made all haste to leave the now intolerable presence of her husband, and, supported by Charlotte, disappeared into the next room.

As John left the parlor to rejoin his bride and his second mother, advocate Desmarais, hiding his face in his hands, sank into an arm-chair, crying:

"Abandoned by wife, abandoned by daughter! Henceforth I am condemned to live alone!"

CHAPTER XXI.

A LOVE FROM THE GRAVE.

His marriage with Charlotte achieved, John Lebrenn, his sister, his wife and Madam Desmarais took up their abode in the modest dwelling on Anjou Street. Here also was Lebrenn's smithy, now for two months transformed into an armorer's shop, for he had received an order for guns for the volunteers, and, with his companions, set about the work with a will.

On the evening of May the 30th, in the year of his marriage, Lebrenn was looking over the newspapers while he rested from the heavy labors of the day, when his wife, sad and engrossed, came to him, saying to herself:

"No—painful though the confidence be, my last talk with the poor child, and my tender attachment for Victoria, will not permit me to postpone it—" Then, aloud to her husband, she began:

"I have for long hesitated, my friend, over the communication I am about to make to you. But the interest I feel in Victoria compels me to-day to speak. Closer knowledge of your sister's character has shown me, my friend, that you do not over-state when you say that, despite the youthful degradation she perforce underwent, her heart has remained pure. And yet I very wrongly harbored an evil thought against her. Now I have the proof of my mistake. I attributed to jealousy the change we noticed coming over her. I thought to myself that Victoria, used to concentrate upon you all her tenderness, to share your life, might feel toward me that sort of sisterly jealousy which the best and bravest of sisters feel in spite of themselves toward the wife of an idolized brother. I blush for my error, my friend, but still it was pardonable. Do you recall that shortly after our wedding we began to remark in your sister a growing sadness and taciturnity? Did she not seem by turns happy and saddened at our intimacy? Has she not appeared almost continuously under the empire of some secret brooding?"

"True; for long I have noticed in Victoria a sort of capricious changefulness of spirit which contrasted strongly with her ordinary equability. Thus, after having taken upon herself the task of evening lessons for our three apprentice boys and little Oliver, the orphan lad whom we took in, who, in spite of his eighteen years, knows no more than the younger boys, my sister suddenly declared she was going to stop the lessons and leave Paris; and without a word of explanation, at that."

"You remember, John, how bitter were her farewells at leaving us?"

"Happily, at the end of barely a week, Victoria returned, and—strange contradiction—insisted upon resuming her functions as school mistress."

"But her sadness, her sighs, the decline of her health proved only too well the persistence of her secret anguish. I said to myself, 'The courageous woman is fighting with all her might against her sisterly jealousy. In vain she tried to flee. Drawn again to us by her tenderness for John, she prefers to live with us and suffer.' But no, my friend, I was in error. I am now positive of it."

"To what cause, then, do you attribute Victoria's deep dejection and chagrin?"

"I shall surprise you, my friend, in revealing the burden—it is love!"

Mute with astonishment, John looked at his wife at first without answering her. Then, sadly smiling, and shaking his head incredulously, he said:

"Charlotte, you mistake. Victoria has had but one love in her life. He whom she loved to distraction is dead. She will be faithful to that flame to the tomb."

"You related to me the sad story of Victoria and Maurice, the young sergeant in the French Guards, killed by his disgraceful punishment. But, recall to mind that two or three days after our marriage, when you presented Oliver and the three apprentices, whom she wished to teach to read, to her, she suddenly shuddered, and cried as in great bewilderment—'Good God! Is it a vision, or is it a specter? 'Tis he, 'tis Maurice I see again!'"

"I remember the circumstance. And instantly coming to herself, Victoria told us she had had a spell of dizziness; but said no more on the subject."

"So, noticing her embarrassment, her downheartedness, we did not insist on knowing from her the real cause of so strange an incident; but a few days after this first meeting with Oliver, a remarkable change began to manifest itself in your sister's manner."

"That is all true; but what do you conclude from it?"

"I conclude, my friend, that it was in amazement at something in Oliver's appearance that your sister uttered the wandering words which startled us. I now believe the words expressed the surprise, mingled with affright, into which she was thrown by the striking resemblance between Oliver and Sergeant Maurice. And finally, the resemblance is explained by what I have discovered;—Oliver is Maurice's brother!"

"Strange, strange indeed!" muttered John. "But tell me, how did you come by the discovery?"

"As you know, we had to bring Oliver into the house, so as to have him close by us, as he is suffering from some languorous malady which renders him unable, despite his courage and willingness, to work in the shop. The unhappy boy, undermined by a slow fever, is in a deplorable state of weakness."

"The physician attributes it to his rapid growth. Oliver is, in fact, hardly eighteen. He has grown fast lately; this would explain his temporary lassitude."

"The physician, it seems to me, is deceived there. I shall tell you why, my friend. Just now, in coming from the shop, I crossed the garden. I saw Oliver seated under the yoke-elm bower, apparently sunk in mournful revery. His eye was fixed, his face bathed in tears. On seeing me he furtively tried to wipe his eyes. His features revealed mental suffering; it was easy to see that all was not physical in his malady. 'Oliver,' I said, seating myself close beside him, 'the cause of your illness is not the one the doctor gives. You feel some great disappointment, you hide it from us—that is wrong. My husband cares for you like a father, why do you not confide your trouble to him?' He seemed as much pained as surprised at my penetration; the embarrassed answers he gave were not sincere. He attributed his sorrow to the loneliness he felt in being left an orphan, without any relatives."

"Such a reply from Oliver surprises me. Has he not often shown by his manner the most touching recognition of our kindnesses toward him? We make him forget, he says, the unhappiness of his orphanhood; we surround him with a family's attention."

"No doubt he was hiding the truth from me, my friend. Then I spoke to him of the family he mourned. He eagerly seized upon the topic, as if glad of an avenue of escape from the new questions he feared I would put to him. He gave me many details of his parents. I learned that his furthest memories went back only ten or twelve years, when he was a boy of six or seven. He remembered that his brother Maurice wore the uniform of the French Guards, and came often to see their mother, a poor lace-weaver."

"There can no longer be any doubt!" cried Lebrenn, greatly amazed. "And indeed, by dint of much turning about of my early memories, which are greatly confused as I was then only a child, meseems that Sergeant Maurice, whom I saw often at the house as my sister's betrothed, did, in fact, resemble Oliver."

"So, my friend, what is there astonishing in the fact that Victoria, finding again, so to speak, Maurice in his younger brother, should yield despite herself to the reawakening of a sentiment which always ruled her so strongly? A strange sentiment, against which Victoria rebels, although in vain, for a thousand reasons, among them the difference in years between herself and Oliver. Victoria, although still young and in the ripeness of her beauty, might be his mother. The slow malady which is gnawing at Oliver's heart has no other cause than a secret and mad love for our sister Victoria."

These last words of Charlotte's, recalling to him many circumstances previously insignificant, forced conviction upon Lebrenn. He felt as one crushed, under the weight of the revelation, and presaging its sad consequences, cried, "Charlotte, Charlotte, what sorrows I foresee—if your suspicions are well founded! And what is worse, I believe you speak sooth."

"My friend, my suspicions are but too well founded. They explain the sadness of our poor sister; they explain her heart's anguish, the cause of which has eluded us. Alas, her grief arises from the conflict between her reason and this strange passion, so incomprehensible at first glance. And still, one can see how her love for Maurice, lasting beyond the grave, would predispose her toward a similar sentiment for his brother, who reflects so perfect an image of the departed. On the other hand, no more is it really strange that Oliver, drawn to your sister by her many proofs of interest in him, by her beauty, by the loftiness of her spirit and the nobility of her character, should end in becoming seriously enamored of her. His love, which seeks to hide itself from all eyes, and which hardly dares acknowledge itself, thinking it could never be returned, will consume him, and perhaps carry him to the grave."

John was silent for some moments. "The affair is so delicate," he said at length, "that I would not venture upon taking it up with Victoria, confident though I am of her attachment to me. We must, then, see to Oliver, and seek to snatch him from his wild passion. I shall have to hasten into execution a project I had already formed for his future. Everything about the boy seems to indicate military inclinations. A long time before his illness I observed during the Section drills not only his aptitude in the handling of arms, but with what insight he seemed to anticipate, as it were, the manoeuvres, and with what precision he executed them."

"Indeed, you have often told me of it, my friend. There are in Oliver, you say, the makings of an officer."

"I wished to wait, before proposing to him to enrol, until his health was completely restored. But, although his convalescence must, indeed, be allowed time for, I think I shall now push forward his engagement in whatever corps of the army is most to his liking. The distractions of the trip to join his regiment, the change of scene, the soldier's life, will, I doubt not, by awakening in Oliver his martial talents, exercise a salutary influence over his health. He will feel his mind grow gradually calmer in the measure that he finds himself further and further removed from Victoria. And lastly, she, no longer having Oliver daily before her, will succeed, I hope, in mastering this fatal love. 'Twould be a happy solution."

The conversation of John and his wife was broken in upon by the entrance of Madam Desmarais. The lady seemed quite uneasy, and said to her son-in-law in alarm:

"My God! What is going on in Paris to-night? They are beating the assembly! The streets are all excitement and hubbub. I was hardly able to get back home, for the crowds. Have we another *day* to fear?"

"According to what you say, dear mother, there probably will be a *day* to-morrow," replied John, smiling. "But it will be as peaceful as it will be imposing, and will, I hope, insure the safety of the Republic."

"May God hear you, my dear John. I know what faith one can place in your words. Nevertheless, I can not help but tremble when I think of your being engaged in these struggles, which may at any time end in massacre."

Gertrude, the old servant of the family, who had followed Madam Desmarais and her daughter to their new dwelling, just then entered and said to John: "Monsieur, your foreman Castillon is in the entry. He wishes me to tell you he would like to speak with you."

"Go and tell him he may come in, my good Gertrude."

"Charlotte and I will leave you," said Madam Desmarais. "If you go out, John, come and see us before you leave."

"Certainly, dear mother." Then addressing his wife, John added, significantly, "If you see Victoria before I do, keep silence on the subject of our talk."

"Speaking of Victoria, my children, I must say that the change in her health seems serious."

"We share your fears, good mother. Without a doubt, Victoria is suffering from some secret sorrow. But you know what reserve we must proceed with if we wish to win our sister's confidence. Depend upon us, mother, and until John or I have seen you, say nothing to Victoria which could lead her to suppose that we have remarked the change which afflicts us—alas, with all too much cause."

"You may count upon my discretion," replied Madam Desmarais. She and her daughter then left the room, and soon Castillon, foreman to John Lebrenn, was engaged in conversation with his master.

CHAPTER XXII.

MASTER AND FOREMAN.

The foreman of John Lebrenn's iron works, a stalwart smith of about the same age as his master, was splendidly typical of the republican workingman of the time. Like most of the proletarians of his day, Castillon had embraced revolutionary ideas more by instinct than by reason. In common with his brother workmen, he desired equality before the law, and common possession of the tools of production as a means of escape from bourgeois exploitation. A high-minded patriot, conscious of his rights and still more conscious of his civic duties; an honest man in the fullest sense of the word, rigorous of conduct, and despite his complete lack of education, endowed with a lively intelligence; an excellent workman at his trade, Castillon often regretted not being able to go to war. He was a true child of Paris, open, joyous and determined of character, joining to solid qualities of heart a spirit full of go and vivacity, and often of an original turn. Much attached to the young artisan, who had worked more than ten years at the forge beside him, John Lebrenn appreciated his foreman as he deserved, and exercised over him a command founded on rectitude of principle, mature judgment, and a degree of education only too rare among his brothers of the people. Master and foreman thee-and-thoued each other like old friends, less in obedience to the general habit of the time than as the result of old reciprocal affection, and long community of labor.

"Ah, John, I would not have disturbed you," said Castillon, as he entered the room. "You were in conversation with your wife and her mother—perhaps I come at the wrong time?"

"You are always welcome, my good Castillon. Be seated. What's afoot?"

"Such as you see me, my friend, I come as an ambassador—but without emoluments. I shall not break the treasury of the Republic."

"The ambassador of our comrades, no doubt; and what is the text of your embassy?"

"This: For a fortnight we have none of us had the time to go to our Section meetings, we had to finish the order of guns and muskets for the nation; for that is sacred, it comes first before everything. To forge arms for our brothers at the front! Ah! by my pipe, they will be proud and happy, down there, to be able to slap the Prussians!"

"Patience, Castillon, our day will come."

"Patience let it be. But it is beggarly hard to be able only to assemble and polish up for others these fine five-foot clarinets, on which one would so love to play the *Ça Ira*, while we spat our lead at the Prussians; and It will come, by my pipe, It will! But what would you? We are like the poor workpeople of the silk factories of Lyons and Tours, who see the holy bourgeois sporting the beautiful goods they themselves have woven! So you see, we could not go to our Section meetings, since we worked from six in the morning till twelve at night, without stopping. And in this labor for the country you set us the example, for if you were before us in the shop, old fellow, you left it after us."

"That was my duty; I demanded great efforts of you in the name of the Republic, I should share your fatigues."

"Hold, John. You are what we may call a man; a worthy man."

"Come, we are too old friends to be bandying compliments."

"Call it what you like, I repeat that you are a worthy man. Look—what did you say to us when you bought the place of our old master, Goodman Gervais? 'Here we are, a score of good fellows, working as one family like good republicans. Let us take count: The shop brings in, or should bring in, in income, so much. Good. From this income we must first take out the sum I must annually pay to Master Gervais, and at the end of ten years the establishment will belong to us. Up till then, we shall share the proceeds proportionately to the hours of labor put in by each of us. My wife, who keeps our books and manages the treasury, will have her share of the proceeds, like us.' It was in this fashion that you spoke to us, John. It was in your power, on becoming our employer, to exploit us, as the bourgeois do. But you, you shared with us as brothers, as good comrades. Ah, and now, to return to the purpose of my mission, for I have traveled far from it, here is the business. It is, as you see, a fortnight since we have been able to go either to our Sections or to the Jacobins or the Cordeliers, to keep track of events. Then, to-night, they beat the assembly. We knew vaguely, from one side and another, that something was simmering; but what it was that was simmering, and what it was simmering for—that was the rub! We could have learned by going to our Sections, but we were sworn, due to the urgency of our task, never to leave the shop before midnight, when work was stopped. Nevertheless, we were restless over what was taking place this evening in Paris. We asked ourselves whether we ought not to drop work anyhow, and go and lend a hand to our brothers, when they beat the assembly. So that finally my comrades sent me to you, John, to ask whether we should stick to the shop, or go to our Sections. Decide the question; we shall follow your advice."

"My advice is that we should work still more diligently to-night, for to-morrow and perhaps day after to-morrow we may have to go out in the street to hold a demonstration, a great demonstration."

"Let's get busy!" exclaimed Castillon, his face shining with ardor. "We have perhaps to exterminate a new intrigue of Pitt and Coburg, or a little scheme of the ex-nobles and the skull-caps? By my pipe, that's fine. And, *ça ira*; I have just finished a love of a musket; maybe I can test it on the blacks or the whites, on the Jesuits, their laymen, and the nobles! What an opportunity!"

"You will not have that sad chance."

"What, to mow down the enemies of the Republic, you call that a sad chance? You, my old fellow?"

"Civil war is always a sad thing, my friend. And it is death to the soul when it must resign itself to take up arms against our brothers, against the sons of our common mother, the nation."

"Ah, but tell me, friend John, did not these brigands pull sweet faces and send the blue-bonnets to ambush and cannonade the patriots on the 14th of July, on the 5th and 6th of October, on the day of the Field of Mars, on the 10th of August, and everywhere, and all the time? The aristocrats are our enemies."

"If our adversaries are strangers to the sentiment of brotherhood, must we then imitate them, my friend? In civil war either chance is cause for mourning—victory or defeat."

"Come, John, we shall never agree on that. As to me, I know but one motto—'To a good cat, a good rat,' or if you like it better, 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' as they said of old. That's why, in September, we did jolly well to purge the prisons, I'm thinking."

"If you are set on recalling dates, my good comrade, speak of the great days of July 14 and August 10. Let us combat abuse, and be indulgent toward individuals. We are on the eve of a very grave crisis. To-morrow the whole people will be in the public place in arms, not to fight—God be thanked!—but to demonstrate in the name of its rights, in its fullness and power and sovereign might. All must bow before the people."

"Good! I know it, old friend. A manifestation is afoot like that of the 20th of June of last year, when we went to say to Capet, full in his face, 'Here, my man, you are the hereditary guardian of the nation! It has given you for your pains forty million pledges. Excuse yourself! you betray the nation, in place of serving it. Attention to the command, my man. If you do not walk straight, we shall sack you, if we don't do worse!' Capet didn't walk straight; on the contrary; accordingly, we both sacked him and did worse besides, as was just; we shaved him."

"To-morrow's manifestation should be as peaceable as that of the 20th of June."

"And for what purpose is the demonstration? It is good to know the reasons for it."

"I shall tell you, along with your comrades. Let us go down to the shop. It is nine o'clock, and while we work we shall talk. I shall bring with me certain papers which will be necessary to give you the full lay of the land," added John, taking several written sheets in a portfolio from the bureau. "Return to our comrades, I shall soon join you."

"So be it, my old friend, we await you, big and little, journeymen and apprentices. Speaking of apprentices, how is Oliver? We have not seen him to-day. Poor boy, do you know he seems to be in a bad way? He is so weak he can hardly drag himself along. And yet he does not lack courage! He haunts the workshop like a lost soul, so great is his chagrin at seeing us at work while he remains idle against his will. Day before yesterday he tried to fit in a gunlock, a girl's work, but, bah! almost at once his weakness seized him, and we had barely time to open our arms to catch him and carry him out to the garden. He had fainted outright."

"We shall talk again of the good boy. Perhaps I shall have to beg you to do him a service."

"You have but to speak. We all love Oliver in the shop, and I am like the rest."

"Thanks, Castillon. I knew I could count on you." And ringing the bell, John added: "I have two words to say to Gertrude before joining our friends in the smithy; you shall not have long to await me."

Castillon left, and Gertrude having come in in response to the bell, John said to her:

"Is my sister in her room?"

"No, monsieur, she went out two hours ago, saying that perhaps she might not be back for supper. Poor mademoiselle! You really ought, Monsieur John, to consult Oliver's physician about her."

"Do you know where the boy is?"

"He went up to his room at sundown; he was very tired, he said, complained of a fever, and shivered with the cold. He asked me to give him some coals in a chafing dish to keep his medicine warm, which I did immediately."

"Go, Gertrude, please, and see how he is, and whether he wants for anything," replied Lebrenn; and to himself he continued, "Ah, what sorrows I foresee if, as Charlotte supposes and as I have every reason to fear, Victoria loves Oliver, and he feels for her a mad passion, a fatal love barren of hope. My sister's past, her betrothal to the poor boy's brother, condemn her never to marry him. The difference of age would not in itself constitute any obstacle, but my sister is of too dignified and firm a mold not to resign herself to the cruel position in which the memory of Maurice has placed her, even should the resignation carry her to the grave." And thoughtfully John mused on: "The departure of Oliver can alone prevent these woes; the matter must be hastened through."

At that moment Gertrude broke in, saying to John in a mysterious, almost frightened air:

"Ah! monsieur, something strange—"

"What is it, Gertrude?"

"On the way up to poor Oliver, I had to pass by Mademoiselle Victoria's door, and I heard the sound of footsteps within."

"My sister did not go out, then?"

"Pardon me, monsieur; I saw mademoiselle leave the house, with my own eyes, and she gave me the key of her room."

"That is truly strange! Who then can be there?"

"No one, monsieur, for your sister does not receive a soul. That is why the sound of steps astonished me so!"

"Explain yourself more clearly!"

"I mean I heard, or thought I heard, someone walking in mademoiselle's chamber. It could not be you, monsieur, because you are here. It could be neither madam nor her mother, for I had just seen them on the first floor as I went up to mademoiselle's; so I said to myself, 'Perhaps it is some rogue who has broken in!' Then I rapped at the door and called, 'Mademoiselle, are you there?' No answer. I rapped again; no answer. I said to myself, 'It surely must be some rascal or other!' I came down in haste to get the key; risking whatever might come, I opened the door, and, 'pon my faith——"

"That is what you should have done first thing. The mystery would have been solved at once. Whom did you find?"

"No one—absolutely no one. Everything was in good order, as it always is in mademoiselle's room. Her work table and her other little writing table were in their accustomed place, near the dormer window that looks on the garden, and as it was open I peeped out. I saw neither ladder nor cord which could have served anyone either for entry or escape. I looked under the bed, I opened the door of the closet—no one! Then I said to myself—"

"Whence it follows, my good Gertrude, that you thought you heard footsteps in my sister's room and that you were mistaken, that's all. Now tell me, how did you find Oliver?"

"When I knocked at his door, the young man was sound asleep, for he did not hear me at first."

"So much the better. If he sleeps deep it is a happy symptom. His fever has gone."

"I asked him through the door how he was, and whether he needed anything. He told me he had lain down after taking his hot drink, and that he had slept till I woke him; that he felt better, and that he hoped to pass a good night. Thereupon he wished me good-even."

"Poor boy—may his hope of rest be realized. Tell my wife, Gertrude, that I am going out to the shop, and not to be worried at my absence. I shall come in for supper at ten o'clock as usual."

So saying, John passed out of the parlor and went to join his comrades in the smithy.

CHAPTER XXIII.

TO THE WORKMAN THE TOOL.

The factory of implements of war, established by John Lebrenn in his iron works, took the toil of twenty workmen. All—apprentices, old men, young men—vied with one another in patriotic ardor in the accomplishment of their task. They felt that this was no ordinary labor. They were conscious of serving the Republic, and lavished their skill on the arms destined for the patriots at the front. Accordingly, with what eagerness did not these artisans forge, beat, or file the iron, lighted here by a smoky lamp against the wall, there by the reverberating glow of the furnace. The ringing cadence of the hammers on the anvils was often accompanied by the popular songs of the period chanted in chorus by the workmen's sturdy voices. Most oft it was the Marseillaise, the Carmagnole, or the famous *Ça Ira*, whose brief and rapid rythm seemed to beat the "Charge!"

Songs and labors both stopped short at the entrance of John Lebrenn. Castillon had notified the shop a few minutes before that 'friend John,' as they cordially called him, was coming to post them on the events of the coming day, and to supply the information of which they had for some time been deprived.

"Citizens," said Castillon when he saw Lebrenn, "I rise to a motion! In order to lose as little time as possible, and in order to hear friend John without halting the work, let us set aside for an hour our hammers and files, and put in the time fitting or polishing our pieces. That will make practically no noise, and in this way we shall not be idling, and still can hear friend John in comfort."

"The motion is carried!" cried the workmen. In a few moments the bustle, consequent on the change of occupations, was over, and silence fell on the shop. John Lebrenn took his accustomed place, and speaking to several by name, thus addressed his companions:

"Brothers, we are on the eve of a great day, as beautiful, as decisive, as those of July 14 and August 10. This day will save, I hope, the Revolution, the Republic, and France, now more seriously threatened than ever. And moreover, it is also my firm hope that not a drop of blood will be shed. The law and the national Representatives will be respected, the people will know how to rise to the grandeur of its mission and overcome its adversaries no longer by force of arms, but by its moral influence. My language surprises you, men of action that you are."

"My faith, yes, friend John. But after all, if one can win without a fight, that is so much gained. It makes for peace."

"The victory will only be the purer for it. But, in order that you may understand the significance of the events now on the threshold, we must first take up those which have preceded. You know, my friends, and it is one of the greatest misfortunes of the times, that the Convention chosen by the people to proclaim the Republic and to arraign and judge Louis Capet has been, from the beginning of its existence, divided by party rivalries. The party leaders, the Mountainists, the Moderates, or the Girondins, are all more or less guilty of the same fault, I ought to say the same crime; for, forgetting the public weal, or confounding it with their own personalities, they have lost precious time reciprocally accusing one another of treason. Thus Capet's trial was dragged out over four months. The new Constitution is hardly drafted. National education is as yet but a project. Finally, if they have accepted the compulsory tax of a thousand million on the rich, and have established a maximum of wealth, we still await the laws to complete the emancipation of the proletariat by decreeing the right to the common possession of the instruments of production, for all citizens, male and female."

"We agree with you, friend John. The bourgeoisie has gotten its part of the Revolution, namely, justice; but Jacques Bonhomme has still the half of his to get. He has won political rights, universal suffrage, and the Republic—that is good, it is something, but it is not all. One must eat to live, and in order to eat one must have at his disposal either work or the tool with which to produce the necessaries of life. To the peasant the land, to the workman the tool. To each his part in the common property."

"Whose the fault, my friends, if our legitimate hopes have not been fulfilled?"

"By my pipe, friend John, the fault is in the delays of the Convention; that is clear as day."

"Whence it follows, that if we had chosen better Representatives we would never have had to suffer the delays which now bear so harmfully upon us. If the Convention has not up to now completed the emancipation of us proletarians, the fault lies with our lack of discernment in choosing our Representatives. You follow my reasoning? Now let us come to the conclusion."

"In fact, that is true enough, friend John. But, after all, if we made a bad choice, on whom can it be blamed?"

"On our inexperience, my friends; an inexperience entirely natural, for we are still *apprentices* in the exercise of our political rights. But experience will teach us how to serve ourselves better with the sovereign instrument over which we dispose; we shall obtain by the votes of our Representatives everything that we can legitimately claim and demand. Are we proletarians not, after all, the vast majority of the country? Let us then know how to make a better choice for the Assembly which will succeed the Convention, and our freedom will be complete. Does that mean, however, that the Convention does not count within its ranks some true friends of the people? That would be a

slander on it; but these, Robespierre, St. Just, Danton and the other Jacobins, are unfortunately in the minority. The Girondins, who control the majority, are incapable of dissipating the perils which now stare the Republic in the face."

"An idea, friend John! How if we invited the Girondins to take a little visit down there to see how their friends Pitt and Coburg were getting along? If they don't accept, we march in force upon the Convention, sort the goats from the sheep, purge the flock of the goats, and then—. Stern diseases need stern remedies!"

"Then, my friend Castillon, the sovereignty of the people one and indivisible would be violated in the person of its Girondist Representatives. For these, no less than the Mountainists, are sacred by virtue of their popular election. Their inviolability covers them so long as there exists against them no proof of overt treason. We shall not step out of the just path. What must be done to save the Republic without violence, without illegality, without an assault on the sovereignty of the people, is to obtain from the Girondins, voluntarily, an abandonment of their power to the Jacobins."

"But how can that be done?"

"By using our right of assemblage and petition, by making the Convention hear the voice of the people, of Paris, and of all France. And, I call God to witness, that voice will be heard! The most refractory of our Representatives will be forced to obey."

"Bravo! Tell us some more!"

"Here, comrades, is what occurred yesterday, May 29. The Section of the Cité, through the organ of its president Dobsen, issued an appeal to the other forty-seven Sections of Paris, inviting them each to send two delegates to the electoral club sitting at the Bishopric. These delegates, clad by the Sections with full power for the common safety, are to act in concert. The call of the Cité has been heeded, and to-day these ninety-six commissioners of the Sections have named a superior committee of nine. This committee has resolved as follows:

"To-morrow, in order to establish the legality of the power with which the Sections have invested it, the committee will repair to the City Hall, declare its powers, and dismiss (but only for form's sake) the Municipal Council, whose authority exists only at the will of the Sections. This done, the Municipal Council will be reinstated in its functions, as it is composed of good patriots. The directorate of the department, on its part, being with the Sections, will call upon the officers of the Commune to assemble at the City Hall to-morrow and meet with the Municipal Council to the end of consulting, if need be, on matters of general security. Thus, to-morrow, at daybreak, all the Sections will assemble, with their cannon; that is to say, all Paris will be afoot, armed, not to fight, but to demonstrate, calm and dignifiedly, garbed imposingly in its power and sovereignty."

"I understand, friend John, that the ex-nobles still carry, even in tranquil times, their rapiers at their sides. It is 'part of their costume,' they say. Well, by my pipe, on these grand occasions, and without meaning to fight, the people shall put on *its* Sunday best, and march with pike-staves and cannon! That will be its ceremonial costume!"

"You have said it, friend Castillon. The ex-gentleman is not complete without his sword beside him—it is his symbol of oppression. The patriot is not complete without the pike in his hand, his symbol of resistance to oppression. To-morrow, then, when the Sections are peacefully assembled, in their ceremonial costume, as you said, Castillon, Citizen Rousselin, the spokesman of the deputation of the forty-eight Sections of Paris, and L'Huillier, in the name of the directorate of the department of Paris, will read at the bar of the Convention the petitions borne by the delegates of the Sections."

"Now, friend John, I understand the affair," returned Castillon. "We go say to the Girondins: 'Look you, citizens, we are here, a hundred thousand good patriots of Paris; and down there, in the country, other hundreds of thousands of good patriots, all convinced, like us, that you have not enough hair on your eyebrows to save the Republic. That is settled! We have the numbers, the force and the cannon for you, but these numbers, this force, these cannon we do not want to use. Only we say to you, in the name of the country: Citizen Girondins, when your loins are not strong enough to bear the burden, leave it to others more robust. Come, make yourselves scarce!'"

"You speak words of gold, my good Castillon. Yes, in all probability, such will be the consequences of to-morrow's program. The majority of the Convention—a majority which is often vacillating and undecided, but which has so far supported the Girondins—will, struck with this imposing manifestation, this calm, dignified, legal attitude of the people, and yielding to the pressure of public opinion, throw off the Girondin influence which dominates it, and join forces with the Jacobins, who will thus become masters of the situation. Then, my friends, be sure of it, whatever the allied monarchs of Europe may do, whatever the plots of the royalists and priests, the Republic, the Revolution, France, will be saved without the sovereignty of the people having been violated in the person of a single one of its Representatives in the Commune or the Convention, even of those most opposed to new ideas; and without the stigma of bloodshed."

All at once John Lebrenn's wife dashed into the workshop. She was pale and trembling, and called in tones of terror:

"John, my friend, come at once! What a misfortune!"

"Charlotte, you frighten me," cried Lebrenn, hastening to his wife's side. "Heavens, what has happened?"

"Come, come, in haste."

"Citizeness Lebrenn, do you need us?" called Castillon, as much moved as his comrades at the anxiety depicted on the young woman's face. "Speak—here we are, at your service."

"Thank you all, my friends, thank you. Alas! There is no remedy for the grief which has smitten us," replied Charlotte. And taking the arm of her husband, who grew every instant more uneasy, she dragged him out of the shop and towards their dwelling.

CHAPTER XXIV.

LOST AGAIN.

While John Lebrenn was enlightening his companions on the probable events of the coming day, Victoria, returning home close on half past nine, had gone up to her room. Setting the lamp on the table, she took off her street cloak and sat down, sad and weary. Her head fell between her hands. Suddenly her glance rested on a sheet of paper, placed conspicuously in the center of the table, and the young woman read, almost mechanically, these lines, traced in Oliver's still inexpert hand:

> In daring to write you this letter, I put to use the little that I know, and which I owe to your generosity. You had pity on me, a poor orphan, you had compassion upon my ignorance. Thanks to you I can read, and form the letters. Thanks be to God, for at least I am able to write you what I would never have dared to tell you, for fear of incurring your anger or contempt. But at this hour what have I to fear?
>
> What a change has come over me! A moment ago my hand trembled that I could not write, at the mere thought of acknowledging that I love you passionately. Now it seems to me that this acknowledgment will cause you neither contempt nor anger, for it is a sincere one.
>
> You will not love me, you can never love me, because I am not worthy of you, and for that I am too young—I am a child, as you so often told me. I can not hope to win your affection.
>
> This evening, about eight, I saw you go out. I was glad of it. I preferred to know that you were not here, and that I could thus in your absence place this letter on your table, to be read by you on your return.
>
> I double-locked myself in. I looked at the roof gutter. The passage seemed practicable. To assure myself, I went as far as your window. It was open. I saw your table, your work-basket, your books. Ah, how I wept.
>
> On returning to my chamber I began writing you this letter. I went at once to place it on your table, and then, thanks to some charcoal I have procured, I shall—put an end—to my existence—

"The poor child!" exclaimed Victoria, throwing the letter far from her; and rising, pale with apprehension, she ran to Oliver's door, crying aloud for help as she went. But in vain she beat on the panels and sought to force an entrance. Gertrude, Madam Lebrenn and her mother hastened up at Victoria's summons. The latter's presence of mind was only increased by the impending danger; failing in all her attempts to break down the door, she returned to her own room, adventured the narrow gutter which had served Oliver for a pathway, and arrived thus before the window of his garret chamber. There it was but the work of a minute to break one of the little panes, snap back the catch, leap into the room, and unfasten the locked door from within. Immediately, assisted by Madam Desmarais, Charlotte and Gertrude, she hastened to take the first steps for the resuscitation of the unfortunate boy stretched on the couch. The apprentice no longer gave any signs of life. But soon the pure air, rushing in by the now opened door and window, dispelled the deadly fumes of the charcoal. Oliver's breast heaved; he drew a faint breath. Victoria and Madam Desmarais carried the almost suffocated lad to the window. There he was propped up in a chair; his ashen features, covered with icy sweat, slowly regained a slight color, and little by little life returned to his bosom.

Two hours later he had quite come to, and found himself in John Lebrenn's parlor, alone with Victoria. One would have difficulty to frame in his imagination a countenance of more rare perfection than that of the youth, who possessed a physiognomy of charming candor. On her part, the young woman was grave. Her eyes, reddened with tears, and the feverish color which replaced the habitual pallor of her beautiful features, both bore witness to the painful emotions under which she was laboring. After a few seconds' hesitation, she thus addressed the youth in a sweet and solemn voice:

"Oliver, you are now, I believe, in condition to listen to me. I have requested my brother and his family to leave us to ourselves a while. Our interview will, I trust, exert a happy influence over your future, and give you complete satisfaction."

"I listen, Mademoiselle Victoria."

"I have read your letter," resumed the young woman, drawing Oliver's missive from her corsage. "Frightened at your resolve of suicide, and thinking only of snatching you from death while there was yet time, I was not at first able to finish it. But now I have just read it through."

"What do I hear!" exclaimed the youth, clasping his hands in a transport of joy. "My letter caused you neither contempt nor anger?"

"Why should it? You yielded to the promptings of gratitude toward me, and sympathy for my character. So, I am not irritated, but touched, by your affection."

"You are touched by my affection, Mademoiselle Victoria? My heaven, what do you say!"

"Now, my friend, answer me sincerely. The fear of seeing me insensible to an avowal which timidity has for so long kept trembling on your lips, drove you to think of suicide—am I right?"

"Helas, yes, mademoiselle!"

"Now speak true, Oliver. Was it as a mistress, or a wife, that you dreamt of me?"

"Good heavens! Do you think—?"

"You thought of me as the future companion of your life? Ah, me, I declare that I am unworthy to become your wife. Cruelly as this avowal wounds my heart, Oliver, I must make it to you, in order that you retain no illusion, and

no hope. But I offer you in their place a devoted attachment, the affection of a mother for her child. That is all I can give you."

Oliver, who so far had held his hands clasped over his face, now let them drop upon his knees. He replied with not a single word, but fixing upon Victoria a dark and foreboding look, rose with difficulty from his seat, and with a step that still wavered, moved towards the door.

The apprentice's silence and the expression on his face bore evidence to so profound a despair that Victoria presaged some new misfortune. She hastened to Oliver's side, took his hand, and asked:

"Where are you going?"

"To my room. I need rest."

"You shall not stay alone in your room. Gertrude and I will watch over you. We will remain there all night."

"Good night, Mademoiselle Victoria," returned the apprentice, moving anew towards the door. But Victoria, still holding him by the hand, replied:

"Oliver, I know what you are thinking of. You are not in your right mind."

"I beg your pardon, Mademoiselle Victoria; I am fully in possession of my senses; and if you have read my thoughts, you ought to realize that no power in the world can balk my resolution."

"You would have the cruelty to leave me under the weight of the horrible thought that I—I who love you as a son—was the cause of your death?"

"Your heart is compassionate, Mademoiselle Victoria, and your character generous. I wish to leave this world because you do not wish, or are not able, to love me."

"Unhappy child, even were I not sufficiently old to be your mother, I repeat to you with a blushing forehead, I am not worthy of being your wife. You can not be my husband. Such a union would be the shame of your life and the eternal remorse of mine."

"In your eyes, perhaps, but not in mine, Mademoiselle Victoria. Whatever a past of which I am ignorant may hold, a past in which I am in no way concerned, you are now for me the one creature in the world most worthy of respect and love. Life without you will be insupportable. I have resolved to die—"

"What a crazy thought! I do not love you with a lover's love. Why do you persist thus in a struggle for the impossible, poor foolish lad?"

"I have no thought of a struggle. I am resigned—and shall put myself out of the way."

These final words of Oliver's, pronounced without emphasis or bitterness, could not but remove from Victoria's mind her last doubts as to the unfortunate boy's resolution. She had been used long enough to read to the bottom of his open and childlike soul, to recognize there a blending of gentleness and strength of will. Hardly escaped from one almost certain death, the apprentice was all the more determined to seek in self-destruction the end of his torments. Victoria communed long with herself, and after an extended silence, began again:

"Oliver, you are resolved to die. I do not wish at any price to reawaken your hopes by entering into any engagement with you whatsoever. I do not wish to revive your illusions—they must be destroyed, and forever. But in the name of the interest I have always borne you, in the name even of your attachment for me, I ask of you only to promise me not to attempt to destroy your life until to-morrow at midnight. At that hour, you will meet me here again, or if not you will receive a letter from me. If the interview I shall then have with you, or if the reading of my letter does not change your sad designs, you may put them into execution, as you please. Let your destiny then run its course."

"To die twenty-four hours later, or twenty-four hours earlier, it matters little. I promise not to go before the hour you have set," replied the apprentice with such marked indifference that it was clear the poor boy entertained no hope of his suicide's being obviated. Again turning to the door, he added:

"Mademoiselle Victoria, to-morrow, then, shall decide my fate."

"Oliver, we have a full day to reflect on the grave matter which thus links both our existences."

Hardly had Oliver left the parlor when Victoria rose, and running to the door of an ante-room where John Lebrenn and his wife were concealed, said to them in a shaking voice:

"You heard everything?"

"Ah, the unfortunate boy," exclaimed John. "He is out of his mind. It is certain to me that he will carry out his fatal threat."

"Oh, heaven," added Madam Lebrenn, drying her eyes, "to think that to-day we saved him from death, and that to-morrow—oh, it is horrible! But what can one do in such an extremity? What can we make up our minds on? What is your idea?"

"We can and ought at least to put to profit the twenty-four hours and over which you have succeeded in winning from him, dear sister," replied Lebrenn. "I have before now not wished to intrude in this painful affair. But Oliver has a great affection for me. I have some influence over him; his heart is good, his spirit unblemished, his character open. I can appeal to his good parts, I can endeavor to exalt his already so ardent patriotism, which even his mad passion has not been able to cool. I shall prove to Oliver that he would commit a crime against the Republic, against his mother country, in sacrificing his life instead of devoting it to her protection when she is menaced by foreign

invasion."

"Ah, brother, do you then believe that I have not thought of resurrecting that soul, now crushed and disheartened? Alas, my efforts were unavailing. I know the child better than you, my friends. Listen to me—this is the hour of a cruel confession, brother. You know what part Maurice, the sergeant in the French Guards, the unfortunate victim of Monsieur Plouernel, played in my life."

"Aye, and I know further, or I believe I know, that Oliver is Maurice's brother." Then, in answer to a gesture of surprise on Victoria's part, "It is to Charlotte's penetration that I owe the discovery."

"Oliver is, indeed, the brother of Maurice, and by one of those inexplicable mysteries of nature, the physical resemblance between the two is even perhaps less remarkable than their mental resemblance. My knowledge of Maurice's nature has given me the key to Oliver's. Woe is me!" cried Victoria in heartrending tones. "In seeing, in hearing the one, I thought I saw and heard the other! The same voice, the same look! How many times, entranced in memories, have I surprised myself moved, my heart beating for this living phantom of the only man I ever loved in my sad life!"

"You love Oliver—or rather in him you continue to love Maurice. Unhappy sister!"

"Sister, dear," said Charlotte, warmly seizing the two hands of Victoria, who stood mute and overcome, bowing her face which was empurpled with shame and flooded with tears, "do you suppose that we could breathe one word of censure against you? Your new agonies inspire but the tenderest compassion. Ah, if our sisterly affection were capable of any growth, it would increase before this touching proof of the persistence of the single love of your life. Do we not know, alas, that for you to love Oliver is but for you to continue faithful to Maurice?"

"And still this love, although as pure as the former one, would be shameful, revolting," murmured Victoria.

"Victoria," interposed John, unable to restrain his tears, "do not abandon yourself to despair. Let us face the reality coolly, and regulate our conduct accordingly."

"Helas, the reality!" broke from Victoria. "This it is: No human power can prevent the suicide of Oliver, if I do not promise to be his wife—or his mistress. The only alternatives are my shame or his death."

Victoria's words were followed by silence for several minutes.

"Woe is us," at length resumed John, the first to speak. "Aye, fate has shut us in an iron circle. And still, despite myself, some dim hope supports me. Some inspiration will come to us."

"Yes," replied Charlotte, "I also hope, because our sister Victoria is a noble creature; because Oliver is gifted with generous qualities. I believe it will be possible to discover a solution honorable for all of us."

"Oh, dear wife," exclaimed John, "how your words do comfort me. Aye, aye, every situation, desperate as it may seem, is capable of an honorable solution. Beloved sister, raise that bowed forehead. Let us have faith in the unison of noble hearts."

Suddenly Victoria lifted her head, transfigured, radiant; and passionately embracing her brother's wife, she cried:

"You spoke sooth, Charlotte. We shall come out of this situation with honor." Then, clasping John with redoubled ardor, she continued: "Ah, brother, what a weight of fear has been lifted from my heart! To-morrow you shall know all. To-morrow that circle of iron shall be broken which now hems us in. A happy path opens itself before me."

The following morning, as John Lebrenn was leaving his house for the shop, he was met in the courtyard by the servant Gertrude, who drew from her pocket an addressed envelope.

"Mademoiselle Victoria gave me this letter for you, Monsieur John."

"My sister has gone out, then?"

"Yes, sir. She left at daybreak with Oliver. He had a traveling-case on his shoulder."

"My sister has left us!" stammered John, in amazement. Then he hastily broke the envelope he had just received from Gertrude, and read as follows:

> Adieu, brother! Embrace your wife tenderly for me.
>
> I have taken Oliver away. I may not at present let you into my plans; but of one thing be assured, the solution is honorable for all. I am and shall remain worthy of your esteem and affection. Do not seek for the present to fathom what has become of me, and have no uneasiness over my fate. You shall receive a letter from me every week, until the day, close at hand, it may be, or perhaps far away, when I can return to you, dear brother, dear sister, never to leave you again.
>
> While awaiting that day so much to be desired, continue, both of you, to love me—for never shall I have so much needed your affection.
>
> VICTORIA.

CHAPTER XXV.

ROYALIST BARBARITIES.

The following extracts from my diary will help to trace the course of the important political events occurring in Paris between the 31st of May and the 1st of November, 1793.

JUNE 5, 1793.—Rejoice in the day of the 31st of May, sons of Joel. It means safety for the Republic, certain triumph for the Revolution. Aroused as one body, the population of Paris, embracing more than a hundred and twenty thousand citizens in arms, has succeeded in securing, solely by the moral pressure of its patriotism, the suspension of the Girondin Representatives. The greater part of these went into voluntary exile. The people of Paris remained under arms for five whole days—from May 31 to June 4.

JUNE 6, 1793.—A singular chance placed in my hands to-day a note written by Robespierre. I hastened to take a copy, as it was of the greatest interest. It sums up in a few firm and concise lines the policy which he purposes henceforth to impress upon the Jacobin party, which, since the 31st of May, is master of power:

> There must be one will.
>
> It must be Republican.
>
> In order that it may be Republican, there must be Republican ministers, Republican journals, Republican deputies, a Republican government. The Republic can not establish itself save with honest and Republican officials.
>
> The foreign war is a deadly scourge so long as the body politic is suffering from the convulsions of revolution, and from divided counsels. The present insurrection must be sustained until the proper measures be taken to save the Republic. The people must rally to the Convention, and the Convention must serve the will of the people. The insurrection must extend further and further, on the same plan; the sans-culottes must be paid and remain in the cities. They must be furnished with arms, encouraged, and enlightened.

JUNE 7, 1793.—I received this day a letter from Victoria, in fulfilment of her promise to write me each week. Not to mention the profound grief her absence caused us, our uneasiness over her was extreme, in spite of the assurances she gave us in her farewell letter. She now informed me that Oliver's health was improving, and that his spirits were returning. She did not despair of bringing him back to reason and the practice of his civic duties. She was living, she told me, at some distance from the capital; and she could not yet disclose to us the mainsprings of her mysterious conduct, and the reticence of her correspondence.

JUNE 10, 1793.—The majority of the Convention has just made recognition of the value of the passive insurrection of May 31, by adopting the appended resolution:

> The National Convention declares that in the days of May 31 to June 4 the general revolutionary council of the Commune and the people of Paris powerfully co-operated to save the liberty, the unity and the indivisibility of the Republic.

JULY 12, 1793.—Upon a report from the committee rendered by St. Just, the Girondin members of the Convention were on the 10th of July declared traitors to the country, and outlawed. Several other adherents of that party were sent before the revolutionary tribunal.

JULY 19, 1793.—Last Saturday, July 13, Marat was assassinated, between seven and eight in the evening. His assailant was Marie Anne Charlotte Corday D'Armans, the daughter of an ex-nobleman, whose usual abode was Caen, one of those hot-beds of federal insurrection fomented by the Girondins. Simulating the role of a victim who besought assistance and protection from the Friend of the People, Charlotte Corday solicited an interview with him. Worn out and unwell, Marat was taking a bath, but yielding to compassion for the young girl who implored his aid, he consented to receive her. Introduced into his presence, Charlotte Corday struck him with a knife. He died almost instantly. I record this new assassination as an abominable crime! The beauty, the youth, the resolute character of Charlotte Corday in no wise lessen her guilt. It is vain to compare her with Brutus. He struck down Caesar, the undoubted tyrant of his country, whereas the patriotism of Marat, the Friend of the People, had never been called into question. Taken to-day before the revolutionary court presided over by Fouquier-Tinville, the accused woman confessed her connection with the Girondin party, of which she plainly was the instrument. She prided herself on having dealt Marat his death blow, the condign punishment, she said, for his crimes. Unanimously condemned by the jury to death, Charlotte Corday suffered on the scaffold the penalty for homicide.

The universal consternation of the patriots as they learned of the murder of the Friend of the People was an additional proof of the immense influence exercised by this extraordinary man over their heads and hearts. All over Paris these verses were placarded:

> People, Marat is dead, the lover of the land;
> Your friend, your aid, the hope of all who would be free
> Is fallen 'neath the blow of an accursed band;
> Weep—but remember, avenged must he be!

This morning I received a letter from Victoria. She informs me that Oliver's health is being restored, and that he soon will prove to me that my affection for him was not misplaced. In a few lines in his own hand at the end of Victoria's letter, Oliver himself repeated the same pledges. What is her project? I know not. She has at least saved the unhappy boy from suicide.

JULY 30, 1793.—The royalist and "federalist" insurrection of Lyons, Marseilles, Toulon and Bordeaux against the Republic and the Convention has assumed a more threatening aspect through the war that broke out in the Vendee, and which is spreading amid scenes of ungovernable ferocity. Read, sons of Joel, and shudder at the atrocious reprisals, the nameless horrors, committed by the Vendeans under the leadership of their priests and the ex-nobles. If the law of retaliation, that savage and barbarous law, is ever applied to the Chouans and Vendeans by the avengers of the patriots, let the responsibility fall upon the heads of these madmen themselves.

The brigands of the Vendee themselves gave the signal and set the example for murder and massacre. Machecoul was the theater of scenes of horror. Eight hundred patriots were hatcheted to pieces. Several were buried alive. The women were forced to witness the torture of their husbands; then, together with their children, they were spiked hand and foot to the doors of their dwellings, where they expired under the blows and stabs of the assassins. The parish curate, who had taken the oath to the Constitution, was impaled on a spit, and marched through the streets and public places of Machecoul with his genitals cut off. Finally, still breathing, he was nailed to the liberty tree. A Vendean priest celebrated the mass standing in blood and upon mutilated corpses. In the swamps of Niort six hundred children of Nantes were rounded up, massacred, and atrociously mutilated. At Chollet the brigands repeated the frightful scenes of Machecoul. They put the patriots through the most terrible tortures before depriving them of their lives. There, also, they nailed the women and children alive to their house-doors, and made their bosoms a target for their bayonets. They put to the torture everywhere those patriots whom they found, or persons who would not bear arms against the Republic. When they captured Saumur, all who bore the reputation of patriot perished amid indescribable tortures. The women, their children in their arms, were thrown from the windows, and the tigers in the streets poniarded them. The agonies which they made our brave defenders undergo were no less cruel; the least barbarous was to slay them with ball or bayonet; but the most common was to hang them feet uppermost from trees and kindle bonfires under their heads; or to nail them alive to the trees; or to place cartridges in their mouths or nostrils and explode them. It is impossible to take a step in the Vendee without opening new perspectives of torture to the eye. Here, at the entrance of one village, are exposed to our view brave defenders of the Republic hewed to pieces or spiked to the doors of their dwellings. There, the fringe of trees at the edge of a wood displays to us the disfigured forms of our brave brothers hanged from the branches, their bodies half burned. Yonder, we discern their lifeless corpses bound, nailed to trees, to pieces of timber, mutilated, riddled with wounds, their faces burned and baked. Nor did the brigands confine themselves to these inhuman tortures. They filled their country ovens with our defenders, kindled the fires, and left them to expire slowly in this atrocious agony. Recently these cannibals have invented a new manner of torture; they cut off the noses, hands and feet of their prisoners, shut them in their dark caves, and abandon them to perish of hunger.

The distinguished patriot Chalier, at the head of a list of eighty-three, was led to the scaffold at Lyons. The instrument worked poorly. Chalier was twice mutilated. The cruelties of the royalists and parishioners of Lyons will call down great calamities upon the city.

AUGUST 2, 1793.—Often did my sister and I wonder at receiving no news from Prince Franz of Gerolstein, our relative, and one of the most ardent of the Illuminati. The secret of Franz's silence has just been revealed to me. An officer of the garrison of Mayence, long a prisoner in the duchy of Deux Ponts, adjoining the principality of Gerolstein, informed me to-day that for four years, the length of time since Franz left us, the latter was held in a state prison by order of his father, the reigning prince. So did Franz of Gerolstein expiate in harsh captivity his sympathy with the new ideas.

AUGUST 4, 1793.—The Convention passed yesterday a decree of marked Socialist and revolutionary character:

> The National Convention, in consideration of the evils which monopolists inflict upon society by their murderous speculations in the most pressing necessaries of life and upon the public misery, decrees:
>
> Article 1.—Monopoly is a capital crime....
>
> Article 8.—Eight days from the publication and proclamation of the present law, those who have not made the prescribed declarations shall be held to be monopolists, and, as such, be punished with death; their goods shall be confiscate, and also the merchandise and food-stuffs seized in their possession.

AUGUST 7, 1793.—The law against monopolies has had its effect upon the produce and stock jobbers. All food-stuffs have fallen considerably in price.

With redoubled energy the Convention is turning its attention to the dangers which threaten the Republic. News is brought that among the Vendeans have been uncovered the widow of Louis Capet, a large number of non-juring priests, and several imprisoned ex-nobles. The following decrees are passed:

> The National Assembly denounces, in the name of the outraged humanity of all nations, and even of the English people, the cowardly, perfidious and atrocious conduct of the British government, which is instigating and paying for the employment of assassination, poison, arson, and every imaginable crime, for the triumph of tyranny and the annihilation of the rights of man.

Marie Antoinette is taken before the tribunal extraordinary. From there she is at once transferred to the Conciergerie Prison:

> All the individuals of the Capet family are to be deported outside of the territory of the Republic, with the exception of the two children of Louis Capet and those members of the family who are under the sword of the law. Elizabeth Capet may not be deported until after the trial of Marie Antoinette.

Also:

> The tombs and mausoleums of the old Kings, erected in the Church of St. Denis, in the temples, and in other places throughout the whole extent of the Republic, shall be destroyed on the 10th of August next, and their ashes thrown to the winds.

AUGUST 8, 1793.—Up to date Victoria, true to her promise, has written me regularly every week in her own name and that of Oliver. He, she says, is treading with firm step the path of duty. My sister raises not the veil of mystery in which she has enshrouded herself since she quit our house. She announces that she is going to suspend her correspondence, but that if anything untoward intervenes she will inform me of it at once.

AUGUST 23, 1793.—Allied Europe is increasing the masses of troops she is hurling on our frontiers, here menaced, there already invaded. O Fatherland! you appeal to the heroism of your children; your call shall be heard. The Committee of Public Safety, among whose most influential members are Robespierre, St. Just and Couthon, increases its vigilance. The Convention passes decree upon decree, brief, pointed, courageous, like the roll of the drum beating the charge:

> The National Convention, having heard the report of its Committee of Public Safety, decrees:
>
> Article 1.—Until the moment when the foreign hordes and all the enemies of the Republic shall have been driven out of the land, all French people are under permanent requisition for the service of the armies.
>
> The young men shall go to the front; the married men shall forge arms and transfer supplies; the women shall make tents and uniforms, and serve in the hospitals; the children shall pull lint, and the old men shall betake themselves to the public places to kindle the courage of the warriors, keep alive hatred for Kings, and promote the unity of the Republic.

The French people will soon present to the tyrants a united front. The effect produced to-day by the latest decrees of the Convention was immense, indescribable. Thanks to God! the consignment of arms I was charged with making will be finished in a few days. I will be able to rejoin the army. Castillon and I have enrolled in one of the battalions of our Parisian volunteers.

SEPTEMBER 18, 1793.—Since the commencement of this month, Terror is the order of the day. Terror reigns; but to whom impute this fatal necessity, if not to the enemies of the fatherland? The Republic struck only after she had been outraged; she attacked not, she but defended. She obeyed the supreme law of self-preservation, the common right of an individual and a body social. The Terror is reducing our enemies within to impotence.

OCTOBER 17, 1793.—Yesterday the revolutionary tribunal sentenced Marie Antoinette to death, in these words:

> The court, in accord with the unanimous verdict of the jury, in accordance with its right as public investigator and accuser, and in conformity with the laws which it has cited, condemns the said Marie Antoinette, of Lorraine in Austria, widow of Louis Capet, to the penalty of death. It declares, conformably to the law of the 10th of March last, that her goods, if any she have within the confines of French territory, be confiscate to the benefit of the nation. It orders that, at the request of the public ministry, the present sentence be executed upon the Place of the Revolution, and printed and posted throughout the Republic.

Throughout her trial Marie Antoinette maintained an air of calmness and assurance. She left the audience chamber after the pronouncement of sentence without evincing the slightest emotion, or uttering a word to judges or jurors. She mounted the scaffold at half past four in the morning. Only a few spectators were present.

OCTOBER 18, 1793.—The Convention has superseded the old calendar with a new one, based on the observations of exact science. The new names for the months are as poetic, harmonious, and above all as rational, as the old ones were barbarous and senseless, borrowed, as they were in part from the fetes and rulers of the Roman Empire, in part from a pagan theocracy. The decree of the Convention is as follows:

> Article 1.—The era of the French dates from the foundation of the Republic, which took place the 22nd of September, 1792, of the common era, on which day the sun arrived at the true autumnal equinox, and entered the sign Libra at nine hours, eighteen minutes, thirty seconds, Paris Observatory.
>
> Article 2.—The common year is abolished from civil usage.
>
> Article 3.—Each year commences at midnight of the day on which falls the true autumnal equinox, for the Observatory of Paris....
>
> Article 7.—The year is divided into twelve equal months of thirty days each. After the twelve months follow five days to complete the ordinary year. These five days belong to no month.
>
> Article 8.—Each month in divided into three equal parts of ten days each, which are called decades.
>
> Article 9.—The names of the days of the decade are: Primidi, Duodi, Tridi, Quartidi, Quintidi, Sextidi, Septidi, Octidi, Nonidi, Decadi.
>
> The names of the months are,
>
> For Autumn:
>
> Vendemiaire (the Vintage month, September 22 to October 21), Brumaire (the Foggy month, October 22 to November

20), Frimaire (the Frosty month, November 21 to December 20).

For Winter:

Nivose (the Snowy month, December 21 to January 19), Pluviose (the Rainy month, January 20 to February 18), Ventose (the Windy month, February 19 to March 20).

For Spring:

Germinal (the Budding month, March 21 to April 19), Floreal (the Flowery month, April 20 to May 19), Prairial (the Pasture month, May 20 to June 18).

For Summer:

Messidor (the Harvest month, June 19 to July 18), Thermidor (the Hot month, July 19 to August 17), Fructidor (the Fruit month, August 18 to September 16).[13]

12th BRUMAIRE, YEAR II (November 2, 1793).—The detail of arms is completed, and Castillon and I leave day after to-morrow to join at Lille the Seventh Battalion, Paris Volunteers.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A REVOLUTIONARY OUTPOST.

On the 5th Nivose of the year II (December 25, 1793), an advance post of the main body of the Army of the Republic lay in military occupancy of an isolated tavern some quarter of a league's distance from Ingelsheim, a French burg about twelve leagues from Strasburg. Hoche and Pichegru, the Generals of the detachments called "of the Rhine and Moselle," had removed their headquarters to Ingelsheim, after several advantages gained over Marshal Wurmser, the Duke of Brunswick and the Prince of Condé. The republican troops were bivouacked about the city. The light of their campfires struggled with difficulty through the mists of a black winter's night. A line of scouts and pickets covered the position of the post, which was composed of a company of the Seventh Battalion, Paris Volunteers, among whom were John Lebrenn and his foreman Castillon.

The company was gathered in the large hall of the inn, and in the kitchen, where blazed a great fire. The greater part of the men, worn out with fatigue, sought repose on beds of fresh straw laid along the walls, making shift to use their knapsacks as pillows. Others furbished their arms, or blacked their cartridge-boxes; still others were mending their dilapidated garments or exercising their wits to cobble their shoes into a semblance of serviceableness; for neither the stores of the army nor draughts on nature sufficed to clothe and shoe all the citizens called to the flag in the last levies, or to replenish their wardrobes against the havocs of war. Few, indeed, of the volunteers, wore the complete uniform decreed by the Convention and which was already covered with the glory of so many victories. This consisted of a coat of deep blue, with facings and trimmings of red, and large white lapels, which left displayed the vest of white cloth, like the trousers; black knit leggins, with leather buttons, reaching to the knee; a flat three-cornered hat, surmounted with a plume of red horse-hair, falling beside the cockade; and a knapsack of white calf or buffalo-skin. Only the most recent recruits to the battalion were dressed correctly in accord with the decree.

The company was in command of a captain named Martin, a pupil of the painter David, the Convention member. Martin had enrolled after the days of September and at once left for the front. He had already advanced through all the elective ranks. Twice wounded, full of bravery and dash, and knowing how to win obedience in the moment of action, Captain Martin showed himself always jovial, open, and engaging in his relations with the volunteers. Although he had now followed war for fifteen months, David's young pupil did not renounce his former profession. He only awaited peace to lay down his sword, take up his brushes, and attempt to open a new field in his art by depicting the battles of the Revolution, and episodes of camp life. Seated at one corner of a table that was lighted by an iron lamp, Captain Martin was even now amusing himself with sketching, in a little pocket sketch-book, the figure, at once pitiable and grotesque, of the frightened innkeeper. Although a native of Alsace, the latter spoke an unintelligible dialect, and understood no French. Castillon, who was addressing him, indicated with a gesture a young volunteer in spick-and-span new uniform, scrupulously combed and shaven, and altogether looking, as they say, as if he had stepped out of a band-box, and explained:

"This citizen asks for twenty bottles of Moselle wine, to be paid for, of course. Isn't what I'm saying to you clear enough—barbarian!"

To which the innkeeper, multiplying his manifestations of distress, replied in an agonizing jargon.

"But, Gott's t'under, ve vant vine! Ve temant vine of you!" retorted Castillon impatiently, assuming a German patois in the hope of making himself understood.

It was Captain Martin who cut the gordian knot and ended the already too-long debate. Hastily outlining in his sketch-book a bottle and a glass, he waved the drawing under mine host's eyes together with an assignat[14] which he drew from his pocket. The Alsatian gave a sigh of relief, motioned that he at last comprehended, and was about to scamper off to his cellar when the captain held him back, and, to prevent any further misunderstanding, drew the figure 20 underneath the picture of the bottle. To this new intelligence the tavernkeeper responded with uncouth contortions of delight, and a formidable "Yah!"

"The animal!" exclaimed Castillon, shrugging his shoulders, "why couldn't he answer like that right off!" And addressing himself to the new recruit: "If our innkeeper weren't such a booby, we would have been able to drink your welcome to the battalion half an hour ago, Citizen Duresnel."

"True; but then we would have already drunk it, while now we have still in store the pleasure of putting it down," replied Duresnel thickly, as if he had a hot potato in his mouth, and dropping all his r's like one who had never seen Paris.

"Ho, ho! You come in time, comrade," replied a volunteer banteringly. "We're going to have a fight to-morrow, you'll see what it is to go under fire. We'll have a brush of it!"

"That's what I came for," Duresnel made answer in his muffled voice; "only—and you will laugh at me, citizens—I confess to you—never having smelled gunpowder, I am afraid—"

"Which? What?" cried the troop in chorus, greatly amused at the babyishness of the young Parisian. "What are you afraid of? Come, comrade, explain yourself."

"Damn! citizens—I am afraid—of being afraid!"

The answer provoked an explosion of hilarity. Without being in the least put out of countenance, Duresnel added: "Yes, wo'd of honor, citizens; never having been in action, and not knowing what effect it will have upon me, I am afraid of being afraid. That's very simple."

"Bravo, comrade," interjected Captain Martin, "it is not always those who make a flourish of their swords in advance who prove the most heady. Your modesty is a good omen; in consequence of which I wager that to-morrow you will take your baptism of fire bravely, with a cry of Long live the Republic! Just have a little confidence in yourself."

"You're a good fellow, captain; I shall do my best. For, wo'd of honor, it would be disagreeable to me to know that I am a coward, after having posted from Paris to join the battalion."

"You came by post?" exclaimed Castillon. "You must have been in a hurry to get here!"

"Surely; I had already lost so much time. First I was at the quarters of the battalion in the barracks of Picpus, where I learned a little of the drill, after which I took a stage coach to reach Strasburg. Then, taking advantage of the escort which accompanied Representatives St. Just and Lebas to Ingelsheim, I rejoined the battalion, and here I am."

"A beaker of Moselle will give you courage, comrade," said Captain Martin, full of interest in the young man; and seeing at that moment the host return with two baskets bursting with bottles: "Come, friends, let us drink a welcome to Citizen Duresnel. Drink, comrades, to the extermination of Kings, priests, Jesuits, and aristocrats."

"Thanks, captain, I drink nothing but water;" and seeing on the sideboard a water-jug, Duresnel poured himself out a glassful. Then raising his bumper, he replied: "To the health of my brave companions of the Seventh Battalion, Volunteers of Paris! To the extermination of all monarchs! To the lamp-post with the aristocrats!—Captain," continued Duresnel, "since you are my military superior, I have a favor to ask of you."

"Granted in advance, on one condition."

"And what's that, if you please, captain?"

"That you thee-and-thou us, myself and our comrades, as we thee-and-thou you. It is a mark of political fraternity."

"Very well, captain. Here, then, is the request I wish to make of you: I am now a soldier of the Army of the Rhine and Moselle. It seems to me I should take more pleasure of the business if I knew whereabouts we were in the war. Otherwise I should be like a man starting to read a story in the middle, and unable to understand a word, since he does not know the beginning."

"What you say is in point, comrade. I shall do the right thing by your request at one of our next watches."

At this moment the attention of the volunteers was drawn to a new personage who entered the inn-hall. This individual wore the uniform of a mounted cannonier, and the insignia of chief quartermaster. His dress, like that of the volunteers, bore many a patch. His face was of a strikingly martial cut, his long moustaches were covered with hoar-frost. On entering the room he delivered the military salute, and said briskly:

"Good even, citizens. Have you room for a moment at fire and lamplight for a mounted artilleryman of the Army of the Rhine?"

"By heaven, yes!" replied Castillon, stepping away from the fireplace to make room for the newcomer; then gazing at him curiously, he added: "But tell me, comrade, this doesn't seem to be the first time we two have met?"

"Quite likely not," replied the cannonier, in turn searching Castillon's features. "In fact, listen here, we met on an occasion which is, by heaven, difficult to forget—a meeting without its like!"

"Last year, on the second of September—"

"At the prison of La Force!"

"When we purged it of the priests, the holy shaven-pates, and the aristocrats."

"Comrade, you are James Duchemin," cried Captain Martin, seizing him by the hand. "I heard your name pronounced in the National Assembly along with the other names of those who had given themselves to the fatherland. I admire your devotion. You offered all you possessed—your life and your two horses."

"Ah, you were at the Assembly that day?"

"Aye, I came from the Abbey."

"Where you also did work?"

"A fatal and terrible necessity. I believed so then and think so still. Death to the aristocrats and priests! But how one does meet! Come, a glass of wine, my old friend."

"That is not to be refused, comrade. I am frozen numb," returned Duchemin; and added, in a tone of bitter recrimination, "That brigand of a Reddy!"

"Of what 'Reddy' do you speak, friend?"

"Oh, that is the name of one of the horses I gave to the country. We were enrolled, my two beasts and I, in '92, in the Second Battalion, Flying Artillery. But my other horse, my Double-grey, was missing from roll call after the battle of Watignies, because of a little impediment in the way of a four-pound cannon ball, which he received in the belly while one of the servants of my darling Carmagnole was riding him."

"What, you have a sweetheart whom you call Carmagnole? The idea is a droll one!"

"That is how I christened the four-pounder I had charge of in my battery. Ah, citizens," added Duchemin, in reply to the volunteers' mirth at his explanation, "if you only knew that beautiful little piece! Such an amorous little mouth—to spit fire and cannon balls at the nose of the Austro-Prussians and the other Ostrogoths."

"Come, come, old chap, do you take us for marines?" said Castillon, laughingly. "Do you want to give us the idea that pieces of artillery in general—and Carmagnole in particular—have characters!"

"Whether they have characters! Just ask your good cannoniers about that, you'll hear their answer. There are slatterns of pieces on whom you can never depend for a good shot. Whereas with Carmagnole—never a caprice. You train her so many lines' elevation—she'll fire just so high; so many lines' depression—she'll fire low. An angel of a spit-fire! A very love!"

"Comrades," chimed in Captain Martin gaily, "captivated by the character, the virtues and the bravery of Citizeness Carmagnole, I propose her health, and that of the brave artillerymen of the Army of the Rhine."

"To the health of Carmagnole! To the health of the artillerymen of the Rhine!" chorused the volunteers, draining their glasses with Duchemin. Touched by this proof of sympathy for his cannon and his brothers in arms, the latter in turn raised his own glass and cried:

"Thanks, comrades, thanks! I shall convey your good wishes to Carmagnole, and I can tell you that in to-morrow's battle we shall be neither slothful nor over-hot, but just right. Meanwhile, I drink in her name and mine: To the health of the brave men of the Army of the Moselle. To the relief of Landau! Long live the Republic! To the lamp-post with the aristocrats, the black-caps, and all the Jesuits!"

"We shall raise the siege of Landau, or die!" enthusiastically acclaimed the volunteers. "Long live the Republic!"

"Well, indeed, wo'd of honor, I don't believe I am going to have any fear at all to-morrow!" exclaimed Duresnel, electrified by the ardor of his comrades. "Long live the Republic! Death to the aristocrats and down with the skull caps!"

"Citizen Duresnel," replied Captain Martin, smiling, "you will see that it is not such a devil of an undertaking to go under fire the first time, surrounded by gallant comrades."

"Faith, captain, I begin to believe it," replied Duresnel, while Castillon said, addressing Duchemin:

"See there, old fellow, your love for Carmagnole has interfered with your telling us your troubles with your horse, that brigand Reddy, formerly so patriotic a fellow, as you told us, and whom you suspect of having been bought over by a peck of oats given him by an agent of Pitt and Coburg."

"Well, comrades, to return to Reddy, yes, I say that dumb animal is a patriot at heart. Judge for yourselves: Lately, at the affair of Kaiserslautern, we were tearing along at a gallop with one wing of my battery, to take up our position. I was helping along with the flat of my saber two wretches of drivers who had charge of the team of six that drew Carmagnole, and who looked out of sorts at going into action. Suddenly a squadron of Prussian Uhlans, until then hidden by a rise in the ground, broke cover and charged upon us. We were supported by a squad of the famous Third Hussars. We met at full tilt. But right in the middle of the embroglio my brave Reddy seized the horse of a Uhlan by the mane. Reddy did not let go his hold—he lost his footing in the crush—he fell, and me with him. There I was, pinned under him; but thanks to the intervention of the famous pair of the Third Hussars, I was able to escape. This was the first time I saw those two inseparables of the Army of the Rhine, Victor and Oliver, two heroic fellows!"

"These two cavalrymen are called, you say, Oliver and Victor?" and Castillon continued thoughtfully to himself. "A singular idea those two names suggest. What if the gallant pair should be our apprentice and our master's sister! Despite the strangeness of the disguise, it is said there are in the army many patriotic women who enrolled to follow their lovers to the war—"

While Castillon was thus reflecting, the report of a firearm rang out about a hundred paces from the inn. One of the pickets had fired. Captain Martin at once spoke to an under-officer:

"Sergeant, take four men and go see what is up out there. It must be comrade Lebrenn who fired that shot."

"Perhaps he got a bead on some spy within the lines," suggested Duchemin, as the sergeant hastened out with his guard.

The incident, however, passed almost unnoticed by Castillon, who, preoccupied with his own thoughts concerning the "pair" in the Third Hussars approached Duchemin and asked:

"Comrade, did you ever see the two brave cavalrymen you spoke of, again?"

"Yes, often. After Kaiserslautern our battery was attached to their division."

"How old would you say Oliver was?"

"He is eighteen or so; black haired, with blue eyes. He is a fine looking hussar; but in respect of beauty, his companion takes the shine out of him."

"Victor is also a pretty boy, then?"

"He is too good looking for a man. What an air of authority! What an eye of fire!"

"No more doubt of it," murmured Castillon to himself. "It is Citizeness Victoria and Oliver, who have joined the hussars!"

At this moment the sergeant and his squad returned, minus one man who had relieved John Lebrenn at his post. A man and a boy of ten or eleven, dressed as Alsatian peasants, were marched in by the volunteers.

The two seemed perfectly calm as they entered the inn-hall. They did not even shudder when John Lebrenn announced:

"Captain, I think we have laid our hands on a couple of spies."

"And how did they fall into our picket lines, comrade Lebrenn?" asked Captain Martin.

"I had posted my sentries, captain. The mist was so thick I could not see the lights of the inn from my position. The ground, hardened by the frost, carried sounds clearly. All at once I heard at some distance the steps of men coming almost directly at me. I could distinguish also that they wore wooden shoes. I could see nothing, but I cried: 'Halt! Who goes there?' At the challenge the two individuals attempted to flee, but they failed to perceive a patch of ice, on which their wooden shoes slipped. The noise of their fall reached me distinctly. I fired my gun to give the alarm, and plunged in their direction. I reached the pair just as they regained their feet. I grabbed the man by his collar, the boy by his frock. They tried at first to break away, but soon realizing that I had a tough grip, they offered no further resistance. The man addressed me in some unintelligible jargon. Then my comrades ran up, and we bring you the catch."

"You young brigand, you are swallowing a paper!" cried Captain Martin, rushing, but too late, upon little Rodin; for he it was, unrecognized by John Lebrenn as the latter had seen him but once before, and briefly, the day of the taking of the Bastille, when the vicious youngster had attempted to make away with the annals of the Lebrenn family. Needless to say, the man accompanying him, and also unknown to the company of volunteers, was his "sweet" god-father, his "gentle" god-father, his "dear" god-father Abbot Morlet. The wretched youngster had just the minute before quickly carried to his mouth one of his hands, which he had up till then held hidden beneath his coat.

"Search the knaves!" ordered Captain Martin. And quickly raising little Rodin's blouse, he saw that the young one held his left hand tightly shut. The captain pried it open, and some fragments of torn paper fell to the floor. John Lebrenn and Castillon discovered nothing upon the reverend Father Morlet. Carefully the captain pieced together the scraps of paper he had gotten from the Jesuit's god-son, but found nothing but figures. After a moment's examination he cried:

"No doubt of it! The man and his brat are emissaries of the enemy. The letter of which they were the bearers is in cipher, except two names which I find in the fragments—Condé, and then another of which some letters seem to be missing;" and drawing nearer to the lamp, Captain Martin added, "It is something like Plouar—Plouer—"

"Plouernel! without a doubt!" exclaimed John Lebrenn. "This ex-Count of Plouernel, former colonel in the French Guards, was aide-de-camp to the Duke of Brunswick, and must now be serving in the Emigrant ranks of the Prince of Condé."

"Which is all the more probable since the corps of ex-nobles forms part of Wurmser's army which is to attack us at daybreak," replied Captain Martin, while John Lebrenn muttered to himself: "To-morrow, perhaps, I shall find myself again face to face, arms in hand, with that descendant of the Nerowegs whose life I saved last year."

"Your account will not take long to settle, you old rascal," said Captain Martin to the Jesuit, gathering together the pieces of the despatch. "You will be conducted to headquarters and simply shot as a spy, after an examination by way of preface, of course. All the forms will be followed!"

The Jesuit, unmoved, seemed not to hear the captain's words, and made answer in a lingo invented by him for the occasion:

"*Rama o schlick!*"

"Yes, yes, *Rama o schlick*! It is clear as day. Yes, you will be hanged!" replied Captain Martin imperturbably. Then he said to little Rodin, who stood no less stolid than his good god-father: "You commence your pretty trade quite young, you little scoundrel, you brigandette. Your audacity, your presence of mind don't seem to fail you in the least. No doubt they charged you with the despatch in the hope that even if arrested you would not be suspected of carrying it. You are too young to be shot, but we will first give your trousers a good dusting and then send you to a house of correction."

During this speech little Rodin showed himself the worthy pupil of his god-father and master. He did not wink an eyelid, although he kept his snaky optics fixed on the captain. Then, beating his chest with one hand with an air of compunction, he carried the other to each ear in turn and to his mouth, as a pantomimic indication that he was deaf

and dumb.

"So, poor lad, you are deaf and dumb?" said the captain. "In that case you are free. Get out. May the devil take you."

But little Rodin remained motionless, not seeming to have heard. Instead, he made a new sign that he could neither hear nor speak, and heaved a most lamentable sigh. The sigh, the motions and the face of the boy were stamped with such an air of sincerity that Captain Martin and the brave volunteers who witnessed the scene began to believe that the Jesuit's god-son had indeed the use of neither faculty.

The captain continued: "If this little beggar is, indeed, as he seems to be, a deaf-mute, we shall send him to Abbot Sicard. He will have a splendid pupil!" Then, turning to the Jesuit: "But you, old rogue, who are neither dumb nor deaf, you shall be recompensed as you deserve! Come, off to headquarters!"

"*Mira ta bi lou!*" replied the Jesuit, simulating the impatience of a man tired of listening to gibberish.

"I understand perfectly," the captain said. "Be easy, you shall be well hanged." He thereupon turned to John Lebrenn, saying, "You, comrade, will take the prisoners to headquarters, and transmit these shreds of paper to the staff-officer to whom you give the account of your capture. One or two volunteers will accompany you to keep watch on the two rascals."

"Do not weaken your post, Citizen Captain," said Duchemin. "On my way back to my battery I shall accompany my comrade as far as the General's quarters."

Then John Lebrenn, noticing for the first time the cannonier whose patriotism had so strongly touched him a year before, cried out: "Citizen James Duchemin!"

"Present, comrade! But how the deuce did you know me?"

"I'll tell you on our way to the General's," replied John. And soon, taking the Jesuit by the collar while Duchemin seized little Rodin firmly by the hand, the volunteer and the artilleryman left the inn and set out towards the burg of Ingelsheim.

"The capture of the two spies prevented me from acquainting friend John with what I have discovered as to Citizeness Victoria and our apprentice Oliver," thought Castillon that night as he stretched himself out to rest on his pallet of straw. "Well, the confidence will come a little later!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE HEROINE IN ARMS.

The headquarters of General Hoche were established in the Commune Hall of the burg of Ingelsheim; soldiers and under-officers of various corps of the army, detailed as orderlies, awaited the commands of the General in a sort of vestibule leading to the room in which Hoche himself, together with his fellow-General Pichegru and their aides-de-camp, were in conference with St. Just, Lebas, Randon and Lacost, the Representatives of the people sent on special mission from the Convention to the Armies of the Rhine and Moselle. Among the various troopers seated about on the benches, and for the most part sleeping, overcome by the fatigues of the day, were two, a cavalryman and a quartermaster of the Third Hussars, who sat to one side of the folding door in earnest conversation. The manly beauty of one of them, his light brown complexion, the soft black down which shaded his upper lip, his thick eyelashes, his height, the squareness of his shoulders, and the fire and boldness of his glance, left no doubt but that it was Victoria, the missing sister of John Lebrenn. Her companion, who could be none other than the apprentice Oliver, seemed transfigured. His radiant youthful features now shone with hope and martial ardor. His large brilliant blue eyes seemed to mirror dazzling visions. One would have said it was Mars himself in the uniform of a hussar.

"With what impatience I await the morrow," he was saying to Victoria. "Here in my heart I feel that I shall either be killed or named sub-lieutenant on the field of battle. Hoche, our General-in-chief, was sub-lieutenant at twenty-two; I shall be an officer at eighteen! What a future opens before me!"

Dreaming of his martial career, the young soldier gazed long and silently into the golden picture it held up before him. Victoria observed him closely. An inscrutable smile overspread her lips, when suddenly, recalled from his revery by the recollections of love, Oliver blushed and added: "If I am made an officer, perhaps you will at last think me worthy of you, Victoria! Oh! what happiness! To merit the supreme gifts of your tenderness, or to die before your eyes!"

"You yield yourself too readily to the intoxication of glory," said Victoria, gravely reproaching him.

"Is not the glory of arms the most sublime of all?"

"Oliver, woe to those who, loving arms merely as arms, glory as glory, give way to such enticements. Their reason becomes clouded, their spirit becomes unsteeled, their patriotism falters. They grow ready to sacrifice right, liberty, dignity for that glory whose brilliancy oft conceals so much of mere low ambition, of abject servility, of shameful appetites, and vain and childish selfishness. Military chiefs are nearly all contemptible men, even under the republican regime."

"Victoria, how severe you are!" replied Oliver, sorrowfully. "Have I really merited this reproach?"

"When St. Just and Lebas came here to hold council with the Generals over to-morrow's battle, I noticed your hesitancy in giving, as customary, the military salute."

"Yes, I felt extreme repugnance toward saluting a commissioner of the Convention to the armies, because these people are in no way military. If some day I become a general, I shall never consent to submit my plans of campaign to a Representative of the people. No authority should precede that of a general in his army. That authority should be single, absolute, obeyed without discussion; he should be responsible to none for his acts. His soldiers should hear but one voice: his; know but one power: his."

"That is the language held by Dumouriez the eve of the day on which he betrayed the Republic," answered Victoria bitterly. Just then John Lebrenn and Duchemin entered, bringing in their prisoners.

John did not see his sister sitting with Oliver beside the door. But the young woman, doubly surprised by meeting at once both her brother and the Jesuit Morlet, whom she immediately recognized through his rustic disguise, made at first a move to rush after John. But fearing lest he, unable to master his surprise, might compromise the secret of a transformation which she desired to guard, she checked herself, and whispered to Oliver, who was no less stupefied than she at the sight of his former master: "My brother has gone with that country fellow and the little boy into the room of the aides-de-camp. Go tell the cannonier Duchemin to meet me in the courtyard." Tossing her sword under her left arm with military ease, the young woman started for the door; and designating by a glance the other soldiers, she added, "I do not wish my first interview with my brother to take place before our comrades; his emotion would betray me."

"I obey, Victoria," sadly replied Oliver. "My surprise at meeting your brother in the army prevents me from asking you in what I deserve the cruel words you have but just addressed to me."

"My attachment for you, Oliver, compels me never to conceal the truth, harsh as it may be. That is the only means of forestalling results of which you perhaps have no premonition. We shall resume the conversation later," she added, as she left the vestibule, the pavement of which rang under her spurred boots.

The courtyard in front of the Commune Hall was a spacious one. On either side were ranged the horses of the couriers. The fog had lifted; the stars shone overhead. In the clear air of the crisp, cold night, Victoria soon beheld the artilleryman coming towards her. She advanced to meet him, saying: "I desired to speak to you, citizen, for the purpose of giving you some information upon that man and the young child whom you and a volunteer have just brought in as prisoners."

"They are two spies of Pitt and Coburg, who fell among our pickets and were arrested, only an hour ago, by one of our sentries, a Parisian."

"Is that Parisian named John Lebrenn?"

"What, do you know him, my brave hussar!" asked Duchemin.

"That I do. We are old friends. But here is my information: The man under arrest is a French priest, a Jesuit, an enemy of the Republic."

"A Jesuit! Ah, double brigand and black-cap! The gallows-bird!"

"His name is Abbot Morlet. It it urgent that you go at once and inform John Lebrenn of this circumstance; he no doubt will be a witness at the reverend's examination, which may even now be under way. The spy should be unmasked."

"The examiner will give the black-cap's tongue to the dogs if he answers in the gibberish he treated us to just now, in order to throw us off the scent."

"When he finds himself recognized, he will not be likely to persist in that ruse. Go, then, comrade, acquaint John Lebrenn with the fact that his prisoner is the Jesuit Morlet, whom he already knows by reputation. Then say to him that a trooper of the Third Hussars wishes to speak with him a moment, and awaits him here in the court."

"'Tis well. The two commissions will be fulfilled, as you request."

While awaiting her brother, Victoria paced thoughtfully up and down the courtyard. "Dear brother," she thought, "he has kept his promise. He would pay his debt of blood to the Republic, and here he is, a soldier. I can now unveil to him my mystery, and the object of my conduct in regard to Oliver."

Informed by Duchemin that a hussar of the Third wished to see him, John soon stepped out of the Commune Hall, and descrying a cavalryman of the designated regiment at some paces from the door, walked towards him, saying:

"Is it you, comrade, who sent me word by an under-officer of the artillery that you had something to say to me?"

"It is I," answered Victoria, taking two steps toward her brother. The latter, at first taken aback by surprise at hearing a voice which he believed he knew, now approached rapidly. Incapable of leaving him any longer in suspense, Victoria threw herself on the volunteer's neck, saying in a broken voice:

"Brother! Dear and tender brother! Pardon me the pain I have caused you!"

"All is forgotten now," murmured John, weeping with joy, and straining his sister to his breast. "At last I recover you, darling sister!"

"And soon, I hope, we shall be separated no more. My task draws to its close. And your worthy wife?"

"I heard from her only day before yesterday. She is well, and sustains my absence courageously. Ah, Charlotte is

doubly dear to me now—for she is about to be a mother."

"How happy she must be!"

"In the midst of all her happiness, she still thinks of you. There is not one of her letters in which she does not mention you, and wonder at the mystery which has enveloped you for so many months. Good heaven, to find you here in the army, in uniform. I know not whether I am awake or dreaming. I can hardly collect my thoughts." And then after a moment's silence, John resumed: "Your pardon, sister. I am now calmer. I now believe I can divine the cause which led you to emulate those many heroines who are enlisted against the enemies of the Republic. Oliver—doubtless—serves in the same regiment with you? You were anxious to continue directing him, watching over him?"

"Yes, brother mine; and already, by his bravery and aptitude in war he has scaled the lower rounds of the ladder. A brilliant future is unrolled before him."

"Sister—" began John with some hesitancy, "the result is beyond what we hoped—but—"

"At what price have I obtained it? is it not, John? I can read your thoughts. I have no cause to blush for the means I have employed. The day of his attempted suicide, Oliver pledged me, as you know, that he would not make a second attempt within twenty-four hours. Before daybreak I rapped at his door. He had not retired. His face was as ominous as the evening before. 'Oliver,' I said to him, 'let us go at once.' 'Where are we going?' 'You shall know. You have promised me to renounce till night-fall your projects of suicide. It matters little to you where you pass your last day, here or elsewhere. Come.' Oliver followed me. We went to Sceaux, where I had once before spent some time, hoping to find relief in solitude from my griefs. Perhaps you have forgotten that when the chateau of Sceaux became national property, our good old patriot porter in St. Honoré Street became, by your recommendation to Cambon, one of the guardians of the domain. The fine old man occupies with his wife the ground floor of a pavilion situated near one of the gates of the estate. The second floor is vacant, and it was there I dwelt during my former sojourn in the place. To this abode I conducted Oliver. I presented him to the keeper and his wife as one of our relatives who had been ordered to the country for his health; I was to stay to take care of him. The good people received us with joy. They fitted up, from the relics in the furniture repository of the old mansion, a room for Oliver, and took upon themselves the task of preparing our meals. I had in the neighborhood of six hundred livres, which I had saved. That sum would suffice for all our needs for quite a while.

"My arrangements with the keeper concluded," continued Victoria, "I led Oliver out into the park. We had left Paris before dawn. By the time we arrived at Sceaux, nature had donned all the fragrant beauty of new-born day. The May morning sun cast his first radiant beams over those enchanted vistas. We walked in silence over the velvety lawns, whose richness was reflected in the little ponds that dotted them. Here were vases and statues of marble niched in the green of the hedges; yonder spouting fountains surrounded by immense rose-bushes then in full bloom. Their scent filled the air. These details may seem childish, brother, but they were all important."

"I can well see it; you hoped to reattach the poor boy to life by displaying to him, in that fine spring morning, nature in her most smiling aspect."

"Such indeed was my purpose. I observed Oliver closely. His looks, at first lorn and somber, brightened little by little. He breathed in with wide nostrils the morning ambrosia of the woods, the fields and the flowers. He rapturously bent his ear to catch the chirping of the birds nested in the foliage. His glance lost its heaviness, and again glowed with youthful buoyancy. He took new hold of life while abandoning himself to the sweet sensations awakened in him by the contemplation of nature. I sought to stir the most sensitive and delicate chords of the boy's being. My friendliness tempered what had up till then been stern and parental in my relations with him; I spoke to him now more as sister than as mother.

"'It would be paradise upon earth to live here,' he said.

"'Then let us settle in the village, Oliver.'

"'What! You consent to share this solitude with me?'

"'Most assuredly. Indeed, it was even with that hope that I brought you here.'

"He beamed with happiness. But suddenly, his face clouding again, he asked me sadly 'what I would be to him.' 'Your sister,' I told him. But seeing him continue to lose the brightness he had just regained, I added gaily:

"'Yesterday, my friend, I would consent to be nothing more than mother to you. To-day I am willing to rejuvenate myself sufficiently to become your sister. Is not that great progress?'

"'So,' he cried in a transport, 'you give me leave to hope?'

"'I give you permission to hope for what I hope myself, Oliver: that one day I may feel for you a sentiment more tender than that of fraternity. But it depends upon you still more than on me.'

"'What must I do?'

"'Become a man, Oliver; a man of whom I can be proud.'

"Oliver at first gave himself up with joy to this hope; but soon he again asked, with a shade of suspicion in his voice, 'You will not make me any promises—are you thinking, then, of forsaking me?'

"'Not at all, Oliver; and moreover, here is what I propose. We shall remain in this charming retreat until you are completely recovered, then we shall join the army, and enroll in the same regiment.' And in answer to a gesture of stupefaction from Oliver, I added, 'Shall I, do you imagine, be the first woman who shares the perils of our soldiers, with her secret locked under her uniform? I wish to see you rise from rank to rank. Then will come the day, perhaps soon, when some brilliant deed will raise you to the height I dream of for you, and to our common hope. Now, Oliver, choose between suicide and the glorious future I present to you.'"

"All is now explained, worthy and great-hearted sister," exclaimed John Lebrenn.

"I am now happy to note that my influence over Oliver diminishes daily. His warlike ardor, the intoxication of his early successes, the activity of camp life—all, according to my calculation, have combined to overcome his passion. I foresaw that love would be fleeting in that warlike soul, I sought above all to snatch him from suicide, from failure. I wished by a vague hope to rekindle his dying courage, initiate him into the career of arms, which his nature called him to, and by watching over him like a mother and sharing his soldier's life, to preserve him from the pitfalls that destroy so many young men. I wished, in fine, to affirm him in the path of justice and virtue, to develop his civic character, and to render still more fervent his love for the fatherland and the Republic. Then, this self-imposed duty once fulfilled, I reserve the means of casting Oliver upon the destiny which the future seems to hold for him. Such was my project. In part it is realized. The young man's passion for war is now his only amour. Accordingly, I will soon be able to leave him."

At this point in their conversation the brother and sister saw Jesuit Morlet and little Rodin file out of the Commune Hall, escorted by several soldiers. One of these carried a lantern. The artilleryman Duchemin brought up the rear.

"Hey, comrade!" called John Lebrenn to the quartermaster, as he approached him, while Victoria remained behind, "I have something to ask you."

"Speak, citizen."

"Do you know what they have decided about this doubly-dangerous spy, this minion of the Society of Jesus?"

"According to what I just heard, the black-cap will be shot to-morrow morning. They are taking him to the quarters of the Grand Provost of the army, who has charge of the execution; and as my battery is established near the Provost's quarters, I am acting as conduct to the agent of Pitt and Coburg."

One of Hoche's aides-de-camp now stepped precipitately out of the Commune Hall, hastened across the court, and ran in the direction of the General's quarters. A company of grenadiers stationed there at once caught up their arms and fell in line, drum at the right, officers at the head, and soon the four Representatives of the people, St. Just and Lebas, commissioners in extraordinary from the Convention to Strasburg, and Lacoste and Randon, commissioners to the Army of the Rhine and Moselle, descended the steps of the Commune Hall, preceded by several officers furnished with lanterns, and followed by Generals Hoche and Pichegru, and the superior officers of the divisions. The Representatives of the people wore hats, one side of which, turned up, was surmounted with a tricolor plume; their uniform coats were blue, with large unbroidered lapels, and crossed with a scarf in the national colors; over their trousers, which were blue like their coats, they had on heavy spurred boots, and cavalry sabers hung by their sides. St. Just walked before the others. He was of almost the same age as Hoche, about twenty-four. The two conversed in low tones, some steps ahead of the other Generals and Representatives. The features and attitudes of Hoche and St. Just, as revealed by the light of the lanterns, contrasted sharply. The republican General, of robust stature and with a bluff countenance, intelligent and resolute, which a glorious scar rendered all the more martial, displayed an insistence almost supplicating, as he addressed St. Just. The latter, of only medium height, with a high and proud forehead, accorded to the pleadings of Hoche a silent attention. His pale and firm-set features, set off by his long straight hair, gave to the man an air of sculptured impassivity. His life, his feeling, seemed concentrated in his burning glances.

"Brother, do you remark Oliver's countenance?" said Victoria. "Pride possesses it. He seems to regard as acts of servility the marks of respect shown by the officers to the Representatives of the people."

"Oliver's expression is indeed significant," replied John.

"Halloa! Courier of the Third Hussars!" one of the under-officers cried at that moment from the doorway, holding up a sealed packet. "To horse! A despatch to carry to Sultz."

"Present!" called back Victoria; then she continued in a voice filled with emotion, as she held out her hand to John,

"Adieu, brother, till to-morrow. Perchance the order of battle or the fortunes of war will bring us near each other."

"I hope—and fear it, sister," answered John, his eyes moist with tears, lest this should be the last time he was to see Victoria. "You have shown yourself valiant, devoted and generous in your conduct towards Oliver. Till to-morrow."

"Adieu, brother!" And Victoria hastened to receive the despatch, while John returned to the bivouac of the Paris Volunteers.

The despatch which Victoria carried to Sultz had been written by Hoche that very evening, and addressed to Citizen Bouchotte, Minister of War. It read:

Ingelsheim, 6th Nivose, year II, 1 A. M.

I hasten to inform you, Citizen Minister, that the Representatives of the people have just placed me in command of the two armies of the Rhine and Moselle, to march to the succor of Landau.

No prayer or pleading on my part could change the resolution of the Representatives of the people. Judge me. With nothing but courage, how will I be able to carry such a burden? Nevertheless, I shall do my best in the service of the Republic.

Greetings and brotherhood,
HOCHE.[15]

This letter of Hoche's, in which the great captain reveals the modesty that in him equalled his military genius,

illustrates also his anxieties on the score of the responsibility which had just fallen upon him—anxieties his noble and touching expression of which was unable to shake the will of St. Just.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SERVING AND MIS-SERVING.

Jesuit Morlet and his god-son, little Rodin, had been taken in due course before the Provost, and the reverend fellow was now awaiting the hour of his execution, which was set for sun-up. The cord which bound his arms was fastened to a post of the cart-shed that served as shelter for the Grand Provost's mounted police; at the foot of the post the Jesuit lay huddled. Too case-hardened not to face death with a certain degree of calm, he said to his god-son:

"I have no chance of escaping death. I shall be shot at break of day. Here ends my career."

"You will soon be with the angels," dryly responded little Rodin, who now seemed strangely to have recovered both speech and hearing.

"Poor little one! My beloved son, you are, are you not, very sad at my approaching death?"

"You are an elect of the Lord, predestined to glory, and you will sit at His right side through eternity. *Hosannah in excelsis!* On the contrary, I rejoice in your martyrdom."

"So young, and already devoid of affection!" muttered the Jesuit to himself. "Are you not grieved at the idea of being left behind and forsaken by my death?"

"The Lord God will watch over His servant, as He watches over the birds of the air. He provides for all."

"Listen, dear child; when God has called me to Him, go you to Rome, to the General of the Order. God will perform the rest."

"I shall go to Rome; your recommendations will be precisely followed, dear god-father; I shall serve the holy cause of God."

As little Rodin concluded these words, a courier came up and said to the cavalryman on picket duty before the Jesuit and his god-son: "Comrade, can you show me to the quarters of Citizen General Donadieu? I have a message for him."

"You haven't far to go. Pass through the shed, turn to the right, and you will see another cavalry picket before the door of a house. There is where General Donadieu is quartered," replied the sentry, while the courier vanished in the direction indicated.

"Good god-father, General Donadieu is attached to this army! Good news for us!"

"But, dear god-son, how will the presence of this general serve us any?"

"Good god-father," replied young Rodin in a whisper, "if you wish it, you need not go to-day to visit the angels of the Lord. Think and decide whether you would rather go. I am here to obey you."

With a nod the Jesuit approved the advice of his god-son, and beckoning to the cavalryman, who approached them, he said: "Hey, sentry! Is it indeed decided that I be shot at daybreak?"

"In the shake of a lamb's tail. You won't have long to wait."

"Well, well! Since it must be so, I have decided to make revelations—very important ones."

"I shall call the brigadier and he will take you before the Provost."

"No, no. It is to a general that I wish to make my revelations. Let your chiefs know without delay."

"You hear that, brigadier!" commented the sentry to an under-officer who had come up. "The old rascal calls for a general to make revelations to!"

"I'll go see the Provost about it," said the brigadier. The few moments he was gone the Jesuit utilized to confer in whispers with his god-son. The brigadier quickly returned, went up to the post to which the reverend was tethered, and said to him:

"Off to General Donadieu. But look out for yourself if your confidences are a sham!" And seeing that little Rodin made ready to follow the prisoner, the soldier added: "Has this brat also revelations to make? Has he got anything to do with you?"

"The child will attest, by his tender candor, the sincerity of my communications, and will complete them in case of gaps in my memory."

General Donadieu, commandant of a brigade of light cavalry in the Army of the Rhine and Moselle, had just finished reading the order he had received, when one of his aides-de-camp informed him that a spy, condemned to be

shot at sunrise, asked for an audience to give him information of the utmost importance, but requested that the interview have no other witness than the child who would accompany him.

"I do not accept the scoundrel's proposal," replied the General to his aide-de-camp. "His condition is compromising. Send him in, and stay here yourself."

Accompanied by his god-son, the Jesuit appeared. Both were calm. The General looked the spy over from head to foot, and said to him sharply:

"You pretend to have important matters to disclose to me, which, you say, concern the army? I shall listen to you. But be brief. Do not abuse my patience."

"When we are alone," replied the Jesuit, glancing at the aide-de-camp. "Our interview must be in secret."

"My aide is my second self. He may hear all. Speak, then. Speak at once, or go to the devil!"

"I shall speak, then, General, since you command it. The day after the battle of Watignies a cavalry colonel in the republican army was taken prisoner. He was marched to headquarters—"

"Wait a moment!" cried General Donadieu, visibly troubled at these opening words of the Jesuit's. "You hope to obtain a suspension of sentence as the price of your revelations?"

"More than that. I must be set at liberty."

"I can grant you neither delay nor liberation without the authority of the Representatives of the people. Captain, find Citizen St. Just at once, and ask him whether I may suspend the execution of this man if his revelations seem worthy of it."

"At your orders, General," replied the aide, as he left the room.

The General, at last overcoming the uneasiness which the Jesuit's first words caused him, now resumed, haughtily:

"As you were saying, the day after the battle of Watignies a cavalry colonel—"

"General Donadieu," came imperiously from the Jesuit, "your moments are numbered. If, before your aide returns, you have not contrived a way to set me at liberty, you are lost. Think it over. A prisoner at the battle of Watignies, you were conducted by the Count of Plouernel before Monseigneur the Prince of Condé, who received you most flatteringly. You admitted to him that it was with regret that you served in an army so lacking in military pride as to submit to the yoke of the Representatives of the people. You added—still speaking, be it remembered, to the Prince of Condé—these words, literally: 'Monseigneur, my dignity as an officer is so outraged by subjection to the tyranny of these bourgeois pro-consuls, that, without the slightest scruple of conscience, I would offer you my sword and serve on your side.'"

"Ah, indeed? So I said that to the Prince of Condé, did I? And perhaps you have proofs of what you say?"

"The proofs are inscribed in a certain register kept in the Prince's staff headquarters. In that register are kept the names of all the officers in the republican army on whom, in case of need, the royalist party thinks it can call. The fact which concerns you was related to me by the Count of Plouernel, former colonel in the French Guards, who was present at your interview with Monseigneur the Prince of Condé; which interview was continued by his Most Serene Highness in these words: 'My dear colonel, remain in the republican army. You will there be able to serve the cause of our rightful King most efficaciously by spurring your regiment to rebel at the proper moment in the name of military honor, against these miserable bourgeois pro-consuls. Be sure, my dear colonel, that the day the good cause triumphs you will be rewarded as you deserve. Until then, keep snug behind your republican mask.' So," continued the Jesuit, "you have so well worn your mask that after being returned to the army in the exchange of prisoners, you were first promoted to the rank of Brigadier General, then to Division General—"

"Enough, stop," cut in Donadieu in a sardonic tone of complete reassurance. "What now is your project? You intend to make your disclosures to others besides me, if I do not at once enable you to escape?"

"Aye, General, that is my intention."

"There is only one obstacle—"

"And that is, General? Have the goodness to make it known to me. We will find a way around it."

"Eh!" replied Donadieu, moving towards the door, "It is that I shall call the mounted patrolman who brought you hither, order him to shoot you on the spot, and your secret dies with you. The solution is swift and simple."

"And St. Just, to whom you have just applied for permission to remit my sentence? You have forgotten that detail."

"I shall tell St. Just that your revelations were rubbish, and I let the execution take its course. St. Just is not the man to reproach me for hastening the death of a counter-revolutionist. So, then," continued General Donadieu, taking another step toward the door, "you will be shot at once. Our conversation in over."

"And me?" piped up little Rodin, who had so far kept himself motionless and silent in a dark corner of the room. "And me? They won't shoot me, I'm very sure. I am hardly eleven. So then, if you send my good god-father to the angels, I shall tell everyone what I have just seen and heard."

"Whence it follows, General," chimed in the reverend, "that you have no other safe course than to shut your eyes to our flight, and if you are wise, accompany us, and carry the plan of to-morrow's battle to the Austrian headquarters with you."

"This low window opens on the ground," volunteered Rodin, examining the casing. "We will be able to clear out through it, General, before your aide-de-camp comes back. The rest—God will care for."

"The light will help us to avoid your picket lines, among whom we fell last night," added the prelate, in turn approaching the window, whence he beheld the first grey streaks of dawn. Then to Donadieu, who stood paralyzed with fear, he added: "Come, General, loose me of my bonds. I must have this place far behind me when your aide returns."

"What shall I do?" stammered the bewildered General. "My aide will return with St. Just's orders. The prisoners' escape will be the end of me—I shall be suspected of having assisted in it—and suspicion is death!"

"Good god-father," cried Rodin, who had been ferreting around the room and had just opened a door leading into a neighboring apartment, "listen, the General does not wish to fly with us—he will let us escape. He will say to his aide-de-camp that while he was in the next room a minute or two, we profited by his momentary absence to cut the cords on your wrists and to vanish by yonder window."

"What presence of mind!" exclaimed the Jesuit; and, turning to the General, "My god-son is right. There is nothing else left for you to do. You will be accused of negligence; that is grave. But you will at least have a chance of averting suspicion."

"All the more, seeing that if the General had had the intention of letting us escape he would not have sent his aide to St. Just for orders," judicially added Rodin. "You have every chance not to be molested because of our escape, General. But if you have my god-father shot, I shall denounce you to St. Just."

This reasoning commanded prompt action. General Donadieu chose of the two evils the lesser. Hurriedly whipping off the prelate's bonds he said: "Fly, quick. You will find a clump of trees a hundred paces off, within our picket line. Hide there; and lie close till you hear the cannon, which will announce to you the battle is on. Then you will have nothing more to fear. Now go!" cried the General, flinging open the window, "Go, quickly!"

"I shall not prove an ingrate," promised the Jesuit as he passed towards the opening the other had made for him. "When I see the Prince of Condé, I shall report to him that he may always count on you."

The prelate's god-son slipped like a serpent through the window, and was gone. The Jesuit followed suit.

"Ah, well," said General Donadieu to himself. "If St. Just suspects me, over I go to the enemy. We soldiers know how to serve or mis-serve according as our interests or safety demand. If I carry the plans of the battle to the Austrians, I shall at least have saved my life and general's commission. Devil take the Republic!"

CHAPTER XXIX.

BATTLE OF THE LINES OF WEISSENBURG.

Towards eight o'clock on the morning of the 6th Nivose, year II (December 26, 1793), under cover of a thick fog, St. Just and Hoche began their advance. The two leaders walked their horses side by side, close behind a squad of cavalrymen detailed as scouts. A short distance to the rear of the Representative of the people and the Commander-in-chief followed a group of aides-de-camp and artillery officers.

Gradually, in the teeth of a stiff north wind, the fog began again to lift. The gallop of an approaching horse was heard, and one of Hoche's aides loomed out of the thinning haze, made straight for his commander-in-chief, and said, as he reined in his mount:

"Citizen General, our scouts just encountered a party of Uhlans. We charged them and reached the enemy's advance guard near enough to make out a considerable body of cavalry."

The north wind continued to blow, clearing away the mists, and soon, from the rising ground where they had taken their station, St. Just, Hoche, and their staff were able to sweep with their eye the field of the approaching battle. Before them, from northwest to southeast at the extreme edge of the horizon, stretched the regular outline of the "Lines" or entrenchments of Weissenburg, parallel to the course of the Lauter, a rapid river which served as moat to these fortified works. To the right, the now leafless fastnesses of the forest of Bienvalt, which also bordered on the Lauter over which the remnants of the fog still hung, reached away till they lost themselves in the distance toward Lauterburg, a town situated in one of the bends of the Rhine, now the headquarters of the army of Condé.

With his glass Hoche examined the position of the Austrian army, and said to St. Just:

"The Austrian general, as I foresaw, surprised by our march which has taken from him the offensive, has changed his plan of battle by making his infantry fall back half way upon the plateau of Geisberg. We must haste to profit by the hesitation into which this discreet retreat will have thrown the enemy." Then, addressing one of the artillery officers, Hoche added: "Citizen, order General Ferino to push out with the cavalry and flying artillery of his division. His cannoniers are to open fire upon the enemy's squadrons, and when they weaken, he is to send in his cavalry."

The officer left at a gallop to convey the order to Ferino, who commanded the advance guard. The republican army was drawn up in three columns, the cavalry on the right, the infantry in the center, and the artillery on the left, with the reserves, the supplies and the ambulances in second line. Suddenly a distant booming, deep and prolonged, resounded on the left, in the direction of Nothweiller, and Hoche exclaimed:

"The cannon! The cannon! Gonvion St. Cyr has followed my orders! He is pouring out of the valley of the Lauter

and attacking Brunswick's position. There are the Prussians engaged. They will hardly bring aid to the Austrians now! If Desaix has carried out his movement as well, and attacked Condé's body at Lauterburg, the Austrian army is thrown on its own resources. The Lines of Weissenburg are ours, and we shall raise the siege of Landau!"

At that moment General Ferino, in response to Hoche's orders, advanced at a rapid trot at the head of his cavalry and artillery. Beside the General rode Lebas, the Representative of the people on mission to the armies. Recognizing the importance of this first charge for the success of the day, he desired to assist Hoche, and to march in the front rank.

"On, my brave Ferino," called Hoche to the General as he swept by. "First shatter the Austrian cavalry with your cannon, and then—a taste of your saber for them!"

"Count on me, General. I'll send the white-cloaks to drink in the Lauter, whether they are thirsty or not," replied Ferino; and waving his sword he turned towards his cohorts and gave the cry:

"Forward, my children, forward! Long live the Republic!"

"Long live the Republic!" shouted back the cavalrymen, flashing their swords in the air as they thundered past Hoche. "Our comrades have retaken Toulon—we shall free Landau!"

"Soldiers," called Hoche, "show yourselves worthy of your past victories. The Republic counts on the Army of the Rhine and Moselle! To victory or death!"

The battle was on. General Ferino's artillery mowed down the Austrian cavalry, Wurmser's first line. Profiting by their disorder, gathering up his squadrons and hurling them with himself at their head upon the enemy, Ferino overthrew the forces which opposed him, and carried his mounted sabers right into the infantry squares of the second line. Then Hoche flung his attacking column upon Wurmser's center, while that general's left wing fell under the fire of several batteries of flying artillery. One of these batteries, consisting of six four-pounders, had taken position on an eminence where lay a solitary farmhouse. From this hillock it was possible to rake the Austrian's left flank from the rear. A squadron of the Third Hussars and two companies of the Seventh Battalion, Paris Volunteers, were detached to act as guard to this artillery. The captain of the battery, on reconnoitering his position, found that the farmhouse and its buildings occupied nearly the center of a mound about three hundred paces in diameter. Toward the enemy the hill presented a rapid rise of some thirty feet, while on the side of the republican army it was nearly level with the plain occupied by the reserves. A thicket of trees and live brush extended to the right and a little to the rear of the battery's position. The inhabitants of the place had fled with the opening of the engagement, carrying with them their cattle and all their more valuable belongings. One by one the iron spit-fires arrived to take their position in the battery, the first to appear being Carmagnole, the sweetheart of quartermaster Duchemin. This piece, by the almost grotesque cut of its furniture, presented a curious example of the oddity of artillery carriages in those days.

The team drew up with a half-turn, Duchemin and his eight assistants leaped to the ground, and confided their horses to the two artillerymen charged with their care. The pin which coupled the piece proper to the caisson was removed, and there she stood in position on her two wheels, some distance ahead of the caisson, in which the cartridges were kept. The drivers hurried their horses under shelter of the farmhouse, some fifty paces away. Soon the six spit-fires were in position. The commanders of the squadron of hussars and the two companies of volunteers also took what advantage they could of the lay of the land to protect their men from the fire which an Austrian battery might at any moment be expected to open upon the republican guns. One of the Paris Volunteers' companies was masked in the brush of the little wood just mentioned, in position to fire from under cover in case the enemy should attempt to seize the battery. The other company entrenched itself behind the stone wall which enclosed the courtyard of the farm, and behind the buildings which already acted as cover to the artillery horses.

By the chances of war there were thus reunited among the defenders of the battery Oliver and Victoria, John Lebrenn and Castillon, and finally the young Parisian recruit Duresnel, who also was a member of Captain Martin's company.

"Well, comrade," said Captain Martin to him, "how goes it? Your heart is still whole? Keep up your courage, all will go well."

"So far, captain, things are not going badly. But we must wait for the end—or rather for the beginning, for we haven't begun to fight yet."

"It seems it is going to be warm!" volunteered Castillon. "By my pipe, what a cannonade! That must be comrade Duchemin making his Carmagnole spit! Let me see if I can get a glimpse of him over the wall."

Stretching himself on tiptoe, Castillon raised himself sufficiently to cast his eye above the wall, upon the group of cannon, now half enveloped in the smoke of their first volleys. Duchemin, kneeling on the ground after conning the hostile battery through his pocket-glass, was training his piece, already roughly aimed by a brigadier, while his assistants on either side, armed with their ramrods, sponges and levers, stood ready for action. One of them held the match, waiting for the order to light the fuse. The other five pieces, ranged parallel to Carmagnole, were likewise surrounded by their attendants and being sighted by their under-officers. The captain of artillery and his lieutenants, on horseback, superintended the manoeuvring. In the distance the Austrian lines and the advancing columns of the French were lost almost completely in the smoke and smother of the now general cannonade. Nevertheless, the watchers on the hill soon perceived a large mass of opposing infantry so cut up and thrown into disorder by the relentless and accurate fire of the battery, that the Austrian general was moving up four howitzers and four six-pounders, with the intention of crippling the republican artillery. Seeing with his glass the first howitzer advance to the left from the enemy's battery, Duchemin at once carefully re-trained his Carmagnole, shook his fist in the howitzer's direction, and growled under his heavy moustache, alluding to the short and stocky build of those pieces:

"Ah, it is you who would presume to silence my Carmagnole, stump-nose! I'll show you that you were never cast to clip my sweetheart's words!"

Just then, in response to a sign from the captain, the trumpeter of the battery sounded the signal to "Fire!"

"Come, my cadet," cried Duchemin to the soldier with the burning match, "the soup is ready—all we need is to serve it! Light her! light her! Let her go!"

The cannonier touched off the fuse with his match, and Carmagnole's discharge rang out several seconds ahead of the general volley of the battery. Gazing again through his field-glass to watch the effect of his shell, Duchemin cried out: "There she is! The stump-nose is knocked off one wheel, and two of her flunkies are keeled over. Long live the Republic!"

In fact, Carmagnole's ball had crushed one of the wheels of the howitzer and knocked down two of the Austrian artillerists an instant before the hostile battery had gotten in its first shot. But almost immediately the enemy's guns were crowned with several little clouds of white smoke, lighted up with streaks of flame. A prolonged roar reached the Frenchmen, and Duchemin exclaimed, turning towards the stone wall where the volunteer infantrymen were entrenched:

"Citizens, look out for the shells!"

Hardly had Duchemin sounded the warning when the rain of iron was upon them; the balls screamed, the shells rebounded and burst. The commander of the little republican battery was cut in two by a flying shell; horse and rider went down mangled before the shot. Another shell burst between two cannon, killing one of their crew and wounding two others so severely that they fell and with difficulty dragged themselves to the ambulance sheltered behind the farmhouse.

"Cannoniers! Load at will! Aim for the howitzers!" cried the first lieutenant, assuming command. The trumpet repeated the order through its metal throat. The artillerymen vied with one another in haste to charge their pieces. Then cries of "Fire! Fire!" rang out from the farmhouse, which suddenly became enveloped in thick black smoke. A shell exploding in a hay loft had set the blaze.

"In one way that little bonfire isn't bad," said Castillon, "for it is deuced cold. But too much is too much, and now we're going to roast." And catching sight of the volunteer Duresnel, pale, propping himself up with his gun, his lips working as though he would talk, though no sound proceeded from them, Castillon continued: "Well, neighbor, here we are, 'wo'd of honor;' but what the devil do you see back there to make your eyes pop out so?" So saying, Castillon followed Duresnel's fixed and frightened stare, and what he saw made him pull the young volunteer toward him, with the words: "Come, comrade, do not look that way. You haven't got the hang of the thing yet. That is the fortune of war."

"My heaven," stammered Duresnel, as he followed Castillon's advice. "My heaven, it is horrible! Poor victims!"

A ball, rebounding on the inner face of the stone wall, had struck the lines of volunteers sheltered there, killing and maiming all in its path. The dead and wounded weltered in blood. Captain Martin, struck by the spent ball near the end of its course, had been knocked down, but only bruised on the shoulder. Soon recovering from the shock, he lent his aid to the soldiers of his company, John Lebrenn among them, to help or carry the wounded to the surgeons' post in the rear. These at once gave their care to the cannoniers and to some hussars of the Third, among whom a shell had also wrought its havoc.

Undaunted by these disasters, the republican artillery continued to work marvels. At last the opposing commander, fearing lest his right wing be annihilated, sent word to the regiment of the Gerolstein Cuirassiers to storm the battery. Up to this time masked behind a hill, this regiment of heavy reserve cavalry had taken no part in the conflict. They were part of the contingent put by the principality of Gerolstein at the service of the Germanic Confederation, and were commanded by the Grand Duke himself. This prince was the father of Franz of Gerolstein, whom he held immured in a state dungeon. In spite of his sixty-and-odd years, the old Grand Duke preserved the freshness and buoyancy of youth; to his natural bravery he now added the incentive of hatred for the Revolution. The Count of Plouernel, having made good his second escape from Paris, and now for some time married to the daughter of the Prince of Holtzern, was second in command. The horsemen of this troop wore a cuirass and helmet of steel, over a livery in the Grand Duke's colors—bright blue with orange facings—with heavy boots, and white wool trousers. In short, the regiment was one of the best equipped and finest in the allied army. The rank and file, lusty fellows in the prime of life, warlike, well drilled, well clad, well fed and well paid, pampered up, in short, like a troop of the chosen, were typical 'soldiers of monarchy.' Disciplined by their officers with the cane, after the German fashion, they were the instrument of their master's will, ready to saber father, mother, brother or fellow-citizen, or to march upon the enemy, with equal indifference, killing merely because some one said "Kill!" or falling in the onslaught because some one said "Forward!" On the right of the regiment rode the Grand Duke, a robust man, tall of frame, and hard and proud of feature. His face was half concealed under the visor of his helmet, which was surmounted with a rich plume of heron feathers. The gentlemen and officers of his household rode somewhat apart from him, while he himself held the following conversation with the Count of Plouernel, who now bore the uniform of a colonel of cuirassiers:

"Count, I saw the Prince of Condé yesterday on his way through Weissenburg to take up quarters at Lauterburg. 'The Republic,' he said to me, 'is no longer betrayed by its generals. *Our goose is cooked!*' The Prince's observation was sound; I look forward to a series of reverses to our arms. In case I am killed in to-day's battle, do not forget the promise you have given me. Go to my son Franz, in the prison where he lies; tell him that my last thoughts were curses upon him. Then," the Grand Duke added, with a sinister air, "see that justice takes its course with him. My highest court has judged and condemned my unworthy son; he is convicted of a revolutionary plot against the safety of my states, and against my person. He has incurred the penalty of death—the sentence is to be executed with the briefest possible delay. My nephew Otto, whose cousin you married, is to inherit my grand-ducal crown. All the bequests, minutely set forth in my testament, are to be fully carried out."

"Drive away these dark thoughts, monseigneur," replied the Count. "You will reign a long time yet, and decide all these matters for yourself."

The word to advance was given, and the Gerolstein regiment, the Grand Duke at its head, set out at a round trot. The ground shook under the hoofs of its eight hundred horses; the rattle of its sabers, muskets and breastplates made a formidable din. Two hundred rods away rose the hillock on whose brow scowled the republican battery that now menaced every foot of the plain the cuirassiers were advancing over. Unable to outflank the battery, owing to its being protected to the right by the little wood and to the left by the semi-demolished farm buildings, the Grand Duke could see nothing for it but to charge right into the muzzles of the cannon which he hoped to capture, little thinking that they were supported by both infantry and cavalry so cunningly disposed that he was prevented from detecting them.

"The republican position is too strong, monseigneur, to be attacked in front," said the Count of Plouernel, "and yet it would be difficult to try to turn its flank."

"I am resolved to take it in front," replied the Grand Duke. "I rely on the courage of my cuirassiers. Here we are within short range of their cannon, and those fellows do not fire."

"They await our closer approach, that their discharge may be the more deadly."

"Then let us close up the distance, and start the action," exclaimed the Grand Duke.

The trumpets sounded the charge. Formed in a narrow column, to offer less front to the republican fire, the troop trotted rapidly forward. Then, at two hundred paces from the hill, they spread out into two lines, and, at the Grand Duke's command, spurred their steeds to a gallop. In this order, and uttering loud huzzahs, they reached the foot of the hill. Here their impetuous advance was checked by the steep rise they had to surmount in order to reach the summit and the guns. They discharged their muskets at the cannoniers of the battery, whose pieces, pointed straight down the hill, and till this minute dumb, now spoke out with a fearful volley of shot and shell. The Paris Volunteers, placed as sharpshooters in the fringes of the woody thicket, rained upon their assailants a storm of bullets which mingled with the fire of the other company cloaked in the courtyard of the farmhouse. The rain of lead and iron being especially trained on the steeds of the first advancing line, these fell or stumbled, rolled over on their riders, and threw the second line into such disorder that in spite of its momentum it was forced to waver and flee. The Grand Duke ordered a retreat on the gallop, in order to reform his ranks out of range.

Repeated cries of "Long live the Republic!" greeted the retreat. The German musketry-fire had gone over the heads of the French; only a few were wounded. All hastened to reload their pieces. The volunteers threw fresh cartridges into their guns, in order to receive the second charge of the enemy. The cuirassiers, galled and goaded by the desire to retrieve their first set-back, reformed while describing a wide circuit on the plain. Then, led on by the example of the impetuous Grand Duke, they came on again, not this time in wide front, but in still narrower column. Again they reached the rise of the hill, bending low over their horses' manes, and belaboring the animals with boot and spur. They received the new volley of artillery almost point blank, but still almost immediately gained the top of the eminence, the Grand Duke in the lead. They found themselves awaited by the two companies of volunteers, formed in a hollow square about the cannon, whose attendants were furiously reloading them. Of the three ranks which formed the square, the first was on one knee; the others were erect, their bodies bent forward, guns at position; ready to let fly at the command of Captain Martin.

Solemn silence reigned among the volunteers as they saw, some thirty paces from them, the Grand Duke of Gerolstein gain the summit of their hillock, flanked on one side by a colossus in casque and cuirass bearing the regimental standard, and followed by several officers of his military household.

Castillon, who was in the second line, with John Lebrenn half kneeling before him, and the new volunteer Duresnel behind, said to the former, sotto voice:

"Friend John, let us unite to bowl over that drum-major on horseback with the flag. What say you? Let us fire together."

"I am with you. Take the man—I shall aim for the horse."

"Citizens, I also shall aim at the giant," said Duresnel, in his reed-like voice; "if you will permit, I shall be of your party."

At that moment Captain Martin saw behind the Grand Duke, their bodies half over the brow of the hill, the first rank of cuirassiers. Only then, the cavalry being exposed, did he give the order: "Citizens! Attention! Pick each his man! Aim! Fire!"

"Onward, cuirassiers! Saber this canaille!" shouted the Grand Duke, urging his horse to a great leap in order to reach the serried square. "Onward! Hurrah! Thrust, my braves, and on!"

Attackers and defenders disappeared together in the heavy cloud of smoke from cannon and musket. For long the lurid obscurity of battle hung over the little hill; when the blue haze cleared away, the scene that presented itself to the survivors was one of rejoicing for the Republic, of rout and disaster for its enemies.

The foremost cuirassiers, overwhelmed by the fire from the hollow square, had nearly all either fallen, with their horses, or been trampled down by the following ranks which succeeded in scaling the hill. Still the Grand Duke of Gerolstein and several of his men had been carried by the impetuosity of their charge into the interior of the square, in spite of the forest of bayonets with which it bristled; but they came to a stop when their coursers, exhausted by their last assault, and pierced by the republican bayonets, sank under them. Castillon had been sabered in the shoulder by the old Grand Duke; Duresnel was stunned and bruised but not wounded. Both at once, after their first disorder, beheld the Grand Duke within the square, pinned under his riddled horse. The great orange belt which he wore marked him as a military chieftain. Castillon and Duresnel precipitated themselves upon him and took him prisoner. John Lebrenn, for his part, had aimed accurately, and sent a ball into the chest of the color-bearer's mount. The giant, proof against musket balls, thanks to the thickness of his helmet, breastplate and heavy boots, leaped clear of his steed, and, his saber in one hand, his standard in the other, defended himself against John, who rushed at

him with fixed bayonet. The colossus whirled his sword about him and wounded John in the knee; though wounded, the latter rushed on—and captured the colors.

Simultaneously with this, at a few paces' distance, another episode was enacting. An under-officer of the Gerolstein Cuirassiers, seeing himself surrounded, fell furiously upon quartermaster Duchemin and his men. Duchemin, old wagoner that he was, entrenched himself behind one of Carmagnole's wheels, which thus served to shield nearly half his body from the saber and hoof-strokes which his adversary sought to rain upon him. Thus barricaded, and further defending himself with a gun-swab, he at last succeeded in landing so masterful a blow upon his antagonist's helmet that the latter tumbled from his saddle half senseless. Meanwhile Carmagnole's other servitors had reloaded her. At a signal the ranks opened, and once more the artillery belched forth its iron hail upon the last squadron of the Gerolstein regiment, a reserve squad which the Count of Plouernel led again to the charge. Suddenly the remaining cuirassiers, seized with panic, wheeled about and fled full tilt down the steep incline. Their hurried departure was not due alone to the lively and sustained fire of the republican battery. The squadron of the Third Hussars, drawn up in battle array behind the burning farm buildings, had so far taken no part in the fray. Its captain had been killed and its lieutenant disabled by an exploding shell. But Oliver, although the youngest of the under-officers, already possessed so great a reputation for bravery that the soldiers, by common accord, voted him the command of the regiment. "Ah, I was sure of it!" said the dashing young man, leaning over to Victoria, as they walked their horses together alongside the first platoon; "I felt that I should either be killed to-day or win my epaulets. I shall be named an officer on the field of battle."

The French squadron, now put to a gallop, fell upon the rear ranks of the Gerolstein Cuirassiers just as their head was being thrown into disorder and repulsed by the joint fire of the battery and the volunteer infantrymen. Oliver charged the German horsemen furiously. The broil was desperate. The Count of Plouernel, who strove in vain to rally the fleers, suddenly found himself beset by a young hussar whose cap had fallen off in the tumult of battle.

Apparently careless of self the young cavalier rushed straight at the traitor Count—slashed at his face—one eye he would never see out of again. Infuriated by the wound, the Count made a lunge and drove his saber into his adversary's breast. Then Neroweg urged his horse towards the left wing of the Austrian army, and escaped the pursuit of the republican hussars.

The young horseman was Victoria.

CHAPTER XXX.

DEATH OF VICTORIA.

Night was come. Across the December fogs glared the watch-fires of the republican army. The French troops rested on the field of battle, establishing headquarters in the ruins of the chateau of Geisberg, half demolished by cannon-balls. A large barn, one of the outbuildings of the estate, was turned over to the hospital corps. There the wounded were stretched upon litters of straw, receiving medical attendance by the light of torches. Everywhere were heard the moans drawn by the pain of an amputation, or the extraction of a ball. At one end of the barn, an enclosure of planks set off the threshing floor from the rest of the building. Mortally wounded by the Count of Plouernel, Victoria was at length carried from the field hospital into this retreat, her sex having been revealed while her wound was receiving its first dressing.

A torch fastened into a post illuminated the scene. John Lebrenn, also wounded, knelt beside his sister, who lay out-stretched upon her pallet, half wrapped in a coverlet. His back to the wall, Oliver buried his face in his hands and with difficulty checked his sobs, while Castillon, whose manly face was streaming tears, stood a little apart, leaning against one of the door posts.

Victoria's pallor, and her broken breathing, announced that her sands of life were run. Tightly clasped in both of his, her brother held her hand; he felt that hand grow ever colder and colder.

"Adieu, Oliver," said Victoria feebly, as she turned toward the young fellow. "Love and serve the Republic as you would a mother. Bear in mind that you are a citizen before you are a soldier. Remember above all that those who see in war only a field opened to their ambition and their pride are the worst enemies of the people." Then, addressing her brother, Victoria continued: "Adieu, brother. Before the battle I had the presentiment that I would die as did our ancestress Anna Bell—whose sad life bears so many resemblances to mine." Then, struck by a sudden idea, Victoria continued on a new train of thought: "The Grand Duke of Gerolstein is taken prisoner, you told me, brother? St. Just should be told of the services rendered to our cause by Franz of Gerolstein, and the Grand Duke informed that he will be kept in durance until his son is set free. Franz's liberation will mean one soldier the more for the Revolution."

"Your recommendations will be followed, sister dear," replied John between his sobs; "and oh, dear sister, I weep at our separation. You are going on a journey without return. I am young yet, and long years will pass, perhaps, before I will again be able to behold you."

"Those years will pass for you, brother, as a day—sweetened by the tenderness of your wife, by the love of your children, by the fulfilment of your civic duties."

Then, just as a lamp before its dying flicker casts still some bright beams, the young woman rose to a sitting position. Her great black eyes shone radiantly from within; her voice, erstwhile choked and gasping, became

sonorous and full; her beautiful features glowed with enthusiasm; she exclaimed:

"Ah, brother, I feel it—my spirit is shaking off my present body, in order to inhabit a new envelope beyond. The future unrolls before me—

"Hail to that beautiful day predicted by Victoria the Great! Hail! Radiant is its dawn! I see shattered irons, crumbled Bastilles, thrones and altars in dust, and crowning the ruins of the old world a scaffold, the reckoning of Kings! Hail, holy scaffold, symbol of popular justice! O, Republic! Radiant is your birthday! Glorious your sun rises over Europe! Your star, full-orbed, O Republic, pours its torrents of light upon a regenerate world! It buds—It flowers—It bursts into bloom—It sheds in peace its treasures, its riches, its glories, its wonders, amid the joy of its children, free and equal, freed forever from the double yoke of Church and Misery—and united forever by the brotherly solidarity of the confederated peoples—"

The witnesses of the scene, carried away by Victoria's words, deceived by the clearness of her glance and the superexcitation of which she was capable in a supreme burst of energy, forgot that the young woman was dying. Her eyes half-closed, her countenance ashy pale and bathed in an icy sweat, Victoria fell back in her brother's arms; after a moment's agony she passed out of this life to live again in those worlds whither we shall all go.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ONRUSH OF THE REVOLUTION.

The army was to move at break of day. Before dawn John Lebrenn and Castillon dug Victoria's grave on the heights of Geisberg. Thither she was carried on a funeral litter borne by Captain Martin, Castillon, Duchemin and Oliver. John Lebrenn, leaning because of his wounded knee upon the arm of the young volunteer Duresnel, followed his sister's bier in deep grief. It was snowing, and Victoria's last resting place soon disappeared beneath the white blanket that fell upon the heights as the army marched from its bivouac to advance upon Weissenburg, which might still be defended by the Austrian army. But the Austrians left their trenches during the night; they evacuated Weissenburg; the hordes of the monarchs fled before the legions of the Republic.

Oliver was made under-lieutenant in the Third Hussars. Captain Martin was elected commander of the battalion of Paris Volunteers, succeeding the former commander, who was killed in the siege of Geisberg. The standard captured from the Gerolstein Cuirassiers was carried to General Hoche by John Lebrenn, who received from the hands of the young general, in honor and memory of the glorious defense, a sword taken from the enemy on that day.

On the 10th Nivose, General Donadieu, denounced before the revolutionary tribunal, and convicted of treason, was condemned to death, a penalty which he paid on the scaffold.

Hoche's victory, of the Lines of Weissenburg, decided the success of the whole campaign. On the 12th Nivose the Convention, upon motion of Barrere, rendered this decree:

> The National Convention decrees:
>
> The Armies of the Rhine and of the Moselle, and the citizens and garrison of Landau, have deserved well of the fatherland.

John Lebrenn, accordingly, being a soldier of the Army of the Rhine and Moselle, engraved these words on the blade of the sword presented to him by Hoche—JOHN LEBRENN HAS DESERVED WELL OF THE FATHERLAND.

The war continued. As soon as his wound had closed, Lebrenn wished to rejoin the Army of the Rhine and the Moselle. But the cut, hardly healed, opened again, and grew worse under the fatigues of a new campaign. He was invalided to the hospital at Strasburg late in the month of Germinal of the year II (March, 1794).

During her husband's absence Charlotte Lebrenn continued to live with her mother in the house on Anjou Street. Master Gervais consented to resume the direction of the smithy he had sold to Lebrenn, until the latter's return from the army. Charlotte, as previously, kept the books of the house. On this task she was engaged on the 23rd Prairial, year II (June 11, 1794). The young woman, now nearing her confinement, was still dressed in mourning for Victoria, her sister-in-law. Madam Desmarais was employed about some dressmaking.

Having finished her accounts, Charlotte closed her books, took out a portfolio of white paper, and prepared to write.

"I must seem very curious, my dear daughter," said Madam Desmarais, "but I am piqued about these sheets of paper which you fill with manuscript every night, and which will soon make a book."

"It is a surprise I am preparing for John upon his return, good mother."

"May he be able, for his sake and for ours, to enjoy the surprise soon! His last letter gave us at least the hope of seeing him any moment. He wrote in the same tenor to Monsieur Billaud-Varenne, who came to see us day before yesterday expecting to find your husband here."

"John awaited only the permission of his surgeon to set out on his way, for the results of his wound made great precautions imperative. Ah, mother! How proud I am to be his wife! With what joy and honor I will embrace him!"

"Alas, that pride costs dear. My fear is that our poor John will be crippled all his life. Ah, war, war," sighed Madam Desmarais, her eyes moistening with tears. "Poor Victoria—what a terrible end was hers!"

"Valiant sister! She lived a martyr, and died a heroine. Never was I so moved as when reading the letter John wrote us from Weissenburg the day after Victoria expired in his arms prophecying the Universal Republic, the Federation of the Nations." Then smiling faintly and indicating to her mother the papers scattered over the table Charlotte added: "And that brings us back to the surprise I am getting ready for our dear John. Read the title of this page."

Madam Desmarais took the sheet which her daughter held out to her, and read upon it, traced in large characters, "TO MY CHILD!"

"So!" began Madam Desmarais, much moved, "these pages you have been at work on so many days—"

"Are addressed, in thought, to my child. The babe will see the light during a terrible period. If it is a boy, I can not hold before him a better example than that of his own father; if it is a girl—" and Charlotte's voice changed slightly, "I shall offer her as a model that courageous woman whom chance gave me to know, to love, and to admire for a short while before her martyrdom."

"Lucile!" cried Madam Desmarais, shuddering at the recollection. "The unfortunate wife of Camille Desmoulins! Poor Lucile! So beautiful, so modest, so good—and a young mother, too! Nothing could soften the monsters who sat upon the revolutionary tribunal; they sent that innocent young woman of twenty to the scaffold!"

"Alas, the eve of her death, she sent to Madam Duplessis, her mother, this letter of two lines:

> "Good mother; a tear escapes my eye; it is for you. I go to sleep in the calmness of innocence.
>
> "LUCILE.[16]

"Touching farewell!" continued Charlotte. "I also, shall know how to die."

"You frighten me!" exclaimed Madam Desmarais, trembling. "But no; you are a mother, and women in your condition escape the scaffold."

"The child protects the mother. So I address this writing to my child, to whom, perchance, I may owe my life. Camille Desmoulins, Danton, those illustrious men, those lofty patriots, were all sacrificed yesterday. My husband has equalled them in civic virtue, he may be judged and guillotined to-morrow. Sad outlook!"

"Ah, blood, always blood!" murmured Madam Desmarais, her heart sinking within her. "Good God, have pity on us."

"Good mother, let me read you a few lines from the memoirs I have written for my child on the events of our times:

"'You are born, dear child, in times without their like in the world. And when your reason is sufficiently grown, you will read these pages written by me under the eyes of a loving mother, while your father was gone to fight for the independence of our country, and for the safety of the Revolution and the Republic.

"'Perhaps some day you will hear curses and calumnies leveled at this heroic epoch in which you were born. Perhaps for a day, but for a day only, you will see walk again the phantoms of the Church of Rome and of royalty.

"'Christ, the proletarian of Nazareth said, *The chains of the slaves will be broken; all men shall be united in one fraternal equality; the poor, the widows and the orphans shall be succored*.

"'And now the time has arrived.

"'Those who called themselves the ministers of God continued, for eighteen centuries, to possess slaves, serfs and vassals. In one day the Revolution has realized the prophecy of Christ, misconstrued by the priests.'"

"True, true, my daughter," assented Madam Desmarais, "the Republic did in one day what the Church had for centuries refused to do. It was the place of the Church at least to set the example in freeing the slaves, the serfs and the vassals who belonged to it before the Revolution. May it be accursed for its failure to do so."

"You recognize, then, dear mother, that in these troublous times the good still outdistances the bad;" and Charlotte resumed her reading:

"'Church and royalty purposely kept the people in profound ignorance, in order to render them more docile to exploitation. On the other hand, behold what the Republic decreed, on the 8th Nivose, year II (December 28, 1793):

> "'The National Convention decrees:
>
> "'Instruction is unrestricted and shall be gratuitous and compulsory. The Convention charges its Committee on Instruction to draw up for it elementary text books for the education of the citizens. The first of these books shall have in them the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the Constitution, the Table of Virtuous or Heroic Deeds, and the Principles of Eternal Morality.

"'This it followed up by two other decrees, the first under date of the 28th Nivose, year II (January 17, 1794):

"'The National Convention decrees:

"'A competition shall be opened for works treating of;

"'Instruction on preserving the health of children, from the moment of conception till their birth, and on their physical and moral training until their entrance into the national schools.

"'The National Convention decrees:

"'There shall be established in each district within the territory of the Republic a national public library'!"

"These are, as you say, my daughter, great and useful things."

Charlotte continued reading:

"'The National Convention, upon a report of the Committee of Public Safety, adopted also this resolution:

"'The National Convention decrees:

"'There shall be opened in each department a register entitled the Book of National Benefits.

"'The first division therein shall be for old and infirm farmers;

"'The second, for old or infirm mechanics;

"'The third shall be set apart for mothers and widows as well as unmarried mothers, who have children in the country districts.

"'These decrees prove that the Republic, in its commiseration for the unfortunate, consecrates to them a sort of religious care; not only does it relieve the miseries of the people, but it honors their misfortune. It is not a degrading alms which it throws them, it is the debt of the country which it seeks to pay off to the aged who have used up their lives in toil upon the land or in trades. This debt the Republic also pays off to the poor widows who can not undertake the care of their young family. The aged, the child, and the woman, are the constant objects of the solicitude of the Republic.'"

Just then Gertrude the serving maid ran quickly into the room. Her countenance was at once joyous and pained. Charlotte sprang from her seat, and cried,

"My husband has come!"

"Madam—that is to say—but pray, madam, in your condition do not agitate yourself too greatly—" replied Gertrude. "Monsieur John is, indeed, come, if you please—but—"

Charlotte and her mother were both about to rush to meet their returning soldier when he appeared on the threshold, supported on Castillon's arm. The two men were dressed in the uniform of the volunteers of the Republic. John embraced his wife and her mother rapturously, and wiped from his eyes the happy tears which his wife's approaching motherhood caused him. Then seeing that Castillon stood aside, with tears in his eyes also, John said:

"A hug for Castillon, too. In this campaign he has been to me not a comrade, but a brother."

"I knew it by your letters," replied Charlotte, as she warmly embraced the foreman.

"You will sup with us, Citizen Castillon—you would not leave us to celebrate my husband's return alone?"

"You are very kind, Citizeness Lebrenn. I accept your offer gratefully—my day will then be complete," answered the foreman. "I shall just run out and say good-day to my comrades in the shop. But do not forget—friend John must be kept from walking, if he is not to remain a cripple." And Castillon stepped out of the room.

"My child," said Madam Desmarais, "your husband must get off his uniform and lie down. Besides, his wound no doubt needs dressing. Let us attend to it."

Several hours later John and his wife were sitting together, still drinking in the delicious raptures which follow long separations. Day was nearly done.

"When I left you," John was saying, "you were the dearest and best of wives. I return to find you the noblest of mothers. Words fail me to express how moved I am by the sentiment which dictated to you that address to our child which you have just read me. I, too, am affrighted, not for the future but for the present, for the present generation. The most upright spirits seem now to be stricken with a sort of mad vertigo; and still the republican arms are everywhere victorious, everywhere the oppressed peoples stretch out their hands to us. The Terror has become a fatal necessity. The Convention, having restored the public credit and assured the livelihood of the people, continues daily to issue decrees as generous and lofty in sentiment and as practical in operation as those you have embodied in your pages to our child. The national wealth still opens to the country enormous financial resources. The people, calm and steady, has cast the slough, so to speak, of its effervescence and political inexperience. It now shows itself full of respect for the law, and for the Convention, in which it sees the incarnation of its own sovereignty. And yet, it is at this supreme moment that the best patriots are decimating, mowing one another down, with blind fury. Anacharsis Clootz, Herault of Sechelles, Camille Desmoulins, Danton, and many others, the best and most illustrious citizens, are sent to the scaffold."

"Eh! no doubt; and if there is anything surprising, it is your own astonishment, my dear Lebrenn!" suddenly put in a voice.

Charlotte and her husband turned quickly around, to see Billaud-Varenne standing in the open doorway. For some

moments he had been a party to Lebrenn's confidences; an indiscretion almost involuntary on Billaud's part, for the young couple, absorbed in their conversation, had not noticed his entrance. Now stepping forward, he said to Charlotte:

"Be so good as to excuse me, madam, for having listened. Your door was open, and that circumstance should mitigate my 'spying'." Then with a friendly gesture preventing John's rising from the reclining chair where he half sat, half lay, Billaud-Varenne added, as he affectionately pressed the hand of Charlotte's husband: "Do not move, my dear invalid. You have won the right to remain on your stretcher. Your worthy wife must have written to you what interest I took in all that concerned you since your departure for the army."

"My wife has often given me intimation of your affectionate remembrance, my dear Billaud; and further, I know it is through your intervention that Citizen Hubert, my mother-in-law's brother, has been mercifully forgotten in the prison of Carmes, where he has long been held as a suspect. Thanks to you, his life is no longer in danger."

"Enough, too much, on that subject," declared Billaud-Varenne, half smiling, half serious. "Do not awaken in me remorse for a slip. Citizen Hubert has ever been, and ever will be, one of the bitterest enemies of the Republic. For that reason, he should never have been spared. I should have ordered his head to fall."

CHAPTER XXXII.

AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM!

It was forty-five days after the visit of Billaud-Varenne to John Lebrenn; that is to say, it was the 8th Thermidor of the year II (July 26, 1794). Alone in his parlor, towards eight o'clock in the evening, advocate Desmarais now paced up and down in agitation, now sank pensively into a chair, his face between his hands. The anguish and terror which for two years had dogged the hypocrite's steps had completely whitened his hair. His sallow, atrabilious features disclosed the tortures of his soul. Throwing himself into the arm-chair, worn out, he muttered to himself:

"They insist upon coming! Such a session on my premises! I tremble to think of it—I may be sent to the guillotine to-morrow if Robespierre triumphs. Curses upon my wife and daughter who deserted me! Yet, a plague on my weakness, there is not a day goes by but I regret the unworthy creatures! How happy I was in my family. I loved my daughter, I love her still, as much as it is possible to love a creature on this earth. With what tenderness she would have surrounded my old age. I should have been consoled, comforted; for from my daughter I had no secrets, and her confidences gladdened my heart. My God, 'tis I that am unhappy!"

After this outburst the lawyer remained for a long time silent and dejected. Then, rising of a sudden, he shouted: "That infamous Lebrenn! It is he who is the cause of my woes. He came to bring trouble under my roof."

The advocate's soliloquy was cut short by the entrance of a lackey, who announced that several citizens desired audience with him.

"Show them in," answered the lawyer; and as the servant vanished he added, mentally: "The devil take Fouché, who conceived the idea of choosing my house for the meeting place of his friends—a perilous honor I wish I had the power of declining."

Soon there were introduced into the parlor the Convention members Tallien, Durand-Maillane, and Fouché; the reverend Father Morlet accompanied them. The three Representatives of the people belonged to the bloc formed against Robespierre. Durand-Maillane was a member of the Right, or royalist side of the Assembly. Tallien was from the Mountain; while Fouché, an ex-monk of the Oratory, was a Terrorist. A more ignoble physiognomy than Fouché's it would be impossible to imagine. It was a hang-dog face, hedged about with tow-hair, and seamed with vice, treachery, dishonesty, baseness, and cruelty unrestrained. A cynical smirk raised one corner of his thin mouth. He was the first to enter the advocate's parlor. Leading up the Jesuit Morlet, he said:

"Allow me, citizen colleague, to introduce to you a former priest, the reverend Father Morlet. He is of the Society of Jesus, as I was of the Order of the Oratory. Cassock and frock go together."

"But," replied the attorney, very uneasily, as he returned the Jesuit's salute, "the object of the conference which brings us together can not be discussed before witnesses."

"The reverend is one of us," answered Fouché. "He comes from London, and will give us information of the greatest importance. His head answers for his discretion; he is a dissident priest. And so, let us get to work."

Fouché, Durand-Maillane, Tallien, Abbot Morlet and advocate Desmarais thereupon seated themselves about a round table. Desmarais was made chairman, and the conference began.

"I ask the floor," said Durand-Maillane, "to state the question, and to establish the conditions upon which as spokesman of the leaders of the Right, I am empowered to pledge here the assistance of my political friends, royalists, clericals, and conservatives."

"You have the floor," said the chairman.

Durand-Maillane continued:

"Gentlemen, none of you is unaware that in presenting the law of the 22nd Prairial to the Convention six weeks ago Robespierre hoped to obtain for the Committee of Public Safety, and under control of three of its members, the right to pass judgment upon the Representatives of the people without consulting the Assembly. Whence it follows that, by means of the signatures of St. Just and Couthon, Robespierre would be able at any time to send before the revolutionary tribunal, that is to say, to the scaffold, those members of the Convention whom he wished to be rid of. The law of Prairial threatened particularly the Terrorists; its effect would soon have extended to the other parties. It is necessary that we examine and discuss the most significant passages of Robespierre's speech to-day in the Convention, in order to decide what we are to do to temper its effect and conjure away the danger which overhangs us. Here are the particular points of the speech."

Durand-Maillane drew a paper from his pocket and read:

"'The counter-revolution has made its appearance in all parties. The conspirators have pushed us, in spite of ourselves, *to violent measures, which their crimes alone rendered necessary*. This system is the work of the foreigners, who proposed it through the venal medium of Chabot, Lhuilier, Hebert, and a number of other scoundrels. Every effort must be made *to restore the Republic to a natural and mild rule*; this work has not yet commenced. Slacken the reins of the Revolution for a moment, and you will see military despotism seize upon it, and overturn the maligned national representation; a century of civil wars and calamities will desolate our country, and we would die for not having seized the moment marked by history for the founding of liberty. Aye, we would deliver up our country to calamities without number, and the people's maledictions will fall upon our memory, which should remain dear to the human race....

"'The conclusion is, What are we to do? Our duty! What objection can be raised to one's speaking the truth and consenting to die for it? Let it be said, then, that there is *a conspiracy against the public liberty, which owes its force to a criminal coalition that is intriguing in the very heart of the Convention*; that this coalition has accomplices in the Committee of General Surety and in the bureaus of this committee, which it dominates;—that the enemies of the Republic have set this committee up against the Committee of Public Safety, thus constituting a government within a government;—that *members of the Committee of Public Safety are in the plot*;—that the coalition thus formed is working for the destruction of patriots and of the fatherland. What is the remedy for this evil? *Punish the traitors*, reorganize the bureaus of the Committee of General Surety, purge the Committee itself, and subordinate it to the Committee of Public Safety; *purge the Committee of Public Safety itself*; establish unity of government under the supreme authority of the National Convention, which should be the center and the judge; *suppress all factions by the weight of national authority*, and rear upon their ruins the power of justice and liberty. Such are the principles the hour demands. If it is impossible to advance them without earning the epithet Ambitious, I shall conclude that principles are outlawed, that tyranny reigns among us,—but not that I should keep quiet; for how can one object to a man who is right, and who knows how to die for his country? I am made to fight crime, not to govern it. The time is not yet come when men of worth can serve the country fearlessly. The defenders of liberty are no better than exiles, so long as there exists the horde of rogues and rascals.'

"So, gentlemen, to sum up this harangue of Robespierre's, we find out that 'it is necessary to bring back the Republic to a milder rule, to check the bloodshed, to purge the Convention and the Committees, to wipe out factions by the weight of national authority, and to combat crime, because the defenders of liberty are but exiles as long as the horde of rogues and rascals exists.' There remains no one, it seems, outside of Robespierre and the Jacobins, capable of defending, preserving and strengthening the Republic. Therefore we, royalists and clericals, have decided to form a coalition with the Terrorists and the Mountain for the purpose of sending Robespierre to the scaffold, and, along with him, the most active spirits of the Jacobin party."

"I declare my approval of all the previous speaker has said," observed Morlet the Jesuit. "Robespierre is the enemy not only of us Catholics and royalists, but also of the Terrorists and Mountainists here present, and of several of their friends, who insist upon living in splendor, peace and happiness at the popular expense."

"Robespierre to-morrow will attempt to hold a 'day,' with the support of Commandant Henriot and the Commune. His designs must be frustrated," added Tallien.

"The surest way of reaching our end," Fouché advised, "is to drown St. Just's voice when he mounts the tribunal to complete the speech of Robespierre. He will want to speak in defense of his partner. Our cries will redouble: 'Down with the tyrant!' 'Down with the dictator!' 'Death to St. Just and Robespierre!'"

"It is decided, then," asked Durand-Maillane, "that from the beginning of the session we are to interrupt St. Just and Robespierre, and demand of the Assembly their immediate arrest? Who will start the ball?"

"I will," volunteered Tallien.

"Collot D'Herbois, Robespierre's implacable enemy, is in the chair to-morrow. The affair will go roundly," Desmarais plucked up heart enough to say.

"It is probable," continued the Jesuit, "that the Convention will not confine itself to packing to the guillotine Robespierre, St. Just, Couthon, Lebas, and the other leaders of this truculent party of virtue. It may add to the batch several of the most rabid Jacobins from outside of the Convention."

"We shall rid ourselves at once of the big guns of the club, and the Jacobins in the Commune, Fleuriot-Lescot the Mayor, Coffinhal, and their consorts," chuckled Tallien.

"I greatly desire," the Jesuit put in, "for motives of my own, to see included in that batch a certain John Lebrenn, who has been made member of the General Council of the Commune since his return from the army."

At the mention of the name Fouché turned to Desmarais and said, with a leer, "Hey, colleague, the reverend Father demands your son-in-law!"

To which Desmarais grandiosely replied: "Brutus gave his own son—and this Lebrenn is not even of my family. I

grant you the Jacobin's head."

"To-morrow, messieurs, let us be present at the Assembly before the opening of the session, in order to prepare our colleagues of the Right and the Center for what we expect of them," suggested Durand-Maillane.

"Fouché and I," acquiesced Tallien, "will take care of the Mountain and the Terrorists."

So it was arranged. The cabal then broke up, while Jesuit Morlet said to himself:

"The Republic is lost. The sacrifice of the Jacobins delivers it up to us, bound hand and foot—*ad majorem Dei gloriam!* to the greater glory of God! May France perish, and our holy Order triumph!"

During this mental invocation of the Jesuit's, Desmarais showed his four guests to the door and returned to his parlor alone. For some time he brooded somber and silent in his arm chair. At last he muttered defiantly:

"Was it I who demanded the guillotining of my son-in-law? After all, it will be but justice; I will have returned him evil for evil. Is he not, truly speaking, the prime cause of my torments? After his death my daughter and wife will return to me. Everything will be for the best!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ARREST OF ROBESPIERRE.

Early the next morning the chiefs of the anti-Robespierre factions were in the Riding Hall of the Tuileries, where the sessions of the Convention were held. At about eight o'clock Tallien came in. As he walked to his seat on the crest of the Mountain, he passed along in front of the benches of the Right, greeting Durand-Maillane and his friends with an "Oh! what brave men are these of the Right!" Collot D'Herbois, that ex-comedian, thief and criminal, occupied the president's chair. St. Just, coming into the hall, went up to Robespierre, who appeared to give him some instructions. Couthon was carried to his seat between Robespierre the younger and Lebas by two ushers; he was paralyzed in both legs. These three citizens were counted among the purest, the most generous and energetic of the time. Long before the opening of the session the galleries were filled with people picked and stationed there by the enemies of Robespierre. The latter took his seat, an air of firm assurance dominating the preoccupation legible on his austere features. He knew not of the plot laid against him, and depended upon St. Just's speech to settle in his favor the question of accusation unhappily left undecided the night before. The chiefs of the allied factions exchanged signals of intelligence. Billaud-Varenne was speaking with one of the vice-presidents of the Convention, Thuriot, an irreproachable Terrorist. The whole aspect of the Assembly was foreboding. Suddenly the tinkling of Collot D'Herbois's bell sounded above the tumult of conversation, and the session was on.

Why follow the debate into all its bitterness and spite; why tell how again and again the plotters against the Republic raised their cries of "Down with the tyrant! Death to St. Just and Robespierre!"? Suffice it to say that the day ended in decrees of accusation against the Robespierres, elder and younger, St. Just, Lebas, and Couthon. An officer of the gendarmery was commissioned by the president to lead the accused to prison.

At five o'clock that afternoon, the 9th Thermidor, Madam Desmarais and her daughter, seated side by side in their parlor, pricked their ears at hearing the sound of the drum, mingled from time to time with the hurried and distant clanging of the tocsin.

"My God!" exclaimed Madam Desmarais, grief-stricken, "Again a 'day'—again a bloody struggle!"

"Reassure yourself, good mother; the wicked shall not triumph," Charlotte replied. "Robespierre is put under ban of arrest, but the Jacobins and the Sections will go to his rescue. The Commune has declared the country in danger, the tocsin calls the people to arms."

"Alas, I fear for your husband. He is at the City Hall as a member of the General Council. The Commune is in insurrection against the Convention; if the Commune loses, John will have become an outlaw."

"My husband will do his duty; the future belongs to God."

Suddenly Castillon entered the parlor, crying: "Good news! The Sections are taking arms and assembling to march to the Commune, with their cannon; the Jacobins have declared themselves in permanent session. Robespierre has been taken to the Luxembourg Prison; his brother to St. Lazare; St. Just to the Scotch Prison; Couthon to La Bourbe; and Lebas to the Chatelet. As I left the City Hall they were discussing the means of rescuing them."

"You see, mother, the Sections are in the majority, with the Commune."

"Ah, madam, madam!" cried Gertrude, running in in a fright. "Don't be too alarmed—Oh, heavens, there he is!"

Hardly had Gertrude uttered these words when advocate Desmarais, pale, half frightened to death, tumbled into the room, crying: "Save me! In heaven's name!"

And running to his wife and daughter, whom he pressed in his arms, he continued wailing, "Hide me! They are after me!"

"Fright has unbalanced you, father," said Charlotte. "No one is pursuing you."

Madam Desmarais had hurriedly found a bottle of smelling salts, which she held to the nose of her half-fainting spouse. He recovered his senses, and began again, in a quaking voice: "Thank you. You are generous. Now, I beseech you both, conceal me somewhere. Charlotte's husband may come back and be accompanied by some member of the General Council. I shall be recognized—arrested—guillotined. Pity me!"

"But, father, your fears are all exaggerated. My husband will not allow you to be arrested in his house."

At that moment Gertrude, opening a crack of the door, called mysteriously to her mistress:

"Madam, come at once!"

"What is it, Gertrude?" Charlotte asked. "Who is there?"

"A man of the mounted police demands to speak with you."

Hearing the nature of the visitor, Monsieur Desmarais flew into a new fit of fear. His mind gave way. He ran to a window and sought to hide by wrapping himself up in the curtains. Charlotte left the room, closing the door behind her. In a second she was back, joyfully waving a paper she held in her hand. "It is good news, mother. Where's father?"

Madam Desmarais indicated with a gesture the window, the curtains of which revealed the figure of the attorney, and left his feet exposed at the bottom. Then she added, in a low voice: "If we do not hide your father somehow, he will die of agony and fright."

"His fright is baseless, but I think you are right about it," responded Charlotte in the same tone. "We can take him up to the garret, to the locked room; there he will no doubt feel that he is safe, and his fears will calm down." And she went to the window where her father, white as a sheet and bathed in a cold sweat, was clinging for support to the window casing.

"That gendarme!" stammered the lawyer. "What did he want?"

"He just brought me a letter from John. I shall read it to you and mother, after which you will be taken, as you wish, to a retreat, in the top of the house, where you need not fear being seen by a soul. Here is what John wrote me:

> "Dearly beloved wife:—All goes well here so far. The General Council of the Commune is almost complete. We are advising on energetic and prompt measures—prompt above all; the Convention, on its side, is not idle. We are in session. The majority of the Sections are with us. We shall receive word in an instant that the suburbs of St. Antoine and Marceau are ready to march; we await their delegates. The City Hall Place is covered with an armed force, furnished with several pieces of artillery, and all crying 'Long live the Republic! Down with the brigands of the Convention!' Robespierre and his friends are still in prison; we shall deliver them. Be of good cheer, and remember that you live not alone for
>
> "Your
> "J. L.
>
> "Tell Castillon to join me as soon as possible. He is a sure man, and I shall need him."

"If the suburbs march with the Commune, the Convention is lost!" murmured the lawyer. "Conduct me to the hiding place you spoke of. You shall lock me in, you will keep the key about you, you will not give the key to anyone, not even to your husband—you promise me?"

"I swear it;" and forcing a smile, the young woman added: "I alone shall be your jailer. Come, come."

As she went out, Charlotte said to her mother, "Please ask Gertrude to have Castillon wait for me in the parlor." The advocate staggered out on the arm of his daughter. Looking after him, Madam Desmarais sighed to herself, "Unhappy man! I pity him." Sinister reflections followed close: "The triumph of Robespierre will mean the death of Billaud-Varenne, our friend, our protector, he who has prevented, to this very day, my brother Hubert from being called before the revolutionary tribunal. But when he is there no longer, who will take his place in protecting my brother's life? Alas, this day, whatever its issue, will hold a sad outcome for our family. How can one prepare for such a crisis?"

Charlotte at that moment returned, bearing the walnut casket in which reposed the legends and relics of the Lebrenn family. Madam Desmarais, running to her daughter quickly, said, in a tone of reproach, as she helped her set the casket down on a table, "Could you not have called Gertrude, instead of yourself carrying such a burden?"

"Have you asked Castillon to come here, good mother? I wish to set him to a task."

"I forgot your request, my girl. I shall at once repair the forgetfulness, and go seek your foreman. But before all, tell me, why you have brought this box in here?"

"I wish to place it in a safe and secret place, with Castillon's aid, dear mother. You know what store John and I set by the papers and objects contained in it. In these times of revolution, one must think of everything. John will be grateful to me for the precaution." So saying, she rang the bell.

Castillon entered. The foreman seemed preoccupied. He had slung on his cartridge box, his sword, and his volunteer's rifle.

"Put this chest on your shoulder and follow me, brave Castillon," said Charlotte. "I shall soon be back, dear mother. Hope and courage, all will go well! The Commune will triumph over the Convention."

"Oh, my presentiments, my presentiments did not deceive me," moaned Madam Desmarais after her daughter's and Castillon's departure. "This day will be fatal to us!"

Ten o'clock at night of that same day found the General Council of the Insurrectionary Commune of Paris still in session in that chamber of the City Hall called the Equality Chamber. The open windows gave on the square choked with citizens. Their bayonets and pike-heads glittered in the light of numerous torches; several cannon had been dragged up by the Sections, and from time to time one might hear cries of "Long live the Republic!" "Long live the Commune!" Within, torches lighted the vast expanse of the Equality Chamber, and the table about which sat, under the presidency of Fleuriot-Lescot the Mayor of Paris, the members of the Council of the Commune.

"Here is the proclamation," said the Mayor, preparing to read, "which is about to be placarded on the streets of Paris:

> "Citizens, the country is more than ever in danger. Scoundrels dictate laws to the Convention, which they overmaster. They pursue Robespierre, who declares for the consoling principles of the existence of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul; St. Just and Lebas, those two apostles of virtue; Couthon, who has but his heart and head alive, though they are glowing with the ardor of patriotism; Robespierre the younger, who presided over the victories of the army in Italy.
>
> People, arise! Lose not the fruit of the 10th of August and the 31st of May. Let us hurl all the traitors into their tomb!
>
> Signed, FLEURIOT-LESCOT,
> Mayor,
>
> BLIN,
> Secretary."

As the Mayor's proclamation was declared adopted by the session, John Lebrenn, who had approached one of the windows, remarked that not only had the number of armed Section representatives in the square diminished, but that the place was almost deserted. Soon the whole City Hall Place, with the exception of a group here and there, lay silent and empty. John had barely returned to his seat at the table when the doors were flung open with a crash by the press of people who sought to enter. They carried in Robespierre the elder, Robespierre the younger, Lebas, St. Just and Couthon, borne aloft in chairs. At the sight of the liberated Representatives of the people, surrounded by their Jacobin friends, the members of the Council rose spontaneously with cries of "Long live the Republic!" Gradually the tumult died down, and the Mayor of Paris began to speak:

"Citizens—from this moment the functions of the General Council of the Commune should undergo a change. I move that it be transformed into a committee of action, and that the presidency of it be conferred upon Maximilien Robespierre. The *Revolution* now commences!"

Robespierre responded in the following words:

"Citizens, I long resisted the entreaties of the patriots who sought to deliver me from prison. I wished to respect the law, for the very reason that our enemies make of it a football. I wished, in Marat's steps, to appear before the revolutionary tribunal. Had they pronounced me innocent, the villains of the Convention would have been confounded, and honest folks would triumph; on the contrary, had they pronounced my death sentence, I would have drunk the hemlock calmly. But I yield to events. I accept the presidency. The era of the Revolution has begun."

On the instant there rushed into the hall General Henriot, pale, excited, his clothing in disorder. "All is lost!" he cried.

Leonard Bourdon and Barras, delegates of the Convention, and escorted by half a hundred gendarmes with pistols and muskets, burst in at Henriot's heels. The soldiers covered with their guns the members of the Council of the Commune and the five Representatives of the people, all of whom remained standing; calm; impassible.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE NINTH THERMIDOR.

In the early morning of the 10th Thermidor, Charlotte Lebrenn and Madam Desmarais, pale from a night of sleeplessness, silent, worried, listened anxiously at their garden windows, which had been left open through the beautiful, balmy July night. From their nests in the trees the birds greeted with their chirping the first glow of the sun, which lighted up the eastern azure. Nature was smiling, with repose and calm in every lineament.

"Not a sound, absolutely nothing!" said Madam Desmarais, the first to break the silence. "It is more than an hour since the tocsin ceased clanging."

"If that is so, mother, have courage! If the tocsin has ceased, the Commune is worsted. The Convention triumphs," replied the younger woman in a tense voice. Then, unable to withstand the emotion which seized her, Charlotte burst into tears, raised her hands heavenward, and cried, "Just God, spare my husband!"

At this moment Gertrude entered and said to her mistress: "Madam, there is a citizen in the ante-chamber who says he is sent by your husband to bring you news of him."

"Let him enter," answered Charlotte gladly. "I wonder what the news will be," she added, to her mother.

No sooner had she spoken than Jesuit Morlet appeared in the room. His hypocritical countenance at once caused Charlotte a revulsion of feeling; but immediately reproaching herself for what was perhaps an involuntary injustice to the man, she came a few steps toward the Jesuit, saying: "Citizen, you come from my husband?"

"Aye, citizeness; to reassure you, and inform you that he is in a safe place."

"You hear, my poor child," cried Madam Desmarais, weeping with joy as she embraced her daughter. "He is out of danger."

"Can you, citizen, conduct me at once to where my husband is?"

"Such a trip would be very imprudent, citizeness. My friend John Lebrenn has sent me to you, first to reassure you as to his situation; next, to post you on the course of events. The City Hall is in the power of the troops of the Convention, commanded by Leonard Bourdon and Barras. Lebas is a suicide. Robespierre the younger has flung himself from a window and broken both legs. Robespierre the elder has his jaw broken by a pistol fired at him by a gendarme;[17] St. Just and Couthon are arrested, they will be executed in the course of the day, without any form of trial, having been outlawed by the Convention; the same decree has been passed upon the members of the General Council of the Commune, who will also, accordingly—all except my friend John, who escaped in the melee, and is now in safe hiding with me—be guillotined without trial. In short, to tell you all in two words, the Republic is lost. The brigands triumph!"

For a moment Charlotte's tears flowed in silence. Reassured as to her husband, she wept for the first five victims of the 9th Thermidor, those illustrious and virtuous citizens.

"My eternal thanks are yours," she at length replied; and added: "Take me to my husband, I implore you. I long to see him."

"To do as you request, citizeness, would be to commit a great imprudence. Perhaps its only result would be to put the police on his track. As to the gratitude you believe you owe me, let us speak no more of it. Between patriots there should be mutual aid and protection; in concealing John from the searches of our enemies I did my duty, nothing more. But time is fleeting, and I must get to the end of the errand your husband sent me on: It is that you give me a certain casket, containing, he told me, some precious legends which it is of importance to carry away from here, lest they fall into the hands of our enemies; the latter will not delay descending with a search party upon your house."

"My husband has already given me his advice on that subject," answered Charlotte. "Foreseeing that in the struggle against the Convention the Commune might be worsted, my husband arrested, and the house searched, I already have had the casket carried to the home of one of our friends." A slight spasm of anger contracted the brows of the Jesuit; the young woman caught the expression, and the thought flashed over her mind: "Careful! This man may be a false friend!"

"Madam," said Gertrude, coming in leading a young boy by the hand, "here is a poor child who asked to speak to this gentleman; I brought him up to you."

The Jesuit's god-son—who else but he?—respectfully greeted Charlotte, at the same moment that the latter whispered to her mother: "My anxiety for John is still lively, despite this man's reassurances. Something tells me he is deceiving us."

"Gentle god-father," Rodin was whispering to the Jesuit, "I just saw John Lebrenn hurry down a street at the end of Anjou Street, and turn in this direction."

"The devil!" thought the Jesuit to himself, "our man will land at home sooner than I counted on. I shall have to double my audacity; nothing is lost as yet." And then, sotto voice to his pupil, "Are the police agents placed, and in sufficient number?"

"They are watching all around the building—I counted twenty. John Lebrenn will be caught like a mouse in a trap, *Ad majorem Dei gloriam!*"

"While the house is being searched from cellar to garret, follow you the agents, and try to put your hand on that casket you know of."

"Mother," whispered Charlotte, on her part, "they are plotting some treachery." Then, suddenly dashing toward the door, which just then opened, she cried,

"Husband!"

Charlotte's husband, into whose arms his wife joyfully threw herself, was pale, his clothing in disorder; his face was bathed in sweat, and he panted for breath. In a gasping voice he said to his wife, as he returned her embrace, "Charlotte, I could not resist the craving to see you an instant, and to reassure you and mother of my fate, before I flee. The Commune is defeated, I am outlawed; but I hope to escape our enemies. Have courage—" Then his eyes falling upon the Jesuit and little Rodin, he recognized in them the two spies he had arrested before Weissenburg; he recalled that Victoria had designated Morlet to him as an enemy of the Lebrenn family; hence, struck with astonishment, he said to his wife as he stared at the reverend, "What does this fellow here? How did he get entrance to my house?"

"He professed to be sent by you, my friend. He demanded in your name the chest with the family legends."

"Ah, my reverend! The Society of Jesus never lets the scent of those it seeks to run down grow cold!" cried John. "Wretched, infamous spy—hence!"

"Not before you," replied the reverend with a bow and a smirk, indicating to John the commissioner of the Section,

newly appointed by the Convention, who appeared in the door, accompanied by several of his agents.

"Search, the house from top to bottom," ordered the magistrate; and to Lebrenn: "Citizen, here is a warrant of arrest issued against you. I am further ordered to seal your papers and carry them to the office of the revolutionary tribunal."

Lebrenn read the warrant and replied to the magistrate, "I am ready to follow you, citizen."

"I must first place the seals, in your presence, upon all your furniture, and especially on your papers."

The agents of the police, in their search of the house, soon arrived at the retreat which sheltered advocate Desmarais. They incontinently broke open the door. The advocate was soon informed by the agents of the turn events had taken, and at once planned the new role he was to play in the business. Stepping briskly down the stairs, he strode into the parlor, and went straight to the commissioner:

"Citizen, in the name of the law, I denounce a plot of which I am victim. Since yesterday I have been sequestered in this house."

While the advocate was speaking to the officer, Charlotte had given her surprised husband in a few words the history of the pretended sequestration, and added, "Now, my friend, for your own dignity, and out of regard for my mother and myself, maintain the silence of contempt. The wretched man is still my father."

"Dear wife, now, and in your presence, I shall keep silence. But later—I shall speak," answered Lebrenn, yielding to Charlotte's plea; then, recollecting, he suddenly asked, softly, "And the casket?"

"It is safe. Yesterday I thought of burying it, with Castillon's aid, in the cellar; but he suggested taking it to the house of one of his friends, a workman like himself, in the St. Antoine suburb. This latter course I adopted."

"You did wisely. This Jesuit's presence here proves to me that the Society of Jesus, which has so many a time and oft already sought the destruction of our family legends, will leave no stone unturned to ferret them out."

John's words were interrupted by an exclamation from Madam Desmarais. "Brother!" she cried as she ran toward the financier, who had just entered the room precipitately, "Hubert! You here! You are free!"

"Yes, free," replied Hubert, embracing his sister effusively. "And my first visit is to you. The prisons are opened, and all the royalist suspects are giving place to the brigands and terrorists."[18]

"Ah, brother, you forget that we are under the roof of my son-in-law John Lebrenn, who has been accused, and has just fallen under arrest."

"What!" exclaimed Hubert, not having noticed Lebrenn as he came in, "is that true?" Then, addressing the young man, to whom he extended his hand, "I was unaware of the misfortune which has fallen upon you, Monsieur Lebrenn; I know what interest you have always borne me, and if I can to-day in my turn prove useful to you, I am entirely at your service."

The commissioner received the report of his agents. They had unearthed not a paper in the entire house, nor in the furniture, nor in the workshop. They had sounded the cellar floor, examined the earth in the garden, nothing gave suspicion of a secret hiding place. Little Rodin also confirmed this information to the Jesuit.

"Citizen," said the magistrate to John, "a coach is at the door. Are you ready to follow me?"

"*We* are ready," said Charlotte, hastily throwing a cloak over her shoulders. "Come, my friend, let us go. I shall accompany my husband to the prison door."

"Adieu, good and dear mother," said John to Madam Desmarais, embracing her. "Be of good heart, we shall see each other soon again, I hope. Adieu, Citizen Hubert. Revolutions have strange outcomes! You, the royalist, are free—I, the republican, go to prison!"

"Whatever your opinions, I have always found you a man of courage," quoth the financier, in a voice of emotion. "If any consolation can temper the bitterness of your temporary separation, let it be the certainty that my sister and my niece, your wife, will find in me a most tender and devoted friend. I shall watch over them both."

John Lebrenn and Charlotte left with the commissioner. Monsieur Hubert and Madam Desmarais accompanied them as far as the waiting carriage, and strained them in a last adieu.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DEATH OF ROBESPIERRE.

Eight months after the events of Thermidor just described, I, John Lebrenn, write this chapter of the story of the Sword of Honor, on the 26th Germinal, year III of the Republic (April 15, 1795).

Escaped from my prison, I lay for several weeks in hiding in a retreat offered me by the friendship of Billaud-Varenne; to him I also owed a passport made out in another name, thanks to which I was enabled to leave Paris, gain Havre, and there take a coasting vessel for Vannes. I chose Vannes as a haven not alone because I was unknown in

that retired community, but because it was close by the cradle of our family, towards which, after such excitement and such cruel political deception, I felt myself strongly attracted. At the end of about a month's sojourn in Vannes, certain then that I could continue to dwell there without danger, I wrote to my wife to rejoin me in Brittany, with her mother and our son, whom she had named Marik, and who was born the 7th Vendemiaire, year III. Thus I had the joy of being soon reunited with my family. My wife brought with her the inestimable treasure of our domestic legends, happily preserved from the clutches of Jesuit Morlet. My wound, received at the battle of the Lines of Weissenburg, having reopened, I was for some time almost helpless, and was forced to give up my trade of ironsmith. Madam Desmarais was able to lay out for us some moneys, and Charlotte proposed that they be expended in setting up a linen-drapery and cloth store in Vannes.

This business afforded my wife and mother-in-law an occupation in line with their tastes and aptitudes. For my part I was able, although still very lame, to drive about in a carriage to the various markets and out into the country, to dispose of our cloth. Everything gave me to hope that my obscure name was forgotten in the hurly-burly of the Thermidorean reaction.

A short time after the arrival here of my cherished wife, we made a pilgrimage to the sacred stones of Karnak; we found them as they had lain for so many centuries. You will undertake that same pilgrimage for yourself when you have attained the age of reason, my son Marik, you to whom I bequeath this legend of the Sword of Honor, which I add to the relics of my family.

I conclude my recital of the events of the bourgeois revolution of 1789 with a few words on the last moments of the martyrs of the 9th Thermidor, the words of a hostile eye witness. What could be more touching than his account:

> "Robespierre the elder was carried to the City Hall, to the Committee of Public Safety, on the 10th Thermidor, between the hours of one and two in the morning. He was carried in on a board, by several artillerymen and armed citizens. He was placed on a table in the audience hall which lay in front of the executive room of the committee. A pine box, which held some samples of bread sent from the Army of the North, was placed under his head and served in some sort as a pillow. He lay for the space of nearly an hour so immobile that one might think he had ceased to live. Then he began to open his eyes. Blood flowed freely from the wound in his lower left jaw. The jawbone was shattered by a pistol shot. His shirt was bloody; he was hatless and cravatless. He wore a sky-blue coat, and trousers of nankeen; his white stockings were rolled down to his shoes. Between three and four in the morning they noticed that he held in his hand a little bag of white skin, inscribed 'At the Grand Monarch; Lecourt, outfitter to the King and his troops, St. Honoré Street, near Poulies Street, Paris.' This sack he used to dispose of the clotted blood which came from his mouth. The citizens surrounded him, observing all his movements. Some of them even gave him a piece of white linen paper, which he put to the same use, keeping himself ever propped up on his left elbow, and using only his right hand. Two or three different times he was scolded at by citizens, but especially by a cannonier of the same district as himself, who reproached him, with military vigor, for his perfidy and scoundrelism. Towards six in the morning a surgeon who happened to be in the courtyard of the National Palace was called in to tend him. For precaution he placed a key in Robespierre's mouth, and found that his jaw was fractured. He drew two or three teeth, bandaged the wound, and had a hand-basin with water placed beside him. Robespierre made use of this, and also of pieces of paper folded several times, to clean out his mouth, still employing only his right hand. At the moment when it was least expected, he sat up, raised his stockings, slid quickly from the table, and ran to seat himself in an arm-chair. As soon as seated he asked for water and some clean linen. During all the time he had lain on the table, after he regained consciousness, he fixedly regarded all who surrounded him, especially those employes of the Committee of Public Safety whom he recognized. He often raised his eyes toward the platform; but apart from some almost convulsive movements, the bystanders constantly remarked in him a great impassibility, even during the dressing of his wound, which must have caused him the severest pain. His complexion, habitually bilious, assumed the pallor of death.
>
> "At nine o'clock in the morning Couthon, and Gombeau, a conspirator of the Commune, were brought in on stretchers as far as the big staircase of the Committee, where they were deposited. The citizens detailed to watch them stood about, while a commissioner and an officer of the National Guard went to report to Billaud-Varenne, Barrere and Collot D'Herbois, then sitting in committee. They took an order to these three calling for Robespierre, Couthon and Gombeau to be removed at once to the Conciergerie Prison, a decree which was immediately carried out by the good citizens to whom had been confided the guard over the three prisoners.
>
> "St. Just and Dumas were taken before the Committee in the audience hall, and at once taken on to the Conciergerie by those who had brought them in. St. Just gazed at the large engrossing of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and said, as he pointed towards it, 'Yet it was I who got that passed!'
>
> "Such was the downfall of Robespierre. His agony was more cruel than his death. His erstwhile colleagues on the committees insulted him, struck at him, spat in his face; the clerks of the bureau pricked him with their penknives."

So died Robespierre by the guillotine. Let us glorify, sons of Joel, the memory of this great citizen, the Incorruptible revolutionist. And as sacred for us let the memory be of the other illustrious martyr-victims of Thermidor, like St. Just, Lebas, Couthon, Robespierre the younger; or martyrs obscure, like that throng of patriots whose blood flowed from the scaffold in torrents during the Four Days. The reaction of Thermidor smote with the guillotine without judgment; it assassinated the greater part of the last defenders of the Republic.

PART III.

NAPOLEON

CHAPTER I.

THE WHITE TERROR.

To-day, the 22nd of September, 1830, the thirty-eighth anniversary of the foundation of the French Republic in 1792, I, John Lebrenn, arrived at the sixtieth year of my life, add these pages to the legend of the Sword of Honor.

I have been for long back in Paris, established with my family in St. Denis Street. During my stay in Brittany, beginning after the days of Thermidor, 1794, I kept track of the more important historical events by means of the journals of the period. Later, on my return to Paris, I re-entered political life and took part in the events of the Eighteenth Brumaire, the Hundred Days, and the Revolution of 1830. In the following pages I shall endeavor to reproduce briefly the principal deeds of these three epochs—1800, 1815, and 1830.

Should I depart this life before the completion of my task, my son Marik Lebrenn, now arrived in his thirty-seventh year, will supply my place in the work, aided thereto by the material and notes left by me, and by his own memories. I have postponed from year to year this continuation to our family legends, awaiting the accomplishment of the two prophecies which hover ever above these accounts. One has been realized, in the period from 1800 to 1814; the other has had but one approach toward success—in July of this present year 1830.

Alas, we have already seen the sinister fulfilment of the prophecy of Robespierre the Incorruptible, the martyr of Thermidor—'*The brigands have triumphed, the Revolution is lost.*' The reins of the Revolution fell into hands that were corrupt, perfidious, criminal. The national representation was debauched, annihilated in the month of Brumaire by Bonaparte; *military despotism seized the power, and civil war desolated the country*.

The second prophecy of our family records—that there should be no more Kings—had already begun to move towards fulfilment. Since 1793 the tradition of republicanism had struck in the people's minds roots that were live, deep, and indestructible. The people protested against the Consulate of Bonaparte by the conspiracy of Topino Lebrun and Arena; it protested against the Empire by forming the secret society of the *Philadelphians* and by the conspiracy of General Mallet; it protested against the Restoration by several conspiracies, among them that of the four sergeants of La Rochelle.

Let us rest firm in the assurance that, despite these eclipses, the star of the Republic will yet rise over France, over the world, and our children will yet greet the appearance of the United States of Europe, the Universal Republic.

Meanwhile the disinherited shuddered and trembled before the fury of the counter-revolution. At Avignon, at Lyons, at Marseilles, prisoner patriots were massacred without even the excuse the latter had when in September they put the traitors to death in the name of public safety and of the fatherland, menaced from without and within. The victims of the royalist reaction were ten times as numerous as those of the Terror. The murders of Lyons pass all belief, and that in time of peace, without provocation or cause. In one single day and in one single prison one hundred and ninety-seven prisoners, among whom were three women, were assassinated by the royalist dandies known as the Jeunesse Dorée, or "Gilded Youth." At Marseilles, at the St. John Fortress, two hundred and ten patriots were slashed to pieces or burned in the same day.

But let us draw the veil over these saturnalia of blood, these orgies of the White Terror, and compose our minds in thoughts of the republican armies. Our armies learned with grief of the fall of Robespierre; but then, submissive to the civil and military powers, and respecting the decrees of the Convention, they accepted the Thermidor government; and under the command of Hoche, Marceau, Jourdan, Moreau, Augereau, and Joubert, they continued to battle against the coalized Kings. Holland, freed by our arms, set itself up anew as a Republic; Prussia and Spain sued for peace and obtained it; the royalists, encouraged by the reaction, attempted again to arouse the Vendee, with the support of the English, who made a descent upon Quiberon; but Hoche snuffed out that civil war in its first flickers. The Convention modified on the 15th Thermidor, year III (August 2, 1795), the Constitution of 1793. The mass of the proletariat was stripped of its political rights. According to the Constitution of 1793, all citizens twenty-one years old, born and living in France, were electors, and members of the sovereign people; according to the Constitution of 1795, on the contrary, it was necessary to pay a direct tax in order to be eligible to the electoral right. The Constitution of the year III, further, divided the legislative power into two bodies, the Council of Five Hundred, and the Council of Ancients; to be a member of the latter, one must have attained the age of forty. The executive power, or Directorate, was to be composed of five members, chosen by the Councils, which were themselves elected by a taxpayers' and indirect vote, in two degrees. Primary assemblies nominated electors, and these latter chose the deputies to the Councils. The imposition of a tax qualification excluded the proletariat from the count, and delivered it up to the will of a reactionary bourgeoisie; hence the royalist party had not the slightest doubt of the success of its candidates. The majority of the old Convention, composed in part of lukewarm oligarchic republicans, but in the main of corrupted legislators who were opposed to a restoration of the monarchy (whose vengeance they feared, most of them having been regicides), attempted to obviate the certain success of the royalists by decreeing that two-thirds of the old members must be re-elected. This restraint imposed upon the freedom of the ballot was at once iniquitous and absurd, and paved the way for a new civil war. The Constitution of the year III and the clause relative to the re-election of two-thirds of the members of the Convention was submitted to the sanction of the primary assemblies, composed of taxpayers. Among these, thanks to the exclusion of the proletariat, the reaction was on top. Certain of a majority in the approaching elections, and expecting consequently to control both the Councils and Directorate, the reaction had anticipated dealing the last blows to the expiring Republic, and re-establishing the monarchy. But defeated in their hope by the decree rendering obligatory the re-election of two-thirds of the Conventionals, the royalists incited the primary assemblies against this decree. On the 11th Vendemiaire, year IV (October 3, 1795) the bourgeois and aristocratic Sections of the center of Paris—Daughters of St. Thomas and Hill of the Mills among others—came to the front of the movement, and a horde of Emigrants and ex-suspects raised an insurrection. The rebels declared the decree compelling the re-election of two-thirds of the old

Conventionals an assault upon the rights of the 'sovereign people'; they took up arms and organized a council of resistance under the presidency of the Duke of Nivernais. The Convention named a committee of defense and called to its assistance the patriots of the suburbs. Twelve or fifteen hundred patriots responded to the appeal. The royalists, to the number of forty thousand men, or thereabouts, under the command of Generals Danican, Duhoux, and the ex-bodyguard Lafond, marched against the troops of the Convention, and won at first some advantage over them. Barras, commander-in-chief of the forces at the disposal of the Assembly, called to his staff a young artillery officer named Bonaparte, whose military renown dated from the siege of Toulon. The latter hastily brought up the cannon from the camp of Sablons, made an able strategic disposition of his forces, and, with the aid of the patriots of '93, wiped out the royalist insurrection before the Church of St. Roche, on the 13th Vendemiaire, year IV. The Convention employed its last session in organizing the Councils; that of the Ancients was composed of two hundred and fifty members; the remaining elected deputies formed the Council of the Five Hundred.

The members of the Directorate elected by these Councils were Carnot, Rewbell, Lareveillere-Lepaux, Letourneur, and Barras—all of them, except Barras, men of honesty, only moderate republicans, but sincere.

The 4th Brumaire, year IV (October 26, 1795), the Convention pronounced its own dissolution. It had been in session since the proclamation of the Republic, September 21, 1792.

CHAPTER II.

COLONEL OLIVER.

The studio of Citizen Martin, painter, member of the Council of Five Hundred, and former captain and then battalion commander of the Paris Volunteers who fought at Weissenburg, was decorated in martial fashion with pictures and sketches depicting episodes in the republican wars, placed here and there on easels; models of antique statuary and studies of nature graced the walls. On one side was a gay display composed of the epaulets of Commander Martin, his arms of war, and his military hat, whose two bullet holes bore witness to its wearer's intrepidity. One morning early in November, 1799, the painter himself was gladsomely embracing John Lebrenn, who had just deposited on a stool the traveling bag he carried.

"Well, but I'm glad to see you, my friend," said John warmly, "after so many chances and such a long separation!"

"It was made less grievous for me," rejoined Martin, "by our correspondence. What is the news of your worthy wife, your little Marik, and Madam Desmarais?"

"They were all well when I left them."

"And your cloth business—does it prosper as you would wish?"

"Our labor furnishes us the means to supply our modest wants; we desire nothing more. Our life is rolling on peacefully at Vannes, that old town of Armorica, the cradle of our family."

"I know how greatly the country should please you."

"And nevertheless, we must soon leave our nest, for it is impossible there to give my son a suitable education. In a year or two, or perhaps even sooner, we shall return to Paris, where we shall continue our Breton cloth commerce. Such, at least, is my intention and that of my dear wife and her mother."

"Hurrah! May your plan be realized, the sooner the better, my dear friend. Then we shall no longer be reduced to a correspondence for consolation."

"Your last letters," replied John, "decided me to come to Paris, seeing the Republic was in danger of perishing. I think I could be useful to you in such a case, and also perhaps to the Republic, by still pulling a trigger against her enemies."

"The political situation is indeed grave. Nevertheless, there is no ground for fearing a catastrophe very soon. In the Council of Five Hundred there is an imposing republican majority; we are decided to preserve liberty, and to fight the clericals, Jesuits and monarchists to the finish."

"I doubt not your energy nor that of your friends; but the Republic has now been for some time deprived of the popular element, its life, its spirit, its strength."

"True; since Thermidor a great gap has been made in the republican ranks. You may be sure that General Bonaparte, for all his military renown, would never have dared affront Vergniaud, Danton, or Robespierre, had they been in the Council of Five Hundred. At their voice the people would rise in arms, and the ambitious dictator would be sent before the revolutionary tribunal."

"Belated regrets, my friend. But explain to me how it is that the Directorate, knowing full well the intrigues organized in Napoleon's favor by his brothers, by Fouché, and by that former Bishop Talleyrand, than whom no meaner rascal ever lived—how the Directorate was so weak as not to send this General Bonaparte before a court-martial, guilty as he was of deserting the army in Egypt, more than six hundred leagues from France? In the height of the Convention such an act would not have passed unpunished."

"For this weakness of the Directorate, and our own indecision in the Council of Five Hundred, there are many causes. Sieyès is the soul of the conspiracy against the Constitution of the year III, which he himself framed, while we republicans rather defend that Constitution, defective as it is, in order not to throw the Republic open to new dangers. Sieyès, a member of the Directorate, and Roger Ducos, his colleague and accomplice, are at the head of the sworn enemies of the present Constitution. Among these oppositionists are the majority of the Council of Ancients and some members of the Council of Five Hundred; then come a crowd of intriguers of all sorts, stock brokers, men with frayed reputations, get-rich-quick contractors, bourgeois weather-vanes, corruptionists, harpies, repentant Terrorists, like Fouché and your brother-in-law Desmarais, who is now a member of the Council of Ancients. Sieyès's object is to overthrow the Constitution of the year III by a coup d'etat and replace it by a bourgeois oligarchy; on top of which would come a constitutional monarchy similar to that of '92, and then it would be done for the Republic. That is the plan of the opposition. Now here is the situation of us republicans, who constitute the majority of the Council of Five Hundred. We count on the support of two members of the Directorate, Moulins and Gohier, devoted to the Republic. Then in case of a conflict, we have cause to hope that General Bernadotte, whose influence may serve to blanket Bonaparte's, will march on our side. The Council of Five Hundred has, moreover, for braces, the remains of the several republican parties—Girondins, Mountainists, Jacobins, Terrorists—as well as a large number of former members of the Commune who escaped the scaffold after Thermidor, and belong to the bourgeoisie—men of progress and free thought."

"And the people," inquired John again, "the workingmen of the suburbs, are they also sunk in inertia? They should form a strong element for you."

"Alas, they live indifferent to public affairs, except some workingmen in Santerre's brewery and some old sans-culottes, such as your old foreman Castillon—whom you will no doubt see this morning, as I notified him of your arrival."

"Thank you, friend, for having arranged this pleasure for me. I shall be happy to see our brave Castillon."

"He is still the industrious and honest artisan of yore; only, credulous and naïve as a veritable child of the people, he is like so many other sincere republicans, a great partisan of Bonaparte's."

"Castillon, once so devoted to the Republic!"

"Exactly, since there is not a better republican—God save the mark!—than this very General Bonaparte, according to Castillon and his friends."

Just then Martin's servant entered to hand him a letter, saying: "An ordnance dragoon has just brought this epistle, citizen, and awaits your answer."

Martin tore open the envelope and read aloud:

> "Perhaps you recall, sir, an under-officer in the Third Hussars, who in the days of terrorism when the nation's honor sought refuge in the armies, fought with you in the defense of a battery at the battle of Weissenburg. This under-officer has made his way. He has had the happy fortune of serving under the orders of the greatest captain of ancient and modern times, on whom to-day hangs the safety of France.
>
> "Knowing, sir, your renown as a painter of battles, I desire to engage you on a picture. I beg you to let me know at what hour to-day you can grant me an interview on the subject of this work, on which you may set your own price.
>
> "Accept, sir, my best sentiments,
>
> "OLIVER,
> "Colonel of the Seventh Dragoons,
> aide-de-camp to General Bonaparte.

"Tell the soldier I await his colonel this morning," added Martin to the domestic, after a moment's thought.

The servant left the studio, and Lebrenn, to whom Martin had passed the letter, began:

"My sister's forecast, I see, was not wide of the mark. 'Oliver,' she said to me, 'loves battles. He sees in war only a trade, a means to carve out a fortune—pride and ambition.' And Oliver has become a colonel and one of the staff officers of Bonaparte."

"This order for a picture," replied Martin, "is only a pretext to renew acquaintanceship with me, and attempt to bring me over into the party of his general."

"Painful as a meeting with Oliver will be, I almost congratulate myself on the opportunity. Who knows but I may be able to bring home the truth to him who was once my apprentice, and perhaps, thanks to my old influence over him, open his eyes to the light?"

"I would like to think, at least, that he will not show himself a monster of ingratitude toward you. I know all that he owes to your family, and above all to the devotion of your sister."

"Oliver wrote me several times from Italy to inform me of his rapid promotion in the army. Then the correspondence gradually died out, and now for two years I have completely ceased to receive news from him. Such have been his forgetfulness and ingratitude!"

At this moment who should enter the studio but Castillon, accompanied by Duchemin, the old quartermaster of the field-artillery of the Army of the Rhine and Moselle. The latter wore the fatigue uniform of the artillery, and the straps of his rank; his left arm hung in a scarf. His face, bronzed by the sun of Egypt, was dark as an Arab's. Unable to repress his tears of joy, Castillon fell into Lebrenn's arms, crying "Oh! Friend John!"

"Embrace me, my old Castillon," replied the latter, with unrestrained warmth. "I find you still as I left you, the best of men."

Lebrenn and his former foreman continued their conversation to one side, in low tones, while Duchemin said to Martin, who was studying his face as if seeking to trace a resemblance:

"You don't recognize me, captain?"

"It seems to me I have seen you——" replied Martin dubiously.

"That blasted sun of Egypt has spoiled my complexion, else you'd remember Duchemin, once cannonier in the Army of the Rhine and Moselle, where we served together."

"Aye, now I remember you, old comrade," cried the artist, seizing the other's hand. "And how is Carmagnole—and Reddy?" he added with a grin.

"My poor Reddy—he went the way of Double-grey," sighed the artillerist. "He died like a brave war-horse. He received a ball in the body at the battle of Altenkirchen. As to Carmagnole, my sweetheart of a spit-fire, she split laughing, my pretty piece, while sending a triple charge of grape-shot into the Austrians. After which, widowed of my Carmagnole, I set out for the Orient."

"And so you went through the campaign in Egypt?"

"Bad luck to it, yes! A devil of a war! And Bonaparte!—Twist his noose without drum or trumpet! To leave the army in the lurch! Name of names, what cries, what shouts there were against the 'Little Corporal,' when it became known he had abandoned us. Had we caught him, we'd have tied his necktie for him!"

"*You left Egypt, then, after him?*"

"Three days after, with a convoy of wounded men they were sending back to France. Our ship had the luck to dodge the English cruisers and disembark us at Toulon. Thence I demanded to be sent during my recovery to my old Paris, to see again my St. Antoine and the sans-culottes of '93. They are not very thick now, but those who are still of this world are all good and solid, witness comrade Castillon, one of the first I encountered in the suburb. He told me that he was on his way to visit you, captain, and as an old soldier of the Rhine and Moselle and a pure Jacobin, I thought I might be permitted to follow along with him."

"You could not afford me a greater pleasure, comrade," the painter assented, cordially. "The faithful of '93 are scarce in these times."

"Monsieur Colonel Oliver asks to see you, citizen," announced the servant.

"Let Colonel Oliver enter. You, Castillon, and you, Duchemin, are going to St. Antoine to have a talk with Santerre's workmen?"

"To meet here again at eight this evening, and decide what we shall do, in view of developments," added Lebrenn.

Colonel Oliver was introduced. The brilliant uniform of the dragoons besat him with natural grace; but his face was haughty, imperious and rude; every line in it denoted the arrogance of command. He did not at first recognize, or rather he paid no attention to, Lebrenn, Castillon and Duchemin; but addressed himself straightway to Martin:

"I am delighted, citizen, to take this opportunity of renewing acquaintance with an old brother in arms."

"Citizen," politely rejoined Martin, "I am no less happy than yourself at the circumstance that brings us together, as well as three of our old comrades of the Army of the Rhine;" and he indicated the three friends.

Greatly surprised, Oliver held out his hand and quickly ran over to Lebrenn, crying, "Good meeting! You here? How are Madam Lebrenn and your son?"

"All the family are in good health; my son is growing up, and I hope to make a good republican out of him."

Castillon now approached, and slapping the colonel familiarly over the shoulder, called out, "Say now, my boy—has your rank of colonel made you near-sighted?"

Oliver trembled and turned purple with rage. He looked Castillon up and down, and replied: "Who are you, sir, to permit yourself such familiarity?"

"Well, well! Forsooth, it is I, Castillon, your old foreman, who taught you how to handle a file and hammer a piece of iron, when you were our apprentice."

"Give you good day, my dear sir, give you good day," retorted Oliver haughtily and impatiently; and continuing his conversation with Lebrenn: "And what chance brings you to Paris? Tell me about it."

But Castillon touched Oliver on the arm before he had time to get an answer, and said: "Say, my boy, have you truly become, to all intents and purposes, an aristocrat, since you belong to the staff of General Bonaparte, as Duchemin says, our old comrade of the Lines of Weissenburg, here, whom you don't seem to recognize either?"

"Hush, my old fellow," said Duchemin in Castillon's ear, "else he will have the commandant of Paris toss me into the headquarters of police, and then we won't be able to go to St. Antoine."

After a moment's silence, Colonel Oliver spoke, with difficulty holding himself in: "I would reply to Monsieur Castillon, that if I was his apprentice, it is nothing to blush for. He should understand that my age and the rank I owe to my sword render inappropriate the pleasantries permissible when I was eighteen."

"Pardon, excuse me, Monsieur the Marquis!" rejoined Castillon, not a whit put down by Oliver's manner. "Ah, that's how the staff of General Bonaparte comports itself!"

"As to you, who are still in the service," continued Colonel Oliver rudely to Duchemin, "do not forget that we put the insolent in cells, and shoot the unruly."

"I said nothing, Colonel," replied Duchemin quietly.

"Shut your mouth, hang-dog, and go to the devil!"

"Yes, hold your peace, old comrade, and make yourself scarce, since you have but the choice between a cell and the shooting squad," Castillon advised Duchemin; and then he turned on Oliver: "As to me, who, as a private citizen have hanging over me the shadow of neither, nor yet the awe of gold epaulets, I tell you this, Oliver, son of the people, a poor orphan, put on your feet by the goodness of our friend John—you contemn your brothers. A soldier of the Republic, you conspire against her. You're an ingrate and a traitor! But the day of remorse will come."

"Do not provoke me, wretch, or——" cried Colonel Oliver.

Castillon and Duchemin turned on their heels and went out, Martin accompanying them to the outer door, as Lebrenn had requested that he be left alone a few minutes with the colonel. The latter hung his head and maintained an embarrassed silence.

"Castillon's reproaches seem to have made some impression on you, Oliver," Lebrenn began, at last.

"Not at all; such insolence does not trouble me. But let us forget the wretches, and speak of you and your family, my dear Lebrenn."

"Let us speak rather of you, Oliver; let us speak also of my sister, whose memory should be sacred to you. Her forebodings of your future are realized; I fear her devotion to you has gone for naught."

"In what may my conduct justify your criticism? Has not my sword been ever at the service of the Republic?"

"At the service of your ambition! And at the present moment you seem to be in a mind to sacrifice the Republic."

Oliver responded with a start: "I firmly believe that France has need of order, repose, stability, and a firm hand. I believe that authority should be concentrated in the greatest captain of modern times."

"And what are your Bonaparte's titles—for you doubtless mean him—to the government of France?"

"His victories!"

"But is not the military glory of Hoche, Marceau, Joubert, Massena, Moreau, Kleber, Augereau, Bernadotte, Desaix, equal to that of your general? And even if he were the greatest captain the world has ever seen, it does not follow that he should be given the dictatorship. A nation should never place its destinies in the hands of one man and confide to him that exorbitant power, which smites with vertigo even the hardest heads."

At this juncture Martin returned, and by a look inquired of his friend the result of his interview with the colonel. Lebrenn shook his head in the negative. Martin then addressed the officer:

"I would have excused myself, citizen, for my absence just now, had I not left you in the company of our comrade John. Now I am at your service. Let us discuss the battle scene you wish to give me the commission for. Some explanation will be requisite."

"It is a brilliant charge executed by a squadron of my regiment against the Mamelukes of Hussein Bey. I can furnish you with a sketch of the field of battle made by one of my officers, and some notes I took on the feat of arms itself."

"Any such documents would much facilitate my work, and I can, if you desire it, citizen, commence work in a month—provided," he added with a smile, "I am not in the meantime banished or shot."

"And why should either of those fates befall you, monsieur?"

"I am one of the Council of Five Hundred, and strongly resolved, like the majority of my colleagues, to defend the Republic and the Constitution against all factions. But the defenders of the best cause may be defeated. In that case, your general, who seems to side with the conspirators, is capable, in the event of his triumph, of transporting the republican deputies to Cayenne, or having them shot on the plain of Grenelle."

"Monsieur, I have still to learn that the vanquisher of Lodi, Arcola, and the Pyramids is party to a conspiracy. But if he is conspiring, he has for accomplice the whole of France; and in that case the factious are those who attempt to oppose themselves to the national will."

Just then Duresnel, the young recruit of the Parisian battalion who served under Martin at Weissenburg was introduced into the studio. The colonel brusquely saluted the newcomer together with the two who were already present and left the apartment.

Duresnel looked at John Lebrenn several seconds, and then cried out:

"Eh! If I am not mistaken, I have the pleasure of meeting, at the house of a common friend, an old comrade of the Seventh Battalion of Volunteers?"

"A comrade who was a witness to your first feat of arms, Citizen Duresnel," rejoined Lebrenn cordially, "when after the charge of the German cuirassiers upon our battery, you and Castillon took the Grand Duke of Gerolstein prisoner."

CHAPTER III.

CROSS PURPOSES.

The same day as that on which occurred the scene just described, that is to say, the 17th Brumaire, year VIII (November 7, 1799), the following events took place at the home of Monsieur Hubert, banker and member of the Council of Ancients and uncle to Charlotte. This exponent of high finance had tenfold increased his fortune by his enterprises in furnishing supplies to the army, or, in other words, robbing the people and famishing the soldiers. In conference with the banker was the reverend Father Morlet; politics was on the carpet.

"My reverend sir," asked Hubert, "will you please to tell me why the Catholic and royalist party is taking no hand in political affairs? Do you not comprehend that in supporting the dictatorship of Bonaparte you deal the last blow to the Republic?"

"And who will profit thereby? Just clarify me on that point."

"He will, as a matter of course."

"Bonaparte's ambition is boundless," returned the Jesuit. "He is not ignorant that a monarchy which owes its restoration to a Monck has no more dire need than, as soon as it no longer needs his treasons, to rid itself of the traitor. It is thus more than probable that General Bonaparte prefers the role of a Cromwell, or a Caesar. In either of these two cases we Catholics and royalists must oppose him, for he would thus put off for a long time the return of the Old Regime. But as, after all, and in spite of its improbability, there is one chance in a thousand that he may be looking out for a restoration, we maintain for the present complete neutrality."

"Monsieur John Lebrenn asks to speak with you, sir," announced a valet.

"John Lebrenn in Paris!—Pray Monsieur Lebrenn to wait an instant!" cried the banker to the valet, who at once left the room to execute his master's orders.

"My dear Monsieur Hubert, I am not at all anxious for a meeting with that red-cap Jacobin, and for reasons of a particular nature," said the Jesuit.

"Step into my cabinet. Thence you can descend by the little staircase."

"In case of unforeseen developments, write me, or—you know——"

"Oh, I forgot to ask you about the Count of Plouernel."

"He is," replied the Jesuit, "at Vienna, with his wife, who has just presented him with a son, according to what the Count's brother, the Bishop *in partibus*, whom you know, has just written me."

"And your god-son, little Rodin?"

"He is growing up under the eye of the Lord. He is in Rome, attending the seminary of our Society."

The financier conducted Father Morlet to the door of the cabinet, and then rang for the valet to show in Monsieur Lebrenn at once.

"What can be the motive of my nephew's coming now to Paris?" pondered Hubert. "I hope he bears no bad news from my poor sister. Her last letters foreshadowed nothing untoward. Ah, here he is. Welcome, my dear nephew," he cried as he held out his hand, "welcome! And first of all put me at ease about my sister and niece. Are they well?"

"Charlotte and her mother are in perfect health," answered Lebrenn. "They charged me to visit you and tell you so, and I have made it a point to deliver the message the very day of my arrival. We are living happily in the peaceful town of Vannes, and still occupied in our cloth trade."

"From which I conclude that you no longer trouble yourself with politics. I congratulate you upon your wisdom, my dear nephew. The Republic is a chimera, as I said long ago. Look at it to-day, as good as dead, and to-morrow it will have heaved its last sigh. You come just in time to attend the funeral. May it never rise from its ashes."

"The Republic is like Lazarus in the Scriptures. It may be wrapped in its shroud, it will burst the stones of its sepulture. But let us leave politics aside; we are not agreed on the matter, and never will be. I am asked by my wife and her mother to inquire of you after the health of my father-in-law, your colleague in the Council of Ancients, of whom we have no news."

"My brother-in-law is still the same, dragging his miserable life from apostasy to apostasy, tormented by the fear of death."

"What an existence!"

"He is, indeed, the most cowardly of men, and at the same time the most talkative and vain of lawyers. Then, his position of Representative of the people in the Convention, and now as deputy in the Council of Ancients, flatters his vanity, and furnishes him with the opportunity to give a loose to his voluble oratory. So, tossed back and forth between his vanity, which impels him toward the hazards of political life, just now so tempestuous, and his cowardice, which makes him tremble each day lest he receive the reward of his apostasies, the miserable fellow's life is kept, as the Catholics say, in perpetual hell."

"Monsieur Desmarais!" announced the valet.

The lawyer, barely across the threshold, stopped stock still, as surprised as put out of sorts by the unexpected presence of his son-in-law; for a moment he was unable to utter a word, and Hubert said to him sardonically:

"How, brother! Is it so that you greet your son-in-law after so many years' separation?"

"Monsieur Lebrenn should know," at length replied the lawyer, regaining his self-assurance, "that a deep gulf separates honest men from the Jacobins of '93, the Septembrists, Terrorists, Communists, and other Socialists."

"Citizen Desmarais, we have known each other a long time," retorted Lebrenn. "You are the father of my dear wife, to whom my life owes its happiness. Whatever may be your words or your conduct toward me, there are limits which I shall never exceed in my treatment of you. You inspire me neither with anger nor hatred, but with a profound pity, for you are unhappy."

"What insolence! To hear such words issue from the lips of my daughter's husband, and be unable to punish him for them!"

"My pity for you is very natural," continued Lebrenn. "I pity your condition because you must feel a cruel chagrin at being separated from your wife and daughter."

"Scurrilous fellow!" bellowed the attorney, unable to contain himself. "It is you who came to sow trouble and discord between the members of my family and me."

"Citizen Desmarais, you are arrived at the decline of life; your solitude weighs upon you. You regret, you regret each day anew the sweets of the domestic hearth; our home is and always will be open to you. Renounce your life in politics, the incessant source of your anguish and your alarms, because of your lack of steadfastness. Return to your wife and daughter; they will forget the past. But when fear has its clutch upon you, you are like a person out of his mind; though you may be in perfect safety, yet you will perish anyhow. So then, when you please, Citizen Desmarais, you will find a place at our fireside. You will enjoy with us an existence as peaceful and happy as your present one is tortured."

Then to Hubert he added:

"Adieu, citizen. I shall return before my departure, to get your messages for Vannes."

"Adieu, dear nephew," answered the latter. "Although a Jacobin, you have my esteem."

CHAPTER IV.

LAYING THE TRAIN.

Late that afternoon conspiracy held high carnival in the parlor of Lahary, an influential member of the Council of Ancients. The conspirators present were scattered in groups about the apartment, engaged in lively conversation, when Hubert the banker and advocate Desmarais made their entrance upon the scene.

"Messieurs," Lahary was saying, "there are a number of us present. Let us begin our deliberations. I shall preside. Our colleague Regnier has the floor."

Regnier at once began: "Gentlemen, yesterday, in a long conference held at the home of our friend the president of the Council of Ancients, various opinions were advanced and discussed, but we separated without having reached any conclusion, setting to-day for the final deliberation. We should no longer temporize. Time presses; public opinion, very uneasy, very restless, is watching; it apprehends a coup d'etat, they say, from moment to moment. This state of mind is particularly favorable to our projects, only we must make speed to profit by circumstances, and hasten events. Else the Council of Five Hundred will steal a march on us and appeal to an insurrection, in the name of the Constitution in danger. We should thus lose much of our vantage ground."

"Aye, let us haste," agreed Fouché. "Trust to my long experience. In revolutions, he who attacks has three chances to one."

"The experience and authority of our friend Fouché in matters of conspiracy can not be too highly estimated," Regnier hastened to put in. "I am for attacking, and that to-morrow, the 18th Brumaire. Here is my project. The Council of Five Hundred is the only real obstacle to the overthrow of the Constitution, which, it is decided, shall give way to another form of government, to be determined on later. The Council of Five Hundred, composed in its immense majority of republicans, is, then, the stumbling block to our projects. It must be either suppressed or annihilated."

"It is more than probable that the canaille of the suburbs will not budge an inch. Nevertheless, let us proceed prudently, as if an insurrection were really to be feared. Let us get all the police, horse and foot, upon the field to repress all suggestion of revolt," advised Fouché.

"To conjure away the peril of an insurrection, this is what I would propose," Regnier continued. "The Constitution of the year III vests exclusively in us, the Council of Ancients, the right to appoint or change the meeting-place of the Assemblies. Let us, in virtue of our constitutional right, transfer our seat and that of the Five Hundred to St. Cloud, which we can invest with five or six thousand troops, of which we will give the command to General Bonaparte. Things thus prepared, if the Council of Five Hundred refuses to adhere to our most drastic measures—a refusal who can doubt?—we shall pronounce the dissolution of their Council, and commission General Bonaparte to carry out the decree. Triumph is assured—"

"I am authorized by my brother," spoke up a new party to the debate, Lucien Bonaparte, "to declare to you that if he is placed in supreme command of the troops he will answer for everything, even to the burning of Paris."

"Those are extreme measures, but we must not recoil before them. We may have to burn Paris," chimed in the plotters in chorus.

"Yes, I share the opinion of my colleagues," declared Desmarais the lawyer. "The Council of Five Hundred, transferred to St. Cloud, becomes no longer an object of fear. But how can we justify that relegation in the eyes of the public?"

Fouché smiled sardonically. "Citizen Brutus Desmarais," said he, "you have forgotten the fifty thousand Septembrists who are in the catacombs! My spies and my horse police will spread themselves all over Paris to-morrow trumpeting to the good bourgeois that a tremendous plot has been unearthed to-night by Monsieur Fouché, Minister of Police. He, wishing to frustrate the abominable projects of the scoundrels of Terrorists, who are in league with the Five Hundred, all Jacobins, warned the Council of Ancients of what was on foot; and the noble conscript fathers, who would be the first to perish under the daggers of the bloodthirsty Terrorists, thereupon decided to remove the sessions of the national representation to St. Cloud."

"Hurrah for the great complot!" shouted Lemercier, opening his mouth for the first time. "And this reason can well be supported by another, by insisting above all that the lives of the Council of Ancients are menaced by their sitting any longer in Paris."

"Yes, yes—on with the 'great conspiracy'!" cried all.

"It is agreed, then," summed up Regnier, "that the discovery of this plot—excellent invention of the police!—is to justify the removal to St. Cloud. Now we must see that our project does not miss fire."

"For that purpose we must call a special session of our colleagues of the Council of Ancients, without informing them of the reason therefor," suggested Lemercier.

"I would observe to my honorable colleague, that, to my mind, it would be a very prudent move not to notify the republican minority which sits with us in the Council. These fellows would ask the most indiscreet questions, the most absurd, ridiculous questions. They wouldn't content themselves with the simple affirmation that there was a plot discovered; they would ask for proofs of the plot! And the details of its discovery! It would be most difficult to answer them!" put in Desmarais.

"Desmarais is right," assented Cornet, another of the conspirators. "My belief is that all of us here present should charge ourselves to go this evening to see our colleagues of the majority personally, let them know the reason for to-morrow morning's extraordinary session, and address letters of notification to them alone. Treason all along the line—our success depends upon it. Is my advice taken?"

"If the republican minority complains about not being notified, we can blame the inspectors of the hall," ventured Lemercier.

"It will be necessary, as a matter of precaution, to double the troops about the Council of Ancients," Lucien Bonaparte advised. "Everything must be foreseen. Squads of police agents should even be mixed with them."

"General Bonaparte, more than anyone else, will serve our ends," answered Regnier. "We shall count on General Bonaparte; say to him that he may count on us."

"Ah, there, Lucien," said Fouché with his withered leer, "if your brother orders the troops to march, how will you, as president of the Fire Hundred, whom you betray with such neatness and despatch, keep those prattlers from screeching like jays when they are dissolved?"

"I shall head off the storm, never fear," laughed Lucien.

"And now, dear colleagues," interrupted Regnier, "let us make haste. The day is nearly gone, and we have not a moment to lose. Let us go on. Who will undertake to prepare the letters of notification?"

"I," volunteered Lahary, their host. "I shall see the inspectors of the hall, who are ours. They are all ready to sell themselves."

"My dear Lucien, you will make it your duty to signify to the General the result of our deliberations?" asked Regnier.

"I am going at once to my brother's, on Victory Street," answered the young man.

"Who," Regnier continued, "will post the inspectors of the hall to have the guards doubled to-morrow?"

"I; and I shall reinforce the posts with spies," replied Cornet.

"My other colleagues and I," Regnier went on, "shall partition among us the task of visiting our friends at once, at their homes, and informing them of the motive of to-morrow's special session."

"We ought above all to caution them to keep the strictest secrecy about the affair," counseled Boulay, from the Meurthe district. "Otherwise it will get noised about, and to-morrow we will see the republican minority march into the Council with their bothersome questions."

"It must be an absolute secret, and I particularly recommend this to our friends," assented Regnier.

"And I," Fouché added, "I shall go teach their lesson to my spies and agents of police, all blackguards and off-scourings, willing to do anything, if they are well paid."

Meanwhile Desmarais, aside, was saying in Lucien's ear: "And so, to-morrow evening the greatest captain of

modern times, your illustrious brother, that grand man clad in the dictatorship which he alone can wield, will decide the form of government it pleases him to bestow upon France. We shall behold once more the glorious days of the monarchy."

"How! the dictatorship is to fall on Bonaparte!" cried Councillor Herwin, in surprise.

"We certainly shall not allow General Bonaparte to decide alone on the form of the government!" declared Cornet.

"What a stupid ass this Desmarais is!" said young Bonaparte to himself. "Messieurs," he added aloud, "I give you my word of honor as a man, my brother has no other ambition than to place his genius and his sword at the service of the Council of Ancients. He is outspokenly republican, and has no thoughts of a dictatorship."

Despite the reassuring effect of Lucien Bonaparte's words, his fellow conspirator Regnier thought it wisest also to jump into the breach. "We won't occupy ourselves, dear colleagues," he said, "with a premature question. Let us first turn down the Constitution of the year III, and pronounce the dissolution of the Council of Five Hundred which sustains it. That done, we shall take further counsel; but first let us triumph over the common enemy. And now, gentlemen—till to-morrow!"

To cries of "Till to-morrow!" "Till to-morrow, the day of great events!" the conspirators dispersed.

CHAPTER V.

THE EIGHTEENTH BRUMAIRE.

By eight o'clock on the morning of the 18th Brumaire, year VIII (November 9, 1799), the Council of Ancients were assembled in their hall. Several members of the republican minority, which had not been notified of the session, had nevertheless come to the Assembly, warned by public rumor of something unusual in the wind. These latter gathered in a group about the tribunal, engaged in animated conversation.

Lemercier, presiding officer of the Council, sounded his bell; silence fell upon the assembly, and the members took their seats.

"Messieurs, our colleague Cornet, chairman of the Committee of Inspectors, has the floor," he said.

Cornet mounted the tribunal and began: "Representatives of the people:—The confidence you have reposed in your Committee of Inspectors has laid it under the obligation of watching over your individual safety, with which the public safety is so closely bound up. For, when the representatives of a nation are menaced in their persons, so that they do not enjoy in their deliberations the most absolute independence, it is no longer a Republic. Your Committee of Inspectors knows that conspirators are pouring into Paris in swarms; that those who are already here do but await the signal to bare their poniards against the representatives of the nation, against the highest authorities and members of the Republic. In presence of the danger which encompasses you, Representatives of the people, your committee felt it incumbent upon it to call you together in special session to inform you thereon; it felt it to be its duty to spur the deliberations of the Council on in deciding what part it was to play in these circumstances. The Council of Ancients holds in its hands the means of saving the country and liberty; it would be doubting its prudence, it would be doubting its wisdom, to think that it will not grapple the problem with its accustomed courage and energy."

"It is inconceivable that neither I nor several of my colleagues received notice of this convocation of the Assembly. This omission—voluntary or involuntary—must be explained," interposed Montmayon, a member of the minority.

"You have not been given the floor!" yelled President Lemercier. "Your motion is out of order. I give the floor to Monsieur Regnier."

"Representatives of the people," declared the latter when he in turn had climbed up to the tribunal, "where is the man so stupid as still to doubt the dangers which encompass us? The proofs have been only too well multiplied. But this is not the time to unroll their lamentable length. Time presses! The least delay may prove so fatal that it would then no longer lie in your power to deliberate on remedies. God forbid that I should so insult the citizens of Paris as to believe them capable of assaulting the national representation! On the contrary, I doubt not but they would protect it with their own bodies, if need were; but this immense city is nursing within its bosom a horde of brigands, of bold and desperate scoundrels. They only await, with ferocious impatience, our first unguarded moment to strike us, and, consequently, to strike at the heart of the Republic itself."

Great cries of feigned indignation burst from the conspirators. Tumult rose in the hall. Aside to himself Hubert muttered—"Forward, with Fouché's Septembrists!"

"If there exists a conspiracy against the Republic—unmask it!" cried a member of the minority. "Your assertions are without bottom. Let's have the proofs!"

"You have not got the floor!" again declared President Lemercier.

Regnier continued: "I propose, gentlemen, according to the precise terms of the Constitution, the following motion and irrevocable decree; and I propose it to you with all the more confidence that a large number of our colleagues, honored by our confidence, share my views:

"The Council of Ancients, in virtue of Articles 102, 103, and 104 of the Constitution, decrees the following:

"Article 1.—The legislative body is transferred to the Commune of St. Cloud. The two Councils, the Five Hundred and the Ancients, shall there sit in the two wings of the palace.

"Article 2.—They shall have moved by to-morrow, the 19th Brumaire, at noon. All continuation of functions and deliberations elsewhere before that time is forbidden.

"Article 3.—General Bonaparte is commissioned to execute the present decree. He will take all measures necessary for the safety of the national representation. All the troops are placed under the command of General Bonaparte; he will be called into the Council to receive the announcement of the present decree and to take the oath. He shall act in concert with the Committee of Inspectors of the two Councils.

"Article 5.—The present decree shall at once be transmitted by messenger to the Council of Five Hundred and to the executive Directorate."

The reading of the decree, acclaimed though it was by the intriguing majority, elicited the most energetic disapproval from the members present of the republican minority.

Cornudet followed Regnier on the tribunal: "Representatives of the people, I move the adoption of this address to the French:

"Frenchmen—The Council of Ancients uses its right, delegated to it by Article 102 of the Constitution, to change the seat of the legislative body.

"The common safety, the common prosperity, are alone the object of this constitutional measure. They shall be attained.

"And you, inhabitants of Paris, be calm. In a few days the presence of the legislative body will be restored to you.

"Frenchmen, the results of this day will soon make it evident whether the legislative body is worthy of establishing your happiness, and if worthy, whether it can.

"Long live the people, by whom, and of whom, the Republic has its existence."

The intriguers rose in mass to adopt this address to the French. In vain the minority struggled to make their protests heard. They were drowned out by the clamor raised by the conspirators.

"Ushers, lead General Bonaparte to the bar," ordered President Lemercier.

Bonaparte was introduced by the ushers. He was clad in the severe uniform of the generals of the Republic, a blue coat with large lapels, a scarf tricolored, like the plume in his hat, tight trousers of white cloth, and high yellow boots coming up to the middle of his calf. The sickly and bilious complexion of the Corsican general brought out remarkably the leanness of his countenance, which was furthermore strongly accentuated by its frame of straight black hair. His look was inscrutable; it disclosed at once pride and dissimulation, astuteness and energy. A smile, which varied between insidiousness, mockery and haughtiness, completed his physiognomy. Generals Berthier, Lefebvre, Moreau, Macdonald, Murat, Moncey, Beurnonville, Marmont, and several aides-de-camp, among whom strode Colonel Oliver, escorted Bonaparte. Their air was one of jauntiness and triumph, and the clatter of their trailing sabers and their spurred boots on the flagstones of the hall rang out harshly. Then a profound silence fell upon the Assembly.

"General," quoth President Lemercier, "the Council of Ancients has summoned you to its bar to impart to you its instructions."

In a voice that was clear and shrill, and marked by a curt and haughty accent, General Bonaparte answered: "Representatives of the people, the Republic was perishing. You perceived its plight; your decree has saved it. Unhappy they who would trouble or disturb it! I shall arrest them, with the aid of General Lefebvre, General Berthier, and all my companions in arms. Woe to the seditious!"

Immoderate applause, echoing "Bravos!" on the part of the majority, greeted this speech. Cries of "Long live General Bonaparte!" were heard.

President Lemercier interrupted the tumult. "General," he said, "the Council of Ancients receives your oaths. It entertains no doubt of their sincerity and your zeal to fulfil them. He who never promised the Republic victories in vain can not but execute with devotion his new engagement to serve her in all faith and loyalty."

Followed by his staff, General Bonaparte strode from the hall. The traitor majority rose to its feet with the foresworn cry upon its lips:

"Long live the Republic!"

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE ORANGERY AT ST. CLOUD.

Promptly at noon of the 19th Brumaire the Council of Ancients assembled in the great gallery of the palace at St. Cloud, still under the presidency of Lemercier, one of the most active spirits in the conspiracy. An usher announced:

"General Bonaparte."

General Bonaparte entered the gallery with a lofty air; his aides trailed in his wake. Through the doors of the gallery, which remained open, were visible the guns and fur caps of a platoon of grenadiers.

"What! Soldiers here!" demanded several members of the minority, with indignation. "What right has General Bonaparte to announce himself in this guise? Would he play the role of a new Caesar?"

"I demand the floor!" cried Bonaparte imperiously.

"In what title, in what right do you thrust yourself into these precincts?" demanded Savary.

"General Bonaparte has the floor," Lemercier declared from his chair.

"Representatives of the people, you are in no ordinary circumstances," began Bonaparte, when at last he could speak. "You are sitting upon a volcano. Allow me to speak with the frankness of a soldier, the frankness of a citizen zealous for the welfare of his country; and suspend, I pray you, your judgment till you have heard me to the end. I was at ease and quiet in Paris when I received the decree of the Council of Ancients, which opened my eyes to the dangers that it and the Republic ran. At once I called to my brothers-in-arms, and we came to give you our support. We came to offer you the arm of the nation, for you are its head. Our intentions were pure and disinterested; and as the price of the devotion we yesterday and to-day displayed, lo, already we reap calumnies! There is speech of 'a new Caesar,' 'a new Cromwell'; they pretend that I aim to establish a new military government."

The majority violently applauded these words. The minority held itself impassible. General Bonaparte continued, increasingly threatening, imperious, and haughty:

"If it was said, to put me outside the law, I would call upon you, brave defenders of the Republic, with whom I have shared so many perils to establish liberty and equality. I would throw myself and my braves upon the courage of you all, and upon my fortune!" (Shudders of indignation among the minority, shocked by this audacious appeal to force.) "I invite you, Representatives of the people, to form into a general committee, and to take those salutary measures which the present dangers urgently demand. You will find my arm ever ready to execute your commands."

Then Bonaparte and his suite retired.

While the majority of the Council of Ancients pledged their allegiance to the military dictator, the republican majority in the Council of Five Hundred, assembled in the Orangery of the palace, was a prey to the most lively agitation. Lucien Bonaparte was in the chair.

"You have the floor, citizen," he said, indicating Emile Gaudin, who was on his feet.

The latter mounted to the tribunal: "Citizen Representatives," he began, "a decree of the Council of Ancients has transferred the seat of the legislative body to this commune. So extraordinary a measure can only be evoked by the fear of, or approach of, some extraordinary danger. In fact, the Council of Ancients has declared to the French people that it made use of the right conferred upon it by Article 102 of the Constitution, in order *to disarm the factions which seek to subjugate the national representation, and to restore internal peace*. I ask, first, that a committee of seven members be elected to report on the condition of the Republic and the means of saving it; second, that the committee make its report to the present session; third, that until then all deliberation be suspended; fourth, that all motions be submitted to it. Let the Assembly decide."

Long applause followed this speech. Representative Delbrel rose next.

"Representatives of the people," said he, "grave dangers do, in fact, threaten the Republic. But those who wish to destroy it are themselves the very ones who, under the pretext of saving it, wish to change or overturn the existing form of government. In vain these conspirators have hoped to frighten us by deploying about us the trappings of armed force. If, nevertheless, the conspirators succeed in deceiving or misleading the courage of our troops, we shall know how to die at our posts, in the defense of public liberty against the tyrants, against the dictators who wish to crush it. *We want the Constitution!*"

Again prolonged applause burst out as Delbrel uttered these words. Many of the members spontaneously rose and repeated, with enthusiasm:

"The Constitution or death!"

Lucien Bonaparte hammered his bell for silence, and Delbrel resumed, energetically:

"Bayonets affright us not. Here we are free! I ask that all the members of this Council, by roll-call, renew at once their oath to sustain the Constitution of the year III."

The Assembly rose as one. "Down with the traitors!" "Long live the Constitution!" "Death to the traitors and conspirators!" shouted several members.

"I ask that we take the oath to oppose the re-establishment of all forms of tyranny," cried Grandmaison.

Grandmaison left the tribunal amid thunderous applause and continued cries of "Long live the Constitution!" The acclamations lasted several minutes. Hardly able to dissimulate the inward irritation he felt, young Bonaparte was finally forced to put the taking of the oath to a vote. It was carried unanimously, the infamous minority of intriguers in league with the president not daring to come out in the open by voting against.

When it came in regular course to his turn to take the oath, Lucien Bonaparte left the chair, ostentatiously mounted the tribunal, and in the midst of a profound silence, with the eyes of all fixed upon him, uttered the words in

a strangely unnatural voice:

"*I swear fidelity to the Republic and to the Constitution of the year III.*"

"Secretary of the *Monitor* newspaper, insert in the report the solemn oath of Citizen Lucien Bonaparte!" cried Briot quickly. The words were followed by shouts of "Bravo!"

"If he plays false to his oath, the treachery will live in history!" exclaimed Grandmaison.

Suddenly one of the doors of the Orangery flew open with a crash, and on the threshold appeared General Bonaparte, encircled by his generals and aides-de-camp, and followed by his company of grenadiers, with fixed bayonets. At the sight of this irruption of armed force into their sacred precincts, the Representatives of the people sprang from their benches as if impelled by an electric shock. Their indignation swelled to voice, and outcries rose in all quarters—"What! Bayonets here! Saber draggers! Down with the dictator!"

All his assurance notwithstanding, General Bonaparte fell back before the outburst produced by his and his soldiers' presence. He removed his hat and signified that he wished to speak. He made to cross the sill of the entrance, when Representative Bigonnet sprang before him, and, barring his passage and that of his armed escort, cried:

"Back—back, rash man! Leave this place at once; you violate the sanctuary of the law!"

The attitude of the Representative of the people, his forceful accents, made their impression upon General Bonaparte. He paled, hesitated, and stopped. A new outburst of indignation resounded in the hall:

"Down with the dictator!"

"Outlaw the audacious fellow!"

"Long live the Constitution!"

"Let us die at our post; long live the Republic!"

Controlling the passion which boiled within him, General Bonaparte shook his head haughtily, and seemed again, by a commanding gesture, to ask for the floor. Once more he essayed to cross the threshold of the hall, followed by his staff, when again several Representatives threw themselves in front of him, forcing him to retire; and Citizen Destrem called in a voice choked with indignation:

"General, did you, then, only conquer in order to insult the national representation?"

Anew, and with redoubled energy, the cries broke out of "Long live the Constitution! Outlaw the dictator!"

White with fear and at a loss what to do, Bonaparte recoiled before the universal reprobation displayed against him. His boldness no longer swayed the situation; he made a sign to his officers, several of whom had carried their clenched hands to their sabers, and he and they withdrew.

Lucien Bonaparte, the secret accomplice of his brother's intrigue against the liberties of the land, and who had followed with anguish the diverse incidents of the preceding scene, seemed stricken with consternation at the General's retreat. The great uproar which continued after the departure of Bonaparte gradually calmed down, and little by little peace was restored on the benches of the national representatives.

No sooner had quiet come upon the assembly, however, than a grenadier captain burst into the hall, leaving his platoon standing in the hallway. He marched rapidly towards the group in the middle of which stood Lucien Bonaparte, answering a vehement cross fire of questions from his colleagues with a vehemence no less than theirs. The captain approached Lucien, spoke a few words in his ear, and the young man hastened from the hall, followed by the captain and his escort. This new violation of the council-chamber of the Five Hundred was so sudden, the departure of their president so unexpected, that the Representatives of the people at first were dumb with astonishment. Then a full-throated cry burst forth, "We are betrayed! Our president has gone over to General Bonaparte!" The agitation of the assembly was tremendous.

Lucien Bonaparte, on the other hand, surrounded by his escort of soldiers, marched rapidly from the hall of the Five Hundred towards a large assemblage of troops drawn up in the middle of the park of St. Cloud. A great drove of people, inhabitants of the commune or arrivals from Paris, drawn thither by curiosity, crowded behind the ranks of soldiers; among these spectators were John Lebrenn and Duresnel. Bonaparte and his staff were in front of the troops. The General was pale and seemed a prey to keen anxiety; for the rumor had spread among the throng of onlookers and the soldiers that he had just been outlawed by the Council of Five Hundred. When Lucien, feigning intense indignation, ran up and spoke to his brother, his first words reassured and put new heart into the would-be dictator. Assuredly, failing of Lucien's presence of mind, the fortune of that day would have gone against the house of Bonaparte, for the youngster at once faced the troops and cried, in ringing tones:

"Citizens! Soldiers! I, president of the Council of Five Hundred, declare to you that the majority of the Council is at this moment under the terror of several Representatives armed with stilettos, who besiege the tribunal, threatening their fellow-members with death, and carrying on the most frightful deliberations.

"Soldiers," he continued, "I declare to you that these audacious brigands, who are without doubt sold to England, have set themselves up in rebellion against the Council of Ancients; they have dared to declare a sentence of outlawry against the general charged to execute its decree, just as if we were still living in the frightful times of the Reign of Terror, when that one word—'outlaw'—sufficed to cause the dearest heads of the fatherland to fall under the knife."

The aides and generals about Bonaparte began to utter threats against the members of the Council of Five Hundred. Colonel Oliver, drawing his sword and brandishing it aloft, cried:

"These bandits must be put an end to!"

"Aye! Aye!" replied several voices from the ranks of the soldiery. "Long live General Bonaparte!"

"Soldiers, I declare to you," continued Lucien, "that this little handful of rabid Representatives has read itself outside the law by its assaults on the liberty of the Council. Well, in the name of that people which is a by-word with this miserable spawn of the Terror, I confide to you, brave soldiers, the necessity of delivering the majority of its Representatives, so that, freed by the bayonet from the stiletto, they may deliberate on the welfare of the Republic."

Prolonged acclamation on the part of the officers and soldiers greeted these words of Lucien's. Exasperation ran high against the 'Representatives of the stiletto.' "The villains," exclaimed several soldiers, "it is with poniard at throat that they have forced the others to decree our general an outlaw. They should be shot on the spot! Death to the assassins! To the firing squad with these aristocrats."

Noticing that his brother was more and more regaining his confidence, at the success of this jugglery with facts, Lucien continued, addressing him at first:

"General! And you, soldiers! You shall not recognize as legislators of France any but those who follow me. As to those who remain in the Orangery, let force be invoked to expel them. These folks are no longer Representatives of the people, but Representatives of the poniard. Let that title stick to them—let it follow them forever, and when they dare to show themselves before the people, let all fingers point them out under that well-deserved designation, 'Representatives of the poniard'! Long live the Republic!"

While Lucien was thus haranguing his brother's troops, the Representatives of the people, no longer doubting the complicity of their president in the schemes of the aspiring dictator, and beset by inexpressible anxiety, set about averting the evils which they felt impending. Motion after motion followed hard upon one another, and passed unnoticed amid the tumult.

"Let us die for liberty!" "Outlawry for the dictator!" "Long live the Constitution!" "Long live the Republic!" Such were the cries that rang within the Orangery.

All at once the roll of drums was heard approaching, then the heavy and regular tread of a marching army. The Orangery door was battered down with the butts of muskets. General Leclerc, his sword drawn, entered, followed by grenadiers. At this apparition, a death-like stillness fell as if by enchantment upon the assembly. The Representatives, calm and grave, regained their benches, where they sat immovable as the Senators of ancient Rome. Right, succumbing to the blows of brutal force, protested as it fell, and denounced Iniquity triumphant, a denunciation which will ring through the ages.

From the tribunal General Leclerc gave the word of command:

"In the name of General Bonaparte, the Council of Five Hundred is dissolved. Let all good citizens retire. Forward, grenadiers! Strike for the breast!"

The grenadiers swarmed down the length of the hall, presenting the points of their bayonets to the breasts of the elected legislators of the nation. Most of the Representatives of the people fell back slowly, step by step, still facing the soldiers and crying "Long live the Republic!" Others threw themselves upon the bayonet-blades; but the grenadiers raised their guns and dragged the Representatives out of the hall.

Caesar triumphed; but the day of Brutus will come! Execration on Bonaparte!

Such were the days of Brumaire.

CHAPTER VII.

GLORY; AND ELBA.

The war, immediately after the Brumaire coup d'etat, was pushed with vigor. Moreau received the commandership-in-chief of the Army of the Rhine, and Bonaparte, on the 16th Floreal of the same year (May 6, 1800), left Paris to put himself at the head of the Army of Italy. On the 25th Prairial (June 14), he achieved the brilliant victory of Marengo, which, completing the work begun under the Directorate, expelled the Austrians from Italy.

Between January 8, 1801, and the 25th of March, 1802, the various powers at war with France were one by one forced to sue for peace. The first treaty was signed by England at Amiens. The peace was to be short-lived, but Bonaparte improved his days of calm to restore a great part of the abuses overthrown by the Revolution, and to lay the foundations for his future hereditary power. Himself a sceptic, but considering religion in the light of an instrument of domination, he treated with the Pope of Rome toward the end of re-establishing Catholicism in all its splendor. He founded the order of the Legion of Honor, a ridiculous and anti-democratic body, and in so much a restoration of social inequality. Shortly thereafter the Revolutionary calendar was replaced by the Gregorian; in short, the First Consul set himself against the current of public opinion, by returning, more and more, to the traditions of the Old Regime.

On May 6, 1802, the Tribunate promulgated the suggestion that the powers of the First Consul be extended for ten

years; and two months later upon motion of the Senate, the docile tool of Bonaparte, he was voted the Consulate for life. Pope Pius VII came to Paris to anoint and crown the brow of Napoleon, Emperor of the French by the grace of God.

The consequences of the restoration of hereditary monarchy in France were not long to await. One by one Napoleon forcibly seized all the budding republics of Europe which the breath of the Revolution had fanned into being, and bestowed them as benefices upon his family. Part of Italy, incorporated into France, was given into the vice-regency of Prince Eugene Beauharnais, the Emperor's brother-in-law; and one of the Emperor's sisters received the Duchy of Modena.

The 11th of April, 1803, was marked by a new coalition between England, Austria and Russia. For a moment bent on a descent upon England, Napoleon abandoned the adventurous project. Recalled from Boulogne to face a war on the continent, Bonaparte, whose military genius still attended him, gained on the 2nd of December, 1805, the wonderful victory of Austerlitz. Peace was again imposed upon Austria; on the 26th of the same month she signed the treaty of Presburg by which she surrendered enormous slices of territory.

In 1806 the King of Naples broke his treaties with France. He was summarily dispossessed of his throne to the profit of Joseph Bonaparte, brother to Napoleon. A short time thereafter, the republic of Batavia was presented to Louis Bonaparte, another brother.

Now dreaming of universal empire, and retrograding toward the era of feudal barbarism, Napoleon attached foreign duchy after foreign duchy as fiefs to his throne. His continual inroads into the neighboring territories rekindled the war. A fourth coalition was formed against the Empire. Prussia, neutral in the previous war, this time took an active part; but October 14, 1806, saw her crushing defeat at Jena; on the 26th the French army entered Berlin in triumph.

Russia, defeated at Friedland and at Eylau, begged for peace; it was concluded at Tilsitt, June 21, 1807.

At each of these new and crowning victories Napoleon's vertigo grew. Drunk with constant success, a universal monarchy now became his fixed idea, and still another of his brothers, Jerome Bonaparte, was invested with a kingdom formed out of several states of the Germanic Confederation. The single member of the Bonaparte family who took no part in the rich quarry of thrones distributed by the conqueror was Lucien. Did he seek thus voluntarily to expiate his complicity in the events of Brumaire, or was he victim to the Emperor's ingratitude? Lucien received not a single crown out of the booty.

Napoleon's return to the traditions of the Old Regime, even to those most execrated by the nation, became more and more extravagant. For instance, the right of primogeniture, abolished by the Revolution, was re-established. This iniquity, from the point of view of society and of the family, was forced upon the Emperor by the logic of his mistakes: if he reconstituted the nobility, he could not but ensure its existence by restricting the partition of property.

On March 1st, 1813, the Prussian government, yielding to the public voice of Germany, which was ever more and more hostile to Napoleon, gave the signal for treachery by breaking its alliance with the French Empire and again joining hands with England and Russia. The new coalition was reinforced by Sweden, where Bernadotte, the old general of the Republic, had become King. The victories of Lutzen and Bautzen at first seemed to assure Napoleon's success. Austria proffered its mediation to the belligerent parties, and they concluded, on June 4, 1813, the armistice of Plessewitz. A congress, in session at Prague, offered Napoleon as national limits those won by the armies of the Republic—the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Alps. But Napoleon rejected the proposal with disdain; he feared to lose by it his prestige in the eyes of the world and of France, which he believed he could hold in subjection only by the glamor of his victories.

The war recommenced, but soon, blow upon blow, began the reverses. Macdonald was defeated in Silesia, Ney in Prussia, Vandamme at Culm. The princes of the Germanic Confederation, encouraged by these checks, and yielding to the pressure of their people, abandoned Napoleon on the battle-field of Leipzig. They turned their troops against him. The French army, in full rout, retreated within its frontiers, October 31, 1813; soon the allies threatened them even there. Napoleon rushed to Paris on November 9th, and ordered new levies of troops. Thousands of families, at extortionate prices, had previously bought off their sons from conscription. This last draft took them all. The Corsican ogre devoured the whole generation.

The situation was desperate. The Austrians advanced by way of Italy and through Switzerland; the English, masters of Spain and Portugal, poured over the Pyrenees, under the command of Wellington; the Prussians, led by Bluecher, invaded Frankfort; and the army of the North, with Bernadotte at its head, penetrated France by way of Belgium. In vain the French soldiers performed miracles of valor; in vain were the Prussians annihilated at Montmirail, at Champaubert, and at Chateau-Thierry, and the Austrians overthrown at Montereau. These sterile victories were the final effort of Napoleon's warrior genius.

On the 30th of March, 1814, the foreign armies entered the capital, a shame which France had undergone but once before across the ages, under the monarchy, in the reign of King John. Talleyrand and Fouché, so long the servile tools of their master, were the first to betray him. On April 11, 1814, Napoleon abdicated the Empire after a reign of ten years.

The Senate, whose conduct during the Empire had been marked with abject servility, put the final touches to its ignominy by decreeing with the following justifications the deposition of the man of whom its own members had been the accomplices:

> The Senate Conservator,
>
> Considering, That under a constitutional monarchy the monarch exists only in virtue of the Constitution, or the social contract;

That Napoleon Bonaparte, for some time head of a firm and prudent government, gave to the nation and his subjects reason to depend for the future upon his wisdom and justice; but thereupon he sundered the pact which bound the French people, notably by levying imposts and establishing taxes not warranted by the law, and against the expressed tenor of the oath which he swore to before his ascension to the throne, according to Article 43 of the Act of Constitution of the 28th Floreal, year XII;

That he committed this assault upon the rights of the people just when he had without necessity adjourned the legislative body and had caused to be suppressed as criminal a report of that body in which it contested his title and his part in the national representation;

That he undertook a series of wars in violation of Article 50 of the Constitutional Act of the 22nd Frimaire, year VIII, which states that declarations of war must be moved, discussed, decreed and promulgated the same as laws;

That he unconstitutionally rendered several decrees carrying the penalty of death, namely the decrees of the 5th of March, last; that he presumed to consider national a war which he entered upon in the interest alone of his own unbridled ambition;

That he violated the laws and the Constitution by his decrees on State Prisons;

That he has abolished ministerial responsibility, confounded all powers, and destroyed the independence of the judiciary;

Considering, That the liberty of the press, established and consecrated as one of the rights of the nation, has been constantly subjected to the arbitrary censorship of the police, and that at the same time he has made use of the press to fill France and all Europe with contradicted facts, false maxims, doctrines favorable to despotism, and outrages against foreign governments;

That acts and reports rendered by the Senate have been caused to be garbled in publication;

Considering, That, in place of reigning with an eye singly to the interest, the happiness and the glory of the French people and in accordance with the words of his oath, Napoleon has heaped high the woes of the fatherland by his refusal to treat upon conditions which the national interests bade him accept, and which would have compromised neither French honor nor the interests of the nation;

By the abuse he has made of all the resources of men and of money that have been confided to him;

By his abandoning of the wounded without medical attention, without assistance, and without food;

By various measures, the result of which has been the ruin of cities, the misery and depopulation of the country districts, famine and contagious diseases;

Considering, That, by all these causes, the Imperial Government, established by the Senate-Consulate on the 28th Floreal, year XII, has ceased to exist, and that the manifest will of all the French calls for an order of things whose first result shall be the re-establishment of general peace and which may be also an epoch of solemn reconciliation among all the states of the great European family,

The Senate declares and decrees as follows:

Article 1.—Napoleon Bonaparte is deposed from the throne, and the hereditary right set up in his family is abolished. The French people and the army are released from their oath of fidelity towards Napoleon Bonaparte, who has ceased to be Emperor.

The heart rises with indignation and disgust at the thought of the shamefulness of these miserable senators. Not alone did not one among them dare to protest, even by his silence, against these acts which they now condemned, but these very acts in their time had had no more vociferous upholders than they themselves.

One last test was reserved for France and Napoleon. The latter was furnished later (in 1815) with the opportunity to expiate and redeem the past. His monarchical pride, his hatred for the Revolution both contrived to render impossible this supreme expiation, and a terrible chastisement fell upon him. In 1814 Bonaparte, although his throne was forfeit, was recognized sovereign of the island of Elba. The coalized Kings assigned him that place as a residence, and thither, attended by several officers and soldiers faithful to him in his misfortune, he repaired.

So great was the need felt by France for peace, repose, and independence, after these ten years of warfare and hard service, that in spite of her profound aversion for the Bourbons, their return was hailed with joy. The kingdom of 1814, a new usurpation of the sole, indivisible, indefeasable and inalienable sovereignty of the people, consecrated again the iniquitous principle of monarchy, against which the republican minority in vain protested.

Louis XVIII, accordingly, made his solemn entry into Paris on the 3rd of May, 1814, in the midst of the princes of his family, escorted by the greater part of the Marshals of the Empire, among whom mingled Emigrants and foreign generals: legitimate punishment to Napoleon!

The Bourbons deeply wounded the sentiment of the nation by a return to the usages of the Old Regime and by outrages against the acts of the Revolution. Decrees restored to the Emigrants the estates and property that had not yet been sold; the loans contracted by Louis XVIII in various countries were placed among the debts of the state. Ordinances prescribed the observation of church days and Sundays; the censorship was retained almost as rigorous as under the Empire. Processions commenced again to circulate about the churches. Thus the royal government in a short space became as odious as the imperial government had been. Several military conspiracies were organized. One faction of the bourgeoisie thought of calling to the throne the Duke of Orleans, while the republican party thought, on its part, to turn the trend of events to its own profit. But, as has well been said, the fate of France lay in the hands of the army, attached to Napoleon by the privileges he had showered upon it, and by the memories of its glory. The people, long grown disused to political life, switched off by Napoleon, and wounded by the Bourbons in its revolutionary instincts, lay inert, all save a few old patriots of the illustrious days of the Revolution. The army alone, then, was the deciding factor in the fate of the Restoration. Such was the state of mind in France from the 3rd of May, 1814, the day of Louis XVIII's entry into Paris, up to the beginning of the month of March, 1815, at which period begins our next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

RETURN OF NAPOLEON.

It was ten o'clock in the morning of the 20th day of March, of the year 1815. Monsieur Desmarais and his brother-in-law, Monsieur Hubert, were awaiting in a chamber of the Tuileries an audience which they had requested with the Duke of Blacas, minister to Louis XVIII, and his most intimate favorite. They had anticipated the hour of the interview, in order to arrive among the first; for great was the throng of solicitants which sought Monsieur Blacas, whose recommendation was all-powerful with the King. Desmarais and Hubert were dressed in the costume of peers of the realm of France. The former, first senator under the Consulate, then under the Empire, had been besides created a Count by Napoleon. Thus, turned royalist, just as he had been Bonapartist (and, to retrace his political career, Thermidorean, Terrorist, Jacobin, and first of all Constitutional), Count Desmarais owed to his recent royalist devotion the fact that he had been included in the list of senators who were made peers of France since the Bourbon return. He was now in his sixty-ninth year; his careworn, bitter features began to show the weakening hand of age. Hubert, on the contrary, seemed lively and brisk as ever. He had become the possessor of an enormous fortune, thanks to his purveyorship under the Directorate, while he was a member of the Council of Ancients. He had curried no favors at the hand of the Empire, whose absolutism conflicted with his political principles; his ideal government had always been a constitutional King, subordinated to an oligarchy of bourgeois. Hubert had been one of a batch of large proprietors whom Louis XVIII had in one day admitted to the Chamber of Peers; but he had not been long in alienating himself from the government of the Restoration, which was piling fault upon fault; he accordingly attached himself to the Orleanist faction.

While awaiting their audience with Minister Blacas, the two were engaged in a political discussion. Soon there entered Fouché, in tow of an usher. "You will inform his Excellency that the Duke of Otranto begs an audience with him," said Fouché to the usher. The usher bowed and disappeared into the ante-room, while the new Duke exclaimed:

"What, is this you, Citizen Brutus Desmarais? And pray, what are you soliciting here? An order for the debut at the Opera of that dancing girl you are protecting?"

"That devil of a Fouché knows everything! You would think he was still Minister of Police," interjected Hubert.

"The cask will always smell of the herring, my dear. I saw this morning two of my old agents, who continue to make me their little confidences."

"Prefect of police, chief of spies! A pretty function, and highly honorable!" sneered Hubert.

"Take care, take care, Citizen Hubert," cautioned Fouché. "I have my eye on the Orleanist conspiracy, in which you have taken it upon yourself to play a role!"

"Your spies are robbing you. You are very ill informed," retorted the banker.

"Why try to trifle with me? Everybody conspires under the open heavens these days. These Bourbons are imbeciles, and their Prefect of Police, Monsieur André, is a ninny! We play all around their legs."

"How can you dare to hold such language in the very palace of our beloved sovereigns?" protested Count Desmarais.

"Come, now! You and your fellows in the Chamber of Peers are yourselves conspirators and enemies of the Bourbons."

"Your conspiracies are pure will-o'-the-wisps," again retorted Hubert.

"Well, I tell you that you, Hubert, are conspiring for the Duke of Orleans. Several officers and generals are conspiring in favor of Bonaparte. A number of colonels in command of regiments are connected with this second plot; while, finally, the old Jacobins, and notably your son-in-law John Lebrenn, Citizen Brutus, as well as the painter Martin and their friends, are conspiring for the Republic; that's a third conspiracy."

"All these plots and complots are of your own invention," grumbled Desmarais, feeling very uneasy.

"True!" acquiesced Fouché with a smile. "But if I never follow the conspiracies I invent, I at least always let myself into those which the imbeciles are nursing. I've a foot everywhere: with the republicans, as an ex-Terrorist; among the Bonapartists, as ex-minister of the Emperor; with the Orleanists as an old friend of Philip Equality's; in short, the best proof I can give you of the existence of these complots is, that I have just come to denounce them. Yes," he continued, his smile broadening, while Desmarais and Hubert stared at him in stupefaction, "I have come to denounce them to that blockhead of a Blacas."

"His Excellency will have the honor to receive Monsieur the Duke of Otranto," announced the usher, making a low bow to Fouché.

"Messieurs," beamed Fouché as he moved towards the open door, "a royalist like me comes before everybody."

As the door closed after Fouché, a new group of solicitors entered the waiting room. These newcomers were the Count of Plouernel, now in spite of his missing eye lieutenant-general and second in command of the company of Black Musketeers of the military household of Louis XVIII; the Count's son, Viscount Gonthram, a boy of thirteen, in the costume of King's page; and, lastly, Cardinal Plouernel, the Count's younger brother. The prelate was garbed in a red cloak and cap. For a moment these new personages stood apart, then the Count of Plouernel advanced towards Monsieur Hubert, whom he did not at first recognize, and engaged him in the following conversation:

"Will you have the goodness, sir, to inform me whether the audiences have commenced?"

"Yes, monsieur; just now the Duke of Otranto was called in by Monsieur the Duke of Blacas. But, pardon me," he added, as little by little he recalled the other's features, "is it not Monsieur the Count of Plouernel whom I have the honor to address?"

"Yes, monsieur," replied the latter.

"Monsieur, do you not recognize me?" continued Hubert. "I will assist you. We met in 1792, during the trial of our unhappy King. We were conspiring then against the Republic—"

"St. Roche Street, at the house of the former beadle of the parish? Now I recall it!"

"Who would have told us then, Monsieur Count, that more than twenty years after that meeting we would encounter each other again in the palace of the brother of that royal martyr?"

"I fear lest that terrible lesson be lost upon royalty."

"Between ourselves, and without reproach, you have been somewhat the cause of these unhappinesses, you gentlemen of the nobility."

"In conspiring against the republican Constitution we but defended our property and our honor. The Republic despoiled us of our seigniorial rights, sacred and consecrated rights which we held of God and of our sword."

"Ah, the eternal strife between the Franks and the Gauls! Why is not my nephew Lebrenn here to reply to you!"

"What say you, sir?" asked Plouernel, shuddering at the name. "That Lebrenn, that ironsmith, has he become your nephew? What strange news!"

"He married my niece, the daughter of advocate Desmarais, to-day Count and peer of France."

Under the weight of the memories evoked by the name of Lebrenn, the Count fell silent. The Cardinal drew close to the speakers, holding by the hand his nephew Gonthram. His Eminence, better served by his memory than his brother the Count, recognized Hubert at once, and addressed him in the most courteous tones:

"It has indeed been many years since we met, monsieur; for, if you recollect, I accompanied my brother to the cabal in St. Roche Street. What a time! What sad days!"

"Indeed; and your Eminence must recall how lacking in respect to you the reverend Father Morlet was, who arrogated to himself the chairmanship of our meeting. The reverend was accompanied by his god-son, who seemed to be about the age of this pretty page" (indicating Gonthram); "but he was far from resembling him, for I never saw a face more sly and hypocritical than that child of the Church wore."

"Father Morlet is dead, and his god-son, taking orders in Rome under the name of Abbot Rodin, is affiliated with the Society of Jesus," the Cardinal informed the group. "This Father Rodin, as private secretary of the present General of the Order, enjoys great influence. Ah! by my faith! I did not know that our master hypocrite was in Paris!"

While the Cardinal was uttering these last words, the door opened and in stepped himself, the reverend Father Rodin. He was accompanied by an usher, into whose ear he dropped a couple of words. Rodin was now past his thirtieth year. His meager face, smooth shaven and wan, his half-closed and restless reptile eyes, his slightly bowed back, his already bald forehead, his bent neck, his sidling gait, his attitude of mock-humility, through which shone his contempt for others—everything about the man stamped him as hypocrisy incarnate. His black gown was threadbare and whitened at the seams; the mud was caked on his clumsy shoes. In one hand he held a squalid-looking cap, in the other an old cotton umbrella with red-and-white checks.

The usher to whom he spoke stepped for a moment into the next room and returned almost immediately. He made a deep obeisance of respect to the Jesuit, and said to him in a voice marked with great deference, "Reverend Father, I have the honor to conduct you at once to the private cabinet of monseigneur, who is at present engaged with the Duke of Otranto."

Rodin made a sign of assent, and with eyes fixed on his shoes, so that he did not see the Cardinal, he was about to walk by the group in which the latter stood.

"Usher!" called the Cardinal, haughtily, "a word with you. We, Monsieur the Count of Plouernel and I, were here before this reverend, which he does not seem to know. The reverend gentleman should wait his time of audience, and not usurp ours," he added, while Rodin bowed himself almost to the ground before him.

"I have the honor to inform your Eminence that I have orders from Monseigneur the Duke of Blacas on the subject of this holy Father. He is to be introduced whenever he presents himself, and before all other persons. I obey the orders given me," returned the usher.

"I shall not allow a simple priest to precede by a single step a Prince of the Church!" stamped the Cardinal. Rodin only bowed before him several times, lower than before, without raising his eyes to his face.

"My orders are imperative," said the usher.

Indignant the Cardinal turned to his brother. "Well, brother," he said, "there we are! By the navel of the Pope, I'd like to knock the interloper down!"

For all answer Rodin again mutely and humbly inclined towards the Cardinal. Then he made a sign to the usher to precede him, and vanished through a door on the opposite side of the room from where he had entered.

The latter entrance again swung open, and admitted Lieutenant General Count Oliver, in the garish uniform of his rank and decorated with the Legion of Honor and several foreign orders. He wore the great red ribbon on his scarf, the order of the Iron Crown over his shoulder, and the Cross of St. Louis in one of the buttonholes of his coat, which

glittered with braid. John Lebrenn's old apprentice was now thirty-eight; his moustache still held its blackness, but his hair was streaked with grey; his face still was handsome and martial. A total stranger to the other personages in the audience chamber, he seated himself a little distance off from the group formed by the Cardinal, the Count of Plouernel, and Monsieur Hubert. Count Desmarais had withdrawn into the alcove of a window.

"That Jesuit, that scamp, that priestlet, introduced to Monsieur Blacas before me!" stormed the Cardinal to the Count, his brother. "Me, a Prince of the Church! I declare, as things are going, helped along by that execrable charter of 1814, we are marching towards another '93! France is lost!"

"The Restoration has done a great deal for the clergy, Monsieur Cardinal," declared Hubert. "You are very wrong to cast reproaches at the King and the government."

"I am of my brother's opinion as to what concerns the nobility," said the Count of Plouernel. "I blame the King strongly for giving the command of two regiments of his guards to ex-Marshals of the Empire, clodhoppers, men of no account, like all these plebeians, hardly scraped clean by the nobility Napoleon covered them with." General Oliver, so far unnoticed by the Count of Plouernel, here moved indignantly, but the Count proceeded: "The King should never have entrusted commands to these barrack-heroes, smelling of the pipe and the bottle, bumpkins whom we must elbow out of our way at the Tuileries, we, old Emigrants, who fought them under the Republic. We sacrificed all for our masters, and they do us the outrage to treat these upstarts as our equals! These specimens, during their Emperor's time, expressed themselves most insultingly toward the house of Bourbon; and to-day they accept services, favors, and commands from the King. It is only to betray him some day; at least that would not be the last word in the renegades' baseness, and they would not even be conscious of their apostasy!"

At this General Oliver rose, pale with anger, and striding roughly up to Plouernel said in a voice of concentrated rage:

"Sir, you will regret, I am convinced, your last words, when you learn that I, Lieutenant General, Count Oliver, have served the Emperor, to whom I owe my rank and title. For I have the honor to be a soldier of fortune, sir. I shall know how to chastise any insolence that may be addressed to me!"

Disdainfully looking General Oliver over from head to foot, the Count of Plouernel made answer: "Well, sir! I, Gaston, Count of Plouernel, second in command in his Majesty's Black Musketeers, have the honor never to have served any but my masters. I followed them into exile, and I returned to France in 1814. You have my opinion of traitors and turn-coats."

"The King has conferred on me the command of a military division, and it pleased him to award me the Cross of St. Louis. Tell me, sir, am I in your eyes because of that command and that decoration a traitor or a renegade? Answer, sir," demanded Oliver.

"Since you ask me, sir, I shall reply in all sincerity——"

At the moment when Plouernel would have finished the sentence, he was interrupted by the hilarious roar of a new personage who had burst into the room laughing fit to split his sides. It was his old friend the Marquis of St. Esteve, that intolerable would-be conspirator, whom the most serious moment could not check in his buffoonery. Powdered white, the Marquis's hair was dressed in 'pigeon-wings'; his little queue bobbed up and down on the collar of his bourgeois' coat with gold epaulets. He wore a court sword, knee breeches, and top boots; he was the epitome of that type of Emigrant dubbed 'Louis XV's tumblers.' On seeing Plouernel he at once ran toward him, clasped him in his arms, and all the while laughing fit to kill, exclaimed:

"Ah, Count! Hold me! I die! Oh, the idea! Ha, ha, ha! This time I shall split of it, surely! Oh, oh, oh! If you knew the funny sto—ry! Ah, the idea! I shall surely choke—let me laugh!"

Plouernel pushed him off, muttering "Devil take the nuisance!"

"Hang the Emigrant!" growled Oliver, on his part. "Interrupting just as I was about to slap that insolent fellow's face!"

"You don't know of it!" ran on the Marquis, continuing to shriek with laughter. "Ha, ha, ha! Bonaparte—has—has—oh! the idea!—has returned—has landed at the gulf—oh! oh!—at the gulf of Juan, near the town of Antibes! If that wouldn't make one split his sides laughing! Hi, hi, hi!"

"Gentlemen," cried an usher rushing in in a fright, and beside himself, "his Excellency has just been summoned to the King in haste by an important unforeseen matter. There is no need waiting—the audiences are off for another day!"

Following him hurriedly out of Blacas's cabinet, came Fouché, rubbing his hands. Glimpsing Desmarais, pale and distracted at the news of Napoleon's landing, he called to him: "If the tyrant does not have you shot on his return, Citizen Count Brutus, my faith, you will have fortune with you this time. Make your will!"

"Such a catastrophe! The designs of God are indeed impenetrable!" exclaimed the Cardinal to Fouché.

"On the contrary, this is the happiest event that could happen under the canopy. You don't see that Bonaparte falls into the little trap I set for him. His return is folly. He will reach Paris without striking a blow, for the Bourbons are execrated. But before a month, all Europe will march against France."

Without waiting for Fouché to finish his speech, the various persons in the hall fled to the door, each a prey to a different fear.

CHAPTER IX.

WATERLOO.

The Hundred Days were over. They had passed like the lightning in a stormy night. Relying only on his genius and his army, Napoleon had staked upon the turn of a battle his Empire and the independence of the country. This battle, of Waterloo, he lost, in spite of the super-human heroism of his soldiers.

May the name of Napoleon be accursed!

Several days had passed since that great disaster. In the cloth shop of John Lebrenn, in St. Denis Street, under the sign of the 'Sword of Brennus,' the following scene was enacting.

General Oliver, back wounded from the battle of Waterloo, where he had bravely conducted himself, was engaged in conversation with his former master.

"Well, Oliver," Lebrenn was saying to the wounded warrior, "your Bonaparte has led France to her doom. We have lost the frontiers conquered by the Republic. A second time the stranger is in the heart of our country."

"Ah, would that I had remained at Waterloo, like so many others of my companions-in-arms. But death would not take me!"

"I reproach you not, Oliver. You are defeated and unhappy; you have returned to us. Let us draw the curtain over the past."

"How just were the forebodings of your valiant sister! I sought a title of nobility, chivalric orders, and an income. To sustain the Empire I would have shot my parents and friends. When the Restoration took place, I did like the most of the Marshals and generals. In order to preserve my rank, my title, my crosses and my pay, I turned traitor to my past, I served the Bourbons, whom I despised. I would still have retained a fair competency even if, which was almost impossible, I had been able to tear myself away from the attraction of the army. But no, I had become a servile courtier. I had breathed the air of the court, I could live nowhere else. I cried 'Long live the King!' I went to mass, I followed the processions, a wax taper in my hand, I swallowed the insults the Emigrants heaped upon us when they beheld us at court crooking the knee to their princes. Ah, Victoria! Victoria! Shame and anguish have fallen upon me. I betrayed the Republic in Brumaire, I sold myself to the Restoration in 1814, I deserted it during the Hundred Days, and here I am reduced to exile—a just punishment for my apostasies."

"You have at least, Oliver, the conscience to repent that sad past. But you will see how few among the generals and Marshals of the Empire will repent like you the acts whose memory now galls you. Yes, you will yet see the Princes, the Dukes, and the Counts of the Empire, little as the new Restoration will please them, take up again the white cockade as quickly as they threw it down three months ago for the tricolor. Most of the Marshals are gorged with wealth; dignity would be easy for them. But no, they must renounce it for vanities dearer to their pride. Just God! There you have the fruits of Napoleon's maxim 'It is by rattles that men are led.'"

"I see too late the abysses toward which Napoleon was driving France," groaned Oliver.

Martin the painter just then happened in. "Ah, my dear friend," he announced from the threshold, "all hope is lost. Carnot despairs of the situation."

"Nevertheless, the situation is still good," protested Oliver. "Paris, considered as an immense entrenched camp, gives us the disposition of the five bridges across the Seine. It would be possible, by a night march, to move our troops by either bank of the river and wipe out the Prussian army. But, to carry out that plan, the people would have to be armed, which Napoleon does not want. The people in arms would mean revolution and the Republic."

"What Oliver says bears the stamp of reason," remarked Lebrenn.

"Our friends said to Carnot," returned Martin, "'The Emperor will be forced to abdicate, his hopes of empire will be blasted. The allies will not content themselves with sending him back again to Elba; he has everything to fear at their hands. Well, despairing as our position seems, never, if he wished it, will it have been so excellent! He can yet become the savior of France and the admiration of posterity. Let him again transform himself into General Bonaparte, let him put himself at the head of the troops and the armed people, with the battle-cry "Long live the Republic! Long live the Nation!" Then liberty will triumph and France arise, as ever, victorious.'"

"My heart leaps with enthusiasm at hearing such noble language," cried Oliver. "Yes, yes, Long live the Republic! No more monarchs! Neither Kings nor masters!"

"'The Emperor is resolved to abdicate,' replied Carnot to us," Martin continued. "'He knows well enough that he has only to don the red bonnet and cry To arms! for the whole people to rise. But he does not desire a new revolution, he does not want to go outside the law. He has no longer any authority. The Chamber of Deputies has seized the executive power, and is treating with the allies. The Emperor's part is played, he can do nothing more for France. Without his concurrence, I consider it futile to engage upon a struggle.' Such was the response of Carnot."

Castillon and Duchemin were the next to come into the cloth shop. The first, in his working clothes, still had on his leather apron, blackened by smoke from the forge. Duchemin, whose moustache had grown quite grey in the interim, wore a veteran's uniform. He had been placed in that corps after the Russian campaign, in which he served as quartermaster in the artillery of the Imperial Guard.

"Well, my friends, what news from the suburbs?" asked Lebrenn.

"In St. Antoine they are demanding arms to run to the defense of the barrier of La Villette, which they say is already threatened by the Prussians. 'Guns! Your Emperor will never give them to you!' I told them," answered Castillon. And catching sight of General Oliver, he gazed at him a moment open-mouthed and concluded: "Well, I am

not blind! There is Oliver! What a strange encounter!"

"It is indeed Oliver, our old apprentice," said Lebrenn, smiling.

"Ah, it is really you, my fine fellow!" returned Castillon. "Well, well! It seems you have become a general. Well, that is nothing wrong, for you are a brave one. But I also learned—and this, on my faith, would make a hen smile—I also read that you had become a Count! Is it possible! You, a Count! an ex-ragamuffin who used to ply the bellows for our forge, and to whom I taught the song of those fine days: '*Ah ça ira, ça ira*, to the lamp-post with the aristocrats!'"

Instead this time of getting angry, Oliver smiled sadly and extended his hand to Castillon, saying, "Amuse yourself at my expense, my old Castillon; it is your right. Your quips are merited, I confess my wrongs. But be indulgent toward your old comrade. To-day, I wish to fight for the Republic."

"Heaven be thanked! You have sung me an air there that has brought the tears to my eyes," exclaimed Castillon with emotion as he eagerly pressed the general's hand.

Duchemin smiled genially and gave the military salute. "Present, general," he said. "Still another of the Army of the Rhine and Moselle. You do not recall me at the passage of the Beresina?"

"Well! Well!" replied Oliver warmly. "Well do I remember you, and Carmagnole, your sweetheart of a spit-fire."

"Here is an ex-member of the battalion of Paris Volunteers—a tried patriot, and a republican of the old school," raid Castillon, indicating to General Oliver Duresnel, who just then entered.

"Ah, my friend," said John Lebrenn to the new arrival, "if you do not bring me better news than Martin has just given us, our reunion to-day will lack its flavor. The masses lie indifferent."

"*Consummatum est!*" Duresnel sighed by way of answer. "It is finished. I have just left the Chamber of Deputies; the Emperor has issued his abdication, and is preparing, they say, to set out for his residence of Malmaison, where he will remain while the allies settle upon his fate."

"And what news of the army?"

"The Prince of Eckmuehl, who commands the troops united under the walls of Paris, assembled his generals this morning, and all or nearly all have gone over to the Bourbon government. No more hope for it; we must endure the ignominy of a second Restoration."

"In which case, friend John, what shall we do? Without arms, without headship, without leaders, the people can do nothing," sighed Castillon.

"The old sans-culottes of the St. Antoine suburb ask nothing better than to go to the front. In desperation for the cause, they were to march to-day in mass to the Elysian Fields, in the hope that Napoleon would yield to the acclamations of the populace," commented Duchemin.

"I am on guard at the Elysian Fields at six o'clock!" exclaimed John Lebrenn, looking at his watch. "Like an old National Guard, I must to my post. Adieu, friends!" And he continued to Oliver, "Come to supper this evening with us and with our old comrades here. We shall take our adieus of the banished soldier, and before we part, Oliver, we will drain a last bumper of wine to the re-birth of the Republic. Neither Kings nor masters! The Commune, the Federation, and the Red Flag!"

"Till this evening, then," replied Oliver. "Long live the Republic! War upon Kings! Down with the Bourbons!"

CHAPTER X.

DEPOSITION.

Although it was mid-June, the day touched its close towards eight o'clock in the evening. The shadows of night were already mingling with the thick shade of the Elysian Garden, where Napoleon dismounted on his return from Waterloo. A compact mass of people filled Marigny Alley, one of whose sides was formed by the terrace of the palace, on which trees and verdure grew in profusion.

The throng was composed almost to a man of artisans or federated troops of the suburbs. From time to time the buzzing of the vast multitude was dominated by the cry from thousands of throats—"Down with the Bourbons!"—"Down with the foreigners!"—"Down with the traitors!"—"Arms!"—"To the front!"—"Long live the Emperor!"

As the evening wore on, however, that last cry of "Long live the Emperor," became more and more infrequent. The people understood at last that Napoleon, whose return they had acclaimed with such hopefulness, preferred rather to abandon France to the woes which hung over her than to make an appeal to the spirit of Revolution. The Corsican ceased to be the idol of the people. Cursed be the name of Napoleon!

At his post, gun on shoulder, John Lebrenn paced up and down the length of the terrace of the Elysian Garden. He heard the cries of the crowd—"Down with the traitors"—"Down with the Bourbons"—"The Emperor, the Emperor!"—"War to the knife against the invaders!"

At that moment Napoleon, in a round hat and plain citizen's cloak, turned out of the alley which abutted on the terrace. The dethroned Emperor was walking, in a revery, his hands crossed behind his back. In the dark, and under the trees, he did not notice the sentry until close upon him. When he did, he stopped short, and, falling into his usual habit of questioning those whom he met, he said to Lebrenn, who presented arms:

"Have you been in the service?"

"Yes, Sire," replied John. The thought flashed through his mind that he had in the same words answered Louis Capet in his prison in the Temple; now he was calling Napoleon "Sire" on the day of his deposition.

"What campaigns were you in? Answer," commanded Napoleon.

"The campaign of 1794, in the Army of the Rhine and Moselle."

"Under the Republic! Have you served since?"

"No, Sire; I was married. I served the Republic."

"What is your profession?"

"I am a cloth merchant."

"In what quarter?"

"St. Denis Street."

"What say they of the Emperor among the merchants of St. Denis Street? Answer me without hunting for phrases."

At that moment a new cry burst from the throng below and reached the ears of Napoleon:

"Down with the Bourbons!"

"Down with the traitors!"

"Arms! Arms! To the frontiers!"

"The Emperor, long live the Emperor!"

"Again?" said Napoleon, shrugging his shoulders; and then to Lebrenn, "Well, what do they say of me in St. Denis Street?"

"The most of the burghers look with repugnance upon a new Restoration; but for the commercial bourgeoisie, the Restoration, if it will only assure peace, means a renewal of business," replied Lebrenn.

"Always the same, these bourgeois," muttered Napoleon; "peace, business. Their mouths can shape no other words. Among them never the shadow of national sentiment! And what is the attitude of the people, the workingmen of your quarter?"

"Some are astonished at your inaction, Sire; others are more severe; they arraign your general policies."

"Have I not always had my hands tied by the Chamber of Deputies, by babblers, lawyers, and rainbow-chasers! They think only of orating, of overwhelming me with their reproaches, instead of aiding me to save the country. They balanced opinions like the Greeks in the lower world, while here the barbarians were at the gates of Paris. They are the wretches!"

"I was at St. Cloud in the days of Brumaire, Sire, when with your grenadiers you drove the Representatives of the people from their seats. Now, when the safety of the fatherland is at stake, why do you not employ the same measures against the deputies who prevent your saving France?"

"The Five Hundred were Terrorists, malcontents, seditionists, assassins," said Napoleon quickly; "they merited death."

"I arrived shortly after the session of the Five Hundred. You ran no danger. No poniard was raised against you. The Five Hundred were no malcontents; they defended the law and the Constitution."

"You are a Jacobin."

"Yes, Sire; ever since '93; and I believe that to-day, as in '93, the Republic single-handed could cope with coalized Europe—especially had the Republic your sword!"

Napoleon's face changed, and he smiled with that inscrutability mingled with grace and good-fellowship which gave him, more than anything else, such influence over the simple-minded. "Ah, ah, Sir Jacobin," he said, "well for you it is that I find out so late what you are. You have no doubt some influence in your quarter; I would have sent you to rot in Vincennes, my new prison of state, at the bottom of a pit!"

Anew the cries from below broke out: "Down with the Bourbons!" "Arms!" "To the frontiers!" "Long live the Emperor—War to the death against the foreigners!"

"Brave people!" said Napoleon. "They would let themselves still be hewed to pieces for me; and still they bear the weight of imposts, of munitions of war, while my Marshals and all the military chiefs whom I covered with riches betray me. My role is played out. I shall go to America and turn planter, and philosophize on the emptiness of human events! I shall write my campaigns, like Caesar."

"Sire, you forget France. Place your sword at her service; become again General Bonaparte, as you were in the glorious days of Arcola and Lodi—"

"Sir," broke in the Emperor impatiently and with emphasis, "when one has been Emperor of the French, he does not step down. To fall, smitten by the thunderbolt, is not debasement. Never shall I consent to become again a simple general."

An aide-de-camp came up and joined the General. "Sire," he said, "Colonel Gourgaud awaits your Majesty's commands."

"Let him harness the six-horse coach and make his way out through the large gate of the Elysian Garden, to draw the attention of the mob about the palace. I shall take the single-horse carriage and leave by the equerries' gate. Hold, I have another order for you."

Napoleon grasped the aide by the arm, addressed him in a low voice, and walked off with him. Soon they both disappeared around the corner of the alley. The night was now black as pitch. Below, the cries of the people ascended again:

"Arms! Arms!"

"To the frontiers!"

"The Emperor, the Emperor! War to the bitter end against the invaders!"

"Your Emperor, O people! is fleeing from you by night," soliloquized John Lebrenn as he paced his weary round on the terrace. "He flees the duties to which your voice would call him. He might have enshrined his name in a new glory, that would have been pure and bright forever. But fate drives him on to terrible retribution—captivity, perhaps death. And thus will be avenged the coup d'etat of Brumaire, thus his attempts against the liberty of the people. May the same fate fall upon all the monarchs of the world!"

EPILOGUE.

CHAPTER I.

"TO THE BARRICADES!"—1830.

Fifteen years have rolled their course since the second Restoration, accomplished after the Hundred Days. The Bourbon government seems to have set itself the task of making the indignation of the people run over.

Many are the grievances of France against the Bourbons: Provocations, iniquities, barbarisms, the White Terror of 1815;—the provost courts, where the hatred and rancor of the Emigrants sated itself with vengeance;—assassination, organized, blessed, and glorified, in the south;—Trestaillon and other defenders of altar and throne slaying their fellow citizens with impunity;—the Chamber of Deputies unattainable, all its members royalists save one;—the billion francs' indemnity granted to the Emigrants;—the establishment by the Ultramountainists and the Ultraroyalists of the law of sacrilege and the law of primogeniture;—the impieties of the clergy;—the orgies of the mission fathers.

Military and civil conspiracies sprang up, to protest against the Bourbons with the blood of martyrs. The *Carbonarii*, a vast secret society, extended its ramifications throughout all France and preserved the traditions of republicanism. The Chamber of Deputies was dissolved, having been guilty of declaring to Charles X through the organ of its majority, in its address to the crown, that harmony no longer existed between the legislative body and the government. The Chamber having been dissolved, the country in the new elections responded by returning 221 deputies of the opposition which composed the majority of the Assembly. King Charles X, in place of deferring to this manifestation by the country, imagined that, thanks to the successes of the French arms in Algeria, he could successfully put through a coup d'etat; which he attempted, using Minister Polignac as his instrument, and rendering the ordinances of the 26th of July, 1830, which suppressed the liberties of the nation.

During the fifteen years of the Restoration, John Lebrenn had continued his Breton cloth trade in Paris. Monsieur Desmarais, having gone mad upon the second return of the Bourbons, died in isolation. Marik, Lebrenn's son, had espoused Henory Kerdren, the daughter of a merchant of Vannes, a correspondent of his father's. One son had been born of the marriage. He was now two years old, and had been given the name of one of the heroes of ancient Gaul, Sacrovir.

The 27th of July, the day after the promulgation of the Polignac decrees, at about eleven in the evening, Madam Lebrenn and her daughter-in-law Henory had closed the shop, and had gone up to their mezzanine floor; there, together in their room, they busied themselves with the preparation of lint, in anticipation of the insurrection which

seemed due on the morrow. Marik Lebrenn and Castillon were loading cartridges. Castillon, now at the ripe old age of sixty-three, was white of hair, but still supple and robust, and still plied his ironsmith's trade. A cradle, in which slept little Sacrovir, the grandson of John Lebrenn, was placed beside Henory. It was a picture of the sweet joys of the family.

"In the presence of the passing events, and especially of those that seem to be preparing," observed Madam Lebrenn, the same brave, steadfast Charlotte as of yore, "I feel again that grave and almost solemn emotion which I felt in my girlhood, in the grand days of the Revolution. Those were glorious spectacles!"

"A terrible and glorious time, mother," answered Henory. "Imperishable memories!"

"In the name of a name! We shall fight, Madam Henory!" quoth old Castillon. "These cartridges will not be wasted. Down with Charles X, Polignac, and the whole clique of them! Down with the skull-caps!"

Just then John Lebrenn came up. All rose and ran to meet him. He held out his hand to his wife, and kissed his daughter-in-law Henory on the forehead.

"The delegates of the patriot workingmen of the quarter have not yet come?" he asked.

"No, father," replied Marik.

"What news have you picked up on your travels, my friend?" asked his wife.

"Good, and bad."

"Commence with the bad, father," said Marik.

"The 221 deputies of the opposition lack energy," began his father; "there is indeed a minority of resolute citizens, Mauguin, Labbey of Pompieres, Dupont from the Eure, Audrey of Puyraveau, Daunou, and some others. But the majority seems paralyzed with fear. Thiers is a coward, Casimir Perier a poltroon. These two wretches pretend that royalty must be given time to repent and to return to the paths of legality. They propose opening negotiations with the monarchy."

"Death to Thiers, the petty bourgeois! Death to his accomplices. To the lamp-post with the traitors!" cried Castillon, as he filled a shell.

"The same fear, the same lack of confidence on the part of the bourgeoisie as in 1789," remarked Madam Lebrenn. "To-day, as then, the bourgeoisie is ready to fall at the feet of the King and implore his aid against the revolution."

"What is James Lafitte's attitude?" queried Marik. "Does he show himself a man of resolution in the struggle?"

"His civic courage does not fail him. He remains calm and smiling. His establishment is the rendezvous of the Orleanist party, which is making a lot of stir, but takes no determined stand."

"And Lafayette—is he on the side of the people?" asked Madam Lebrenn in turn.

"He is still the same man as we knew him forty years ago," her husband replied; "undecided, vacillating, incapable of taking a stand. Lafayette is of all cliques."

"General Lafayette knows well enough that if Charles X wins in the struggle, his life is in danger," interjected Madam Lebrenn.

"The General's courage is above suspicion; but his lack of decision may have disastrous consequences for our cause."

"His popularity is very great, and he may aspire to be President of the Republic," pursued Lebrenn's wife.

"Our friends declared to him to-day that they counted on him for President in case the Republic were proclaimed. He made answer that he had no ambition in that direction, and that he would first have to see how things fell out."

At that moment Martin, the painter of battles, and Duresnel entered the room. They were both armed with hunting pieces, and carried belts full of cartridges. Both the artist and Duresnel were chiefs in the republican Carbonarii, and had played their part in many a conspiracy upon the return of the Bourbons. Duresnel had spent three years in prison, having been sentenced for press offences, for being proprietor of a liberal newspaper. Martin, compromised in the conspiracy of Belfort, and being condemned to death in John Doe proceedings, took refuge in England, where he lived for four years, returning to France only after the amnesty. Through it all the two men had retained the patriotic ardor of their youth. They were frank republicans, and partisans of the Commune.

"Good even, Madam Lebrenn," said Martin, setting down his gun. "I see you are pulling lint; a good precaution, for to-morrow, at daybreak, there will be hot work, or I am mistaken. Good evening, Madam Henory; your little Sacrovir will probably hear music to-morrow which will not be as pleasing to his ear as his mother's songs."

"It is good that my son become early used to such music, Monsieur Martin," smiled the young mother. "Perhaps he will have to listen to it often, for I want to make him a good republican, like his father and grandfather."

"What news do you bring, friends?" asked John Lebrenn.

"I am just from the office of the *National*," said Duresnel, "where they were holding a meeting of the opposition journalists. Armand Carrel regards all attempt at revolution as senseless. He will not admit that an undisciplined population can triumph over an army."

"The people, happily, will not guide themselves by the opinion of this particular journalist," laughed Martin. "The agitation is spreading in all quarters. A gathering, ordered to evacuate the Place of the Bourse, attacked the troops, shouting 'Long live the charter! Down with the King! To the lamp-post with the Jesuits and Polignac!'"

"The same scene was reproduced on the Place of Our Lady of Victories, and on St. Denis Boulevard," said Duresnel.

"And they are getting ready for the same struggle in the St. Honoré quarter," Martin continued. "To-morrow at dawn Paris will bristle with barricades. The combatants are pouring in by the thousand. Several printers have released their workmen. Maes, the brewer in the Marceau suburb, is ready to march at the head of his helpers. Coming along the Dauphine passage, I stepped into our friend Joubert's; his book store is a veritable arsenal, filled with arms."

"Several armorers' shops have been invaded," Duresnel went on. "On the Place of the Bourse I met Etienne Arago, the director of the Vaudeville Theater, who was taking a cart-load of guns and swords from the theater to the home of Citizen Charles Teste, whom he charged with the task of distributing them to combatants. There will be arms in abundance."

"This evening," said Martin, "I saw in St. Antoine women and children carrying paving stones to the upper stories of their houses, to hurl down upon the troops. The word is being passed along: 'Down with the pretorians! Death to all the officers!'"

"When the women take part in a revolution," put in Madam Lebrenn, "it is a good omen. Here are some old friends coming," she added. "They will have news also."

Upon the word, in came General Oliver, accompanied by the old mounted artilleryman of the republican Army of the Rhine and Moselle. Duchemin's hair and moustache were now both as white as snow; but he was still alert and active, and carried under his arm an old rusted musket. The bitterness of exile had furrowed Oliver's face with premature wrinkles, and turned his hair nigh as white as his companion's.

Oliver affectionately gave his hand to Charlotte, saying as he did so, "Good evening, my dear Madam Lebrenn;—good evening, Madam Henory. Oh, ho! Here you are occupied like the Gallic women of old on the eve of battle. And here is brave Castillon filling shells. The picture is complete."

Duchemin, also, saluted the company in military fashion, and said, "In my capacity as old artilleryman, I shall lend you a hand, Castillon."

"So here you are at last," cried John Lebrenn cordially to the General. "Our friends and I were beginning to get surprised, and almost worried at not having seen you since the promulgation of the ordinances."

"Before two days have passed the Bourbons will be driven from France," returned the General. "The army can not stand against Paris in insurrection. There are but twelve thousand troops in the city; the victory of the people is assured."

"I fear you are mistaken, General," interposed Martin.

"You may be certain of what I tell you. I have my information from several old officers of the Empire, who have maintained some sort of relations with the War Ministry."

"Your old friends are thinking, perhaps, of giving the movement a Bonapartist turn?" asked Lebrenn.

"They are thinking seriously of it. They besought me to attend a reunion at the house of Colonel Gourgaud, where I met Dumoulin, Dufays, Bacheville, Clavel, and other old comrades. I strove hard, but ineffectually, to convince them that Napoleon's death had made all thought of empire impossible. I remained alone in my opinion."

"I am afraid you will fall again under the influence of your old war-time memories, and that of your companions-in-arms," said Lebrenn, kindly.

"Ah, my friend," replied Oliver with emotion, "I have to-day no other desire than that of retrieving the errors of my military career. I have resolved to fight with you and our friends for the triumph of the Republic."

"We have examined, with Martin, the position of this house," continued Lebrenn, "and the wide open angle which the street forms twenty paces from here seems to render imperative the building of a barricade almost at our doors, in order to cut off the communication of the troops that may come by the boulevards to effect their junction with those who no doubt will occupy the City Hall."

"The place is well chosen," commented Oliver, ever the General.

"In that case," cried Duresnel, smiling, "I move that we name the General commandant-in-chief of the barricade!"

"Carried! Carried!" cried all.

"I accept the position," replied Oliver; "but in order to command a barricade, there must first be one."

"Here, my friend, is how things stand," Lebrenn resumed, when the merriment had subsided; "my son and I enjoy in this street some reputation as patriots. The active men of the quarter, mainly workingmen, have full confidence in us. A number of them have come several times through the day to seek advice. They are resolved to engage in the struggle, if necessary, and only await our giving the signal. Our responsibility is great. If we urge them to the conflict, we must, in placing ourselves at their head, be certain in our consciences of our means of defense. I have assured the brave patriots that this evening, after having visited the different quarters of Paris and informing myself to the best of my ability, by personal observation and through friends, of the state of affairs, I would answer them as to whether they would best take up arms or not. They were to come at eleven o'clock or midnight to receive my decision. It is now half after eleven; their delegates should not be long in coming.

"Now, my friends," continued John, "the supreme hour is come. Let us take counsel. Let us not forget that among the energetic citizens who await only one word of ours to run to arms, many have wives and children of whom they are the only support. If they are killed or defeated, their families will be plunged into distress. It is for us, then, to

decide whether their fighting is commanded by civic duty, whether it offers sufficient chance of success for us to give the signal for battle. We, more happy than our proletarian brothers, are at least certain, if we succumb, of not leaving our families resourceless. Here, then, my friends, is what I propose. We all know how things stand in Paris. Let us put the question to a vote."

Madam Lebrenn spoke first. "Civil war is a terrible extremity," she said. "Vanquishers or vanquished, the mother-country has always some children to mourn. But to-day one can no longer hesitate. It is a choice between servitude or revolt. So, with my spirit in mourning for the fratricidal strife, I say to my husband, and to my son, You must fight to defend the liberties that the kingdom has not yet despoiled us of; you must fight to reconquer, if possible, the heritage of the great Republic. It alone can bestow moral and material freedom upon the disinherited ones of the world, in virtue of its immortal principles, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, and Solidarity. So then, as I see it, we must fight. Let the blood which flows fall upon the head of royalty, it alone has called down this impious struggle! To arms! To arms!"

All were deeply moved at Charlotte's stirring words, and Lebrenn said to his daughter-in-law, "What is your opinion, dear Henory?"

"I believe throughout with my mother. The insurrection must be called."

"And your opinion, Castillon? Speak, old comrade," Lebrenn continued.

"Faggot and death, and *Ça ira*! Commune and Federation, and the Red Flag!"

"You have no need to ask me, friend Lebrenn," volunteered Duchemin. "You have only to look at my musket. The barrel is oiled, and the lock graced with a new flint. Long live the social and democratic Republic!"

"What do you think about it, my dear Martin? What is your advice?" asked Lebrenn of the painter in turn.

"I," said Martin, "say with Madam Lebrenn: Civil war is a terrible extremity; but legal resistance is impossible and laughable. When a government appeals to cannon to back up a coup d'etat, insurrection becomes the most sacred of duties. Long live the Republic!"

"Is that your opinion too, Duresnel?" queried Lebrenn.

"Aye, and all the more so because, as I see it, the insurrection has every chance of success. As for asserting that success will lead to a re-establishment of the Republic, I would be careful of falling into a deception. But at any rate we will have made a big step forward in finally driving out the Bourbons; and whatever the government may be that succeeds them, it can not but carry us far towards the Republic. So, then, down with the King! Down with the Jesuits and priests!"

General Oliver did not wait for the question to be put to him. "My friend," he declared simply, "I have but one way to redeem the past. That is to fight for the Republic, or to die for it."

"As to you, Marik," said Lebrenn, turning to his son, "you have regarded an insurrection as inevitable ever since you heard of the ordinances. You are, then, for taking arms, are you not?"

"Yes, I am for battle, father."

"Well, then, war!" cried John; "Long live the Republic."

"Someone to see you, sir," announced a servant.

"These are the delegates of our friends, come for the word. Ask the gentlemen in."

The servant showed into the room three workmen, in their laboring clothes. One of them, a man still young, and with a face full of fire, addressed John Lebrenn: "Are we to fight, or not to fight, in this quarter, sir? They say it is warming up in St. Antoine, and that they are building barricades. Our St. Denis Street is behind-hand; that will be humiliating for the quarter."

"My men, you have asked my advice—" began Lebrenn.

"We felt the need of getting in touch with things, Monsieur Lebrenn. Yes, for indeed we said to each other from the first, Ordinances, coups d'etat—what has all that to do with us? Our misery is great, our wages hardly buy bread for our children and ourselves; will our distress be any greater after the coup d'etat than before? And still we said that these Bourbons, these 'whites,' are the enemies of the people, and that we should seize the occasion to turn them out. But after all, what will it bring us? The same misery as in the past."

"What will we have gained by driving out Charles, Polignac, and the skull-cap bands?" added the other two workingmen.

"My men, here in two words is the meat of the matter. To-day, in 1830, the proletarians of the towns and the country, in other words the immense majority of the people, produce, almost by their labor alone, the riches of the country; and yet they live in misery. Why is it thus? Because you have no political rights."

"And what help would political rights be to us?"

"Suppose you were all electors, as you were under the great Republic. You would elect your representatives; these representatives would make the laws. So that, if you chose for representatives friends of the people, is it not clear that the laws they made would be favorable to the people? The law could decree, for example, as in the time of the Republic, the education of children, instructed and maintained by the state, from the age of five to twelve. The law could decree assistance for disabled proletarians, for widows with children. The law could decree the abolition of slavery in the colonies, equality of civic rights between man and woman. The law could assure work to citizens in times of unemployment, and sustain them against the exploitation of capital. The law, in short, could change your

condition completely, for the law is sovereign. The law can perform everything within the limits of the possible; so then, by their number, the proletarians composing the great majority of the citizens, they would be assured of having a majority in the elections; whence it follows that if they had well chosen their representatives, all the laws made by these would be in favor of the proletariat. Do you follow me, friends?"

"In virtue of our political rights we would choose the representatives who make the laws, and they would make them in our interests," answered the first workingman. The other two also added: "That is easy to understand."

"That is why," continued John Lebrenn, "as long as you remain without political rights, your condition will continue precarious and miserable."

"But how can we obtain these political rights?" asked one of the workingmen.

"By combatting all governments which refuse to recognize your rights or which pluck you of them, as did Napoleon, the accursed Corsican, and as the Bourbons have done."

"It stiffens one's spine," returned the artisan, "to know that by fighting against Charles X and Polignac we will obtain rights which will permit us to choose the representatives who will make laws in our favor. On to the barricades, then! Let us strike a blow that will count, against the gendarmes, and the officers of the troops."

"To the barricades! Death to the gendarmes!" repeated the other two artisans.

"In conclusion, my men," resumed Lebrenn, "I tell you in all sincerity, it is possible, although doubtful, that we may with this one blow reconquer the Republic, which alone can free you in mind and body, and restore to you the exercise of your sovereignty. Now, my men, decide."

With ringing enthusiasm the three workingmen shouted:

"To the barricades!"

"Down with Charles X and Polignac!"

"Down with all the Jesuits and skull-caps!"

And all present joined in the battle-cry:

"Long live the Republic! To the barricades!"

CHAPTER II.

ORLEANS ON THE THRONE.

Four days later, namely, the 31st of July, Marik Lebrenn lay on his bed, sorely wounded. Bravely defending, with his father, his friends, and a little army of workingmen of St. Denis Street, on the 28th, the barricade raised by them the preceding day a few steps from the Lebrenn domicile, he had his arm broken by a ball. The wound, grave in itself, was further complicated by an attack of lockjaw, induced by the stifling heat of those summer days. Thanks to the care of Doctor Delaberge, one of his father's political friends and one of the heroes of July, Marik had come safely through the lockjaw, in spite of its usual deadliness. But for the three days he had remained a prey to a violent delirium; his reason had now returned to him hardly an hour ago.

Beside his cot was seated his mother; his wife, bent over the bed, held her infant in her arms.

"How sweet it is to return to life between a mother and a darling wife, to embrace one's child, and moreover to feel that one has done his duty as a patriot," murmured Marik feebly, but happily. "But where is father?"

"Father is unwounded. He went out, an hour ago, to be present at a final meeting with Monsieur Godefroy Cavaignac, the valiant democrat," answered his mother.

"And our friends, Martin, Duresnel, and General Oliver?"

"You will see them all soon. Neither the General nor Monsieur Martin was wounded. Duresnel was grazed slightly by a bayonet."

"And Castillon? And Duchemin?"

Madam Lebrenn exchanged a look of intelligence with her daughter-in-law, who had gone to put her child in his cradle, and answered, "We have as yet no news of those brave champions, Castillon and Duchemin."

"Then they must be badly hurt," exclaimed Marik, anxiously. "Castillon would not have gone without coming to see me, for it was he who picked me up when I fell, on the barricade."

"Our friends are probably in some hospital," suggested his wife, soothingly. "But please, do not alarm yourself so; you are still very weak, and strong excitement might be bad for you. We can only tell you that your father is unscathed, and the insurrection victorious."

"Victory rests with the people! It is well; and yet, what will it profit them?"

John Lebrenn and General Oliver now entered the sick-room. Madam Lebrenn rose and said to her husband, with all a mother's joy: "Our son has come entirely to himself, as the consequence of the long sleep which already reassured us. About half an hour after you left he awoke with his head perfectly clear. Our last anxieties may now be set aside; the convalescence begins well."

Lebrenn walked quickly over to the bed, looked at Marik a moment, and then embraced him tenderly, saying: "Here you are, out of danger, my dear son. Ah, what a weight was on my heart! The joy I feel consoles me for our deception—"

"My friend, I beg you—" interposed Madam Lebrenn. "The physician bade me shield our dear patient from all emotion."

"Perhaps it would, indeed, be better to leave Marik in ignorance of the result of our victory; but now it is impossible longer to hide from him the truth."

"You may tell me everything, dear father. Disillusionment is no doubt cruel, but we have already reckoned with that possibility in our forecasts. Whatever the government may be which succeeds that of Charles X, it will still be an improvement over the abhorred regime of the Bourbons."

"Well, then, my son, here is our disappointment: The Republic has been crowded out by the intriguers of the bourgeoisie, and the Duke of Orleans has been acclaimed Lieutenant-General of the kingdom. In a few days the deputies will offer him the crown."

"Our friends then let their guns cool after their success? And did not Lafayette intervene in this matter of kingship?"

"Here," replied John, "is how the comedy was played. Seeing the triumphant progress of the insurrection, and recognizing that Charles was as good as gone, his friends flocked over to the Orleanists. The Chamber of Deputies met last evening in the Bourbon Palace, in solemn session. It was there that Lafitte, elected to the chairmanship of the Assembly, proposed outright to confer upon the Duke of Orleans the Lieutenant-Generalship of the realm. The majority applauded, and named a committee to go to the Chamber of Peers, also in session, and inform them of the decision of the deputies. The peers spared no enthusiasm in acclaiming the Lieutenant-Generalship of Orleans, in order to safeguard their own places, their titles, and their pensions. One single voice protested against this act of turpitude, that of Chateaubriand. At the City Hall, meanwhile, a municipal committee was in waiting there before the arrival of Lafayette. It was composed of Casimir Perier, General Lobau, and Messieurs Schonen, Audrey of Puyraveau, and Mauguin. These two last republicans and anti-Orleanists urged upon the committee to institute a provisional government, but the majority would not hear of it, wishing, on the contrary, like Casimir Perier, to treat with Charles X; or, like General Lobau, to turn over the office to Orleans. In fact, Messieurs Semonville and Sussy having presented themselves in the name of Charles X, who then proposed to abdicate in favor of the Duke of Bordeaux, Casimir Perier consented to listen to their overtures. But Audrey of Puyraveau cried out indignantly, 'If you do not break off your shameful negotiations, sir, I shall bring the people up here!' His language intimidated Perier, and the Bourbon go-betweens retired, followed by Mauguin's words, 'It is too late, gentlemen.'

"A deputation headed by the two Garnier-Pagè brothers was sent to General Lafayette to offer him the supreme command of the National Guards of the kingdom; which he accepted. From that moment it was a dictatorship. The General went to the City Hall, amid the transports of the people; he could do anything; he was master, and could have carried the revolution to its logical conclusion! But, with the exception of Mauguin and Audrey of Puyraveau, the municipal committee, in subordinating itself to Lafayette, contrived to frustrate any such intention on his part by at once flattering and frightening him, posing him in his own eyes as the supreme arbiter of the situation, and showing him the responsibility that was falling upon him and the calamities ready to loose themselves upon France if he did not attach himself to the Duke of Orleans; whom, they went on with much ado to show, was able, by an unhoped-for piece of good fortune, to restore order and liberty, while as to the Republic—that was anarchy, that was civil war, that was war with Europe! These words at once tickled Lafayette's vanity and disturbed his honest conscience. He saw before him a role of a certain degree of grandeur, that of sacrificing his personal convictions to the peace of the country."

"In other words, of sacrificing the Republic to senseless fears!" cried Marik.

"History will severely reproach Lafayette for that defection, that lack of faith in the principles he supported, which he propagated for half a century," continued Marik's father. "But, his character not being equal to the dizzy height of the position whither events had wafted him, he slipped; and promised his support to the Orleanists. In July, 1830, as in the old days of Thermidor, our enemies have defeated us by their quickness, although we had right and the people on our side. The Commune should at that time have triumphed over the scoundrels of the Convention, the same as to-day the City Hall should have triumphed over the intrigues of the Bourbon Palace. May this new lesson be studied and taken to heart by the revolutionists of the future."

"Malediction on the Conservative deputies! They deserve to be shot!"

"Our program contained in substance this: 'France is free, she wants a Constitution. She will accord to the provisional government no right but that to consult the nation. The people should not, and can not, alienate its sovereignty. No more royalty. Let the executive power be delegated to an elected President, responsible and subject to recall. The legislative power should be reposed in an Assembly elected by universal suffrage. For these principles we have just exposed our lives and shed our blood, and we will uphold them at need by a new insurrection.'"

"What effect had the reading of this program?" asked Marik.

"It was applauded by the small number who could hear it. Some cried out, in their simplicity, 'That's the program of Lafayette! Long live Lafayette!' But at that moment a singular procession arrived at the City Hall. It was headed by a coach in which sat Monsieur Lafitte, whose bad leg prevented him from walking. Then came the Duke of Orleans, on horseback, attended by Generals Gerard, Sebastiani, and others, and followed by the committee of the

deputies who had named him Lieutenant-General of the kingdom. The prince was pale and uneasy, although he affected to smile at the throngs of combatants, who still carried their arms. Their attitude, their words, became more and more threatening. Some guns were even leveled at this man who, after the combat, came to usurp the sovereignty of the people. But a feeling of humanity soon raised them again, and a few minutes later the Duke appeared on the balcony of the City Hall with Lafayette. The latter embraced the Duke, and presented him to the people, with the words:

"'Here, my friends, is the best of Republics—'

"Such was the result for which the people of Paris had fought for three days! It is for this that we risked our lives, that you shed your blood, my son—and that our old friends Castillon and Duchemin died valiantly, as did so many other patriots."

"Great heaven! Father, what say you! Castillon—Duchemin—both dead!"

In agony at his unfortunate words, Lebrenn turned to his wife: "Our son did not know, then, the fate of our friends?"

"Poor old Castillon—I loved him so," sobbed Marik, while his tears poured upon the pillow. "Brave Duchemin—how did he meet his end?"

"In spite of his age," said General Oliver, who had so far been a silent spectator of the scene, "he did not leave my side the whole day of the 27th. His patriotic fervor seemed to double his strength. That night he went home with me. At daybreak of the 28th we rejoined, in Prouvaires Street, the citizens who were defending the barricades there. The colonel who commanded the attack, despairing of ever capturing the barricade, attempted to demolish it with his cannon. A piece was brought up, and at the first round a bullet rebounded and tore into Duchemin's thigh. He fell, crying 'Long live the Republic!' Then he forced a smile on his lips, and with his last breath said to me, 'I die like an old republican cannonier. Long live the Commune!'"

Just then a servant entered, and said to Lebrenn, "Sir, one of the workingmen who was here four days ago is come to ask news of Marik."

"Let him come in," replied the young man's father.

It was the artisan who, on the 27th, had acted as spokesman for his comrades of St. Denis Street. His head was wrapped in a bloody bandage; he was also wounded in the leg, and supported himself as with a cane, with the scabbard of a cavalry saber.

"I heard that your son was wounded, Monsieur Lebrenn. I came to inquire after him," he said.

"My son's condition is causing us no uneasiness," Madam Lebrenn answered. "Be pleased to take a seat beside his bed, for you also are wounded."

"I received a saber cut on the head and a bayonet thrust in the leg. But they will be healed in a day or two."

Marik held out his hand to the workman, and said: "Thanks to you, citizen, for thinking of me. Thank you for your mark of sympathy."

"Oh, that's nothing, Monsieur Marik," replied the workman, heartily pressing the proffered hand. "Only I am sorry to have to come alone to see you, because the two comrades who accompanied me here—the other evening—"

"They are also wounded?" asked John Lebrenn hastily.

"They are dead, sir," sighed the workman.

"Still martyrs! How much blood Kings cause to flow! What woes they bring to families!"

"Here, dear son, is how the political farce was wound up," began John Lebrenn again, to complete his interrupted account. "The majority of the 221 opposition deputies, typified in Casimir Perier, Dupin, Sebastiani, Guizot, Thiers, and a few other reprobates, were terrified when they saw the insurrection on the 28th grow to formidable proportions. For, had it been defeated, the 221 would have been taken as its instigators, and, as such, assuredly condemned for high treason either to death or to life imprisonment; on the other hand, if it was successful, they dreaded the establishment of the Republic. To conjure off this double peril, they declared in their special sessions that they still regarded Charles X as the legitimate King, and that if he would revoke the ordinances and discharge his minister, they would at all costs stand for the continuation of the elder branch. Penetrated by this thought, they went to Marshal Marmont on the 28th to beg him to cease firing, declaring that if the ordinances were repealed, Paris would return to its duty. The Prince of Polignac, full of faith in his army, would listen to no proposition on the 27th nor on the 28th. He counted on the intervention of God. The stupid monarch and his minister did not begin to recognize the gravity of their situation till the evening of the 29th, when the troops, thoroughly routed, beat a retreat upon St. Cloud. Then the ordinances were repealed, and Messieurs Mortemart and Gerard were appointed ministers. Charles imagined that these concessions would mollify the insurrectionists, and cause them to throw down their arms."

"And what sort of a role did James Lafitte play through all this?" again inquired Marik.

"The minority of the deputies convened at his house, and, from the 28th on, they judged the kingship of Charles to be at an end. Thenceforward, yielding to the counsel of Beranger, they labored actively for the Duke of Orleans. The rich bourgeoisie, the big commercial men, and a certain number of military chieftains, Gerard and Lobau among them, also rallied to the Orleanist party, desiring a new kingdom under which they hoped to place the actual government in the hands of a bourgeois oligarchy. The house of James Lafitte was thus the center of the Orleanist wire-pullings. You asked my advice," continued Lebrenn to the workingman, "in the name of your comrades, before entering the fight. In the light of our present set-back, do you regret having assisted in the revolution?"

"No, Monsieur Lebrenn; I have no regret for having taken up arms. No doubt we have not obtained what we sought, a government of the people. But is it nothing to have cleaned out the Bourbons who wished to enslave us? If we did not get the Republic this time, we at least know how to go about driving out a King and defeating his army. We shall appeal to the spirit of insurrection!"

"The day of retribution will come, my friend," declared Lebrenn. "A few elected men, chosen not by the rank and file of the citizens, but by a small party representing the privilege of riches, has decided upon the form of government for France and has offered the crown to Louis Philippe. They have stained themselves with the guilt of usurping the sovereignty of the people, which is single, indivisible, and inalienable. To this usurpation we shall reply by a permanent conspiracy until the day of that new revolution when shall be proclaimed the Republican government, which alone is compatible with the sovereignty of the people, which alone is capable of striking off the material and mental shackles of the proletariat. The Commune, and the Federation under the Red Flag! Neither priests, nor Kings, nor masters!"

"On that day," re-echoed the stalwart proletarian at Marik's bedside, "we shall all rise in arms, and cry:

"Long live the Republic! Long live the Commune!"

CONCLUSION

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I, John Lebrenn, concluded the writing of this account on the 29th of December, 1831, the eve of the day on which a daughter was born to my son Marik; she was named Velleda, in memory of our Gallic nationality.

To you, Marik, my beloved son, I bequeath this chronicle, along with the sword I received from General Hoche the day of the battle of Weissenburg. You will join them to the other legends and relics of our family, and you will bequeath them, in your turn, to your son Sacrovir. You will add to these scrolls the history of whatever new events may befall in your time, and our posterity will continue, from generation to generation, these our domestic annals.

And now sons of Joel, courage, perseverance, hope—not only hope, but certitude. In spite of the transient eclipses of the star of the Republic since the beginning of this century, in spite of the disappointment of which we were the victims in 1830, in spite of all the trials which we, and our children, perhaps, have yet to undergo, the future of the world belongs to the principle of Democracy.

————

I, Marik Lebrenn, inscribe here, with unspeakable anguish, the date of April 17, 1832, the evil day on which my beloved father and mother, both at the same hour, although some distance from each other, died under the scourge of the cholera. They retained to the end the serenity of their unsullied lives, and went to await us in those mysterious worlds where we shall at last be reborn, to continue to live in mind and body, and follow there our eternal existence.

THE END.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] See "The Pocket Bible," the sixteenth of this series.

[2] See "The Iron Arrow Head," the tenth of this series.

[3] This speech, which clearly shows the social tendencies of the most radical party in 1789, is here reproduced almost literally from Luchet, *Essays on the Illuminati*, chap. V, p. 23.

[4] See, for details of these scenes, and the questions and discourse of the initiators, Luchet's *Essays on the Illuminati*, chap. V. p. 23, and following; also Robinson, *Proofs of a Conspiracy against All the Religions and all the Governments of Europe*, vol. I, p. 114 and following.

[5] See the preceding work in this series, "The Blacksmith's Hammer."

[6] The old palace of the Bourbons, now abandoned to cheap lodgings and hucksters' booths.

[7] All the persons and facts cited in this story as of historic importance, are authentic.

[8] For an exactly parallel line of conduct, see that of Abbot Le Roy, at the time of the invasion of Reveillon's paper factory in the St. Antoine suburb, as given in the admirable *History of the Revolution* by Louis Blanc. We are glad to render here this public testimony of our sympathy and old friendship for an illustrious campaign in exile.

[9] Mirabeau's death was for long attributed to poison.

[10] The correspondence found at the Tuileries, in the Iron Cupboard, on August 10, 1792, and the correspondence of the Count of Lamark, published in our day, establish superabundantly the treason of Mirabeau.

[11] See "The Abbatial Crosier," volume eight in this series.

[12] See "The Infant's Skull," volume eleven in this series.

[13] As each year started anew on the autumnal equinox, the dates varied a little from those here given. Those given are for the first year of the era. September, 1792, to September, 1793.

[14] The name for the paper notes issued by the Convention.

[15] Department of War, Sec. III, Correspondence, 1793-1794.

[16] This note is historic.

[17] It is fallaciously that tradition reports the attempted suicide of Robespierre. He was assaulted by the gendarme Herda. See the *Monitor*, session of the 10th Thermidor.

[18] The first care of the Royalists in the Convention, the day after the 9th Thermidor, was not to decree liberty to the suspects, but to go in person to open the prisons, whence flocked forth a horde of recalcitrant priests and blood-stained counter-revolutionaries.

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