

LIGHTS AND SHADES

OF

MILITARY LIFE.

EDITED BY

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL

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<sup>amcs</sup> 1853

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA, &c. &c.

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## P R E F A C E.

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It is necessary to apprise the reader, before he commences the perusal of this work, that the volumes composing it proceed from the pens of two different writers. The first portion is the production of Count de Vigny, who is known to his countrymen as the author of the historical novel, "Cinq-Mars," and other works of fiction: and the contents of the second are taken from a publication by M. Elzéar Blaze. The former commenced his military career just after the first dethronement of Napoleon, and, weary of inactive service, has relinquished the sword for the pen. The latter, on finishing his studies at the military academy of Fontainebleau, joined the French army soon after the battle of Eylau, and was attached to it either in Poland, Germany, or Spain, during all the succeeding campaigns in one or other of those countries, till the conclusion of the general peace.

Without this preliminary explanation, the personal particulars which these officers give concerning themselves could not fail to appear incongruous and contradictory; but, aware of this double authorship, the reader will not be liable to attribute to the one facts and adventures relating to the other.

Having been requested to undertake the task of editing the work, and to furnish such observations on its contents as it appeared to me proper to make, I have endeavoured to comply with this wish by showing how far the work

of Count Alfred de Vigny relates to the profession of a British soldier; for he gives us to understand that his object is "to invoke for armies the forgiveness of nations." He seems to apply his invocation to *all* nations, in behalf of *all* armies. On reading this, I felt that, as the British army has committed no crime against the nation, it has no forgiveness to ask; and I thought it useful to make such remarks upon each chapter as should point out to the young British soldier those parts of the work which, if they apply to continental armies, do not altogether apply to ours. I will take the author's own words. The army, he says, "feels as if it were ashamed of itself, and knows neither what it does nor what it is; it is incessantly asking itself whether it is the slave or the ruler of the state. This body is everywhere seeking its soul, but never finds it." The turn of the paragraph is quaint, but, to us British soldiers, quite incomprehensible: we are by no means ashamed of ourselves; we know exactly where we are (generally in colonies and bad climates!); we know precisely what we are; we never ask whether we are the slaves or the rulers of the state, because we know that we are neither; unless a patriotic devotion to our country be called slavery; if so, the British army is composed of slaves—not otherwise. We never seek our soul, because we have it snug in our body; it is called *obedience!*

As the stories in the book are introduced to exemplify the effects of "*military law*," and as I have written a book upon this subject, the Publisher thinks me in some degree qualified to give my opinion; that the Public will hold the same favourable judgment of me is improbable.

Be this as it may, the portion contributed by Count Alfred de Vigny to these "*Lights and Shades of Military Life*" is very interesting; but a few notes, however dry they may appear to the ordinary reader, will not be wholly useless to young officers, in proving that our army *has* "a

soul," which is a very serious affair, as all sober-minded men will admit, and that we all obey its dictates upon sound patriotic principles, and not blindly. "Blind obedience" is the constant taunt made by a certain class of men against British soldiers; but it is not true. We obey, not from blindness, "not upon compulsion," but upon reflection.

With regard to the translation, I shall not make any other remark than that I am no way answerable for its correctness or language; the praise or blame which that merits belongs to the translator, on whom I should be sorry to commit any trespass, especially as I have no doubt that he understands French much better than myself.

In stating my reasons for believing in the superiority of the British army, I have attributed its virtues to our constitution. In doing this, I have been led to a comparison between our constitution and that of the United States of America; and thus my *reveries* have run into general politics, for I considered myself at liberty to range as far as my fancy pleased. When a man gets to France, he generally runs on to Italy—that is what I have done: from comparing constitutions, I have touched upon their results; and, in defending *freedom*, I have endeavoured to show that it does not belong to republicanism—a form of government which appears to me to be contrary to nature. God has created us of different sizes, both morally and physically; he has also ordained that we should walk upon our feet, and under the direction of our heads. Now, a republican form of government seems as if we were all to agree to be cut to an equal length, and that all who had heads and feet left should walk upon the one or the other, according as the fashion should be decided by a general vote, passed every four years! Now this I do not like. I am very fond of my feet: I buy good worsted stockings and good boots for them; I keep them warm and dry with great care; but I have no idea of their pretending to wear



my hat, and making my head do their work. If, in my reveries, I have been stupid and prosy, I am sorry for it ; but the reader has the remedy in his hands. Few men read observations and notes, and mine are not necessary to an explanation of Count de Vigny's portion of this work, which contains very interesting stories ; so the former may skip over the "*Editor's*" dull notes and lose very little ; for the small merit they contain is like a bad gold mine, and will not, I fear, repay the trouble of working. After this honest confession, I consider that all accounts of conscience between myself and the reader are clear.

C. J. NAPIER.

# CONTENTS.

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## PART I.

### RECOLLECTIONS OF MILITARY SERVITUDE.

#### CHAPTER I.

My Motives for putting together these Recollections—Causes of my early fondness for Military Glory—Portrait of Frederick the Great . . . . .	1
Editor's Remarks . . . . .	9

#### CHAPTER II.

On the General Character of Armies—Armies of the Ancients—Armies of the Middle Ages—Modern Armies . . . . .	25
Editor's Remarks . . . . .	30

#### CHAPTER III.

On the Servitude of the Soldier, and of his Individual Character	48
Editor's Remarks . . . . .	52

#### CHAPTER IV.

An Adventure on the Road—Flight of Louis XVIII. from Paris—The Chef de Bataillon and his covered Cart . . . . .	59
---	----

#### CHAPTER V.

Narrative of the Chef de Bataillon—History of the Red Seal—Laura and her Husband—A Summary Execution . . . . .	65
Editor's Remarks . . . . .	84

#### CHAPTER VI.

How I continued my Route—Conclusion of the Story of Laura and the Chef de Bataillon . . . . .	89
---	----

## PART II.

RECOLLECTIONS OF MILITARY SERVITUDE  
CONTINUED.

## CHAPTER I.

- On Responsibility—Difficulty of Reconciling the Passive Obedience required in the Military Profession with the Dictates of Conscience . . . . . 96

## CHAPTER II.

- A Soldier's Scruples of Honour—An Evening at Vincennes—The Adjutant of Artillery . . . . . 102

## CHAPTER III.

- On the Love of Danger . . . . . 107

## CHAPTER IV.

- The Family Concert . . . . . 110

## CHAPTER V.

- History of the Adjutant—The Children of Montreuil and the Stonemason . . . . . 114

## CHAPTER VI.

- The Lady in Pink—Queen Marie Antoinette and the Princess de Lamballe . . . . . 117

## CHAPTER VII.

- The First Rank Position—Sedaine, the Dramatist . . . . . 122

## CHAPTER VIII.

- Sitting for a Portrait—The Queen and Madame de Lamballe . . . . . 126

## CHAPTER IX.

- A Capital House—Performance of Rose and Colas at the Theatre of Orleans—Gretry and the Manager—Mademoiselle Colombe—The Queen . . . . . 130

## CHAPTER X.

- Conclusion of the Adjutant's History . . . . . 136

## CHAPTER XI.

- The Alarm—Explosion of the Powder-Magazine at Vincennes . . . . . 138

## CHAPTER XII.

A Drawing in Crayon—A Frightful Bust—Louis XVIII. at Vincennes . . . . .	143
Editor's Remarks on Parts II. and III. . . . .	146

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## PART III.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF MILITARY GREATNESS.

## CHAPTER I.

Reflections on Military Greatness . . . . .	149
---	-----

## CHAPTER II.

A Memorable Night—History of Captain Renaud, commonly called Bamboo Cane . . . . .	151
--	-----

## CHAPTER III.

Malta—General Bonaparte . . . . .	158
-----------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER IV.

A Simple Letter—Battle of Aboukir—Explosion of L'Orient—Quackery of Bonaparte—Kleber and Menou . . . . .	162
--	-----

## CHAPTER V.

The Overheard Dialogue—The Emperor Napoleon and Pope Pius VII.—Comedian and Tragedian . . . . .	168
---	-----

## CHAPTER VI.

A Seaman—The Flotilla of Boulogne—The Prisoner of War—Lord Collingwood—The Parole of Honour—Meditated Escape . . . . .	182
--	-----

## CHAPTER VII.

The Reception—Court Theatre at Paris—The Emperor—Gentle Hint to Prisoners of War . . . . .	204
--	-----

## CHAPTER VIII.

The Russian Corps-de-Garde—Horrible Butchery—The Russian Boy—An Unexpected Meeting—The Emperor Napoleon and the Bomb-Shell . . . . .	206
--	-----

## CHAPTER IX.

A Marble—Death of Captain Renaud . . . . .	216
--	-----

## CHAPTER X.

On the Principle of Honour—Conclusion . . . . .	223
---	-----

## PART IV.

MILITARY LIFE IN BIVOUAC, CAMP, GARRISON,  
BARRACKS, &c.

## CHAPTER I.

The Velites, and the Military School of Fontainebleau . . . . .	231
Editor's Remarks . . . . .	243

## CHAPTER II.

The Bivouac and Marauders . . . . .	249
Editor's Remarks . . . . .	266

## CHAPTER III.

Marches . . . . .	267
Editor's Remarks . . . . .	293

## CHAPTER IV.

Quarters—Germany, Poland . . . . .	299
Editor's Remarks . . . . .	323

## CHAPTER V.

Quarters—Spain . . . . .	325
--------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER VI.

A Day of Battle . . . . .	345
---------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER VII.

The Camp . . . . .	373
--------------------	-----

## CHAPTER VIII.

The Garrison . . . . .	382
------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER IX.

Barracks . . . . .	392
--------------------	-----

## CHAPTER X.

Reviews . . . . .	404
-------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

Military Executions . . . . .	419
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# LIGHTS AND SHADES

OF

## MILITARY LIFE.

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### PART I.

#### RECOLLECTIONS OF MILITARY SERVITUDE.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### MOTIVES FOR PUTTING TOGETHER THESE RECOLLECTIONS.

IF it be true that, according to the Catholic poet, there is no keener pain than to call to mind happy times in times of misfortunes, it is equally true that the mind feels some pleasure in reverting, in moments of tranquillity and liberty, to periods of pain or of slavery. This melancholy emotion causes me to cast a retrospective glance at some of the years of my life, though those years are not far from the present, and though that life has not yet been very long.

I cannot abstain from recording what sufferings I have witnessed—sufferings but little known, and endured with fortitude by a race of men, always slighted or honoured beyond measure, according as nations find it to be useless or necessary.

It is not, however, this sentiment alone that instigates me to this undertaking, which, I hope, will occasionally serve to show, by details of manners observed with my own eyes, how much there is yet left that is antiquated and barbarous in the quite modern organization of our permanent armies,



in which the soldier is separated from the citizen, in which he is unhappy and ferocious, because he feels his condition to be cruel and absurd. It is lamentable that, while everything is changing among us, the destiny of armies should alone undergo no modification. The Christian religion has once changed the ferocious usages of war; but the consequences of the new manners which it introduced have not been pushed far enough on that point. Before its time, the vanquished were put to death or enslaved for life, the towns taken were pillaged, and the inhabitants expelled and dispersed; accordingly, every state, filled with alarm, held itself in constant readiness for desperate measures, and the defence was not less ferocious than the attack. At the present day, all that conquered towns have to apprehend is the payment of contributions. Thus war has become civilized, but not armies; for not only has the routine of our custom retained all that was vicious in them, but the ambition or the terrors of governments have increased the evil, by separating them daily more and more from the country, and by subjecting them to a servitude more idle and more gross than ever. I put but little faith in the benefits of sudden organizations; but I can comprehend those of gradual improvements. When general attention is directed to an evil, the cure is speedy. This cure, indeed, is a problem difficult of solution for the legislator, but for that reason so much the more necessary to be proposed. Here, then, I propose it; and, if our epoch is not destined to arrive at its solution, at any rate I shall have given a form to this wish, and its difficulties will perhaps be thereby diminished. It is impossible to hasten too much the period when armies shall be more identified with the Nation, if it is to arrive at that time when armies and war shall be no more, and when the globe shall comprehend but one nation unanimous at last on its social forms—a consummation which ought long since to have been accomplished.

I have no intention whatever to interest the reader for myself; these recollections will be rather the memoirs of others than my own: but I have been grievously enough and long enough hurt at the strange anomalies of military life to be able to treat of them. It is only to prove my claim to this sad right that I say a few words concerning myself. I belong to that generation born with the century, which, fed with the bulletins by the Emperor, had a naked sword constantly before his eyes, and came forward to grasp it at the very moment when France was sheathing it in the scabbard of the Bourbons. Accordingly, in these modest sketches of an obscure part of my life, I wish to appear nothing more than what, to my deep regret, I was—spectator rather than actor. The events that I sought were not, when they did come, so great as I could have wished. What was to be done? We have it not always in our power to play the part that we prefer; and the dress does not always come to us at the time when it most befits us. At the moment when I am writing, a man after twenty years' service has not seen a pitched battle. I have but few adventures to relate; but I have heard much. I shall, therefore, let others speak more than myself, unless when I shall be obliged to call myself forward as a witness. To this I have always felt some repugnance, owing to a certain bashfulness that comes over me when I have to appear in person upon the stage. Whenever this shall happen, I can at least attest that in those places I shall adhere to truth. In speaking of one's self, the best Muse is frankness. I could not bedizen myself with a good grace in peacock's plumage; beautiful as it is, I conceive that every one ought to prefer his own to it. I am not modest enough, I must confess, to imagine that I should gain much by borrowing anything from the attractions of another, and by assuming an imposing attitude, artistically chosen, and painfully retained at the expense of good natural inclinations and of an innate propensity that all of us have

to truth. I am not sure that in our times this literary affectation has not been carried to excess, and I cannot help thinking that the pout of Bonaparte and that of Byron have planted grimaces on many an innocent face.

Life is too short for us to waste a precious portion of it in making counterfeits of ourselves. If, indeed, we had to deal with a people rude and easily duped, the case would be different; but ours has an eye so quick, so sharp, as to discover in a moment from what model you borrow this expression or that gesture, this favourite word or that favourite step, or merely this head-dress or that coat. It blows immediately upon the beard of your mask, and conceives a contempt for your real face, to the natural features of which it might otherwise have taken a liking.

I shall therefore assume little of the warrior, having seen but little of war; but I have a right to speak of the manly customs of the army, in which fatigues and disgusts were not spared me, and which steeped my soul in a patience proof against everything, by making it concentrate its energies in solitary reflection and study. I shall have it in my power to show what there is alluring in the savage life of arms, arduous as it is, having remained in it so long between the echo and the vision of battles. Those fourteen years would most certainly have been thrown away, had I not meanwhile exercised an attentive and persevering observation, which turned everything to account for the future. I am even indebted to an army life for views of human nature which I never could have acquired unless under the military habit. There are scenes which are to be met with only amidst disgusts, that would be absolutely intolerable if one were not forced to endure them.

I was always fond of listening, and I contracted this fondness when quite a child on the wounded knees of my old father. He entertained me first with the history of his campaigns, and on his knees I found war seated by my side :

he showed me war in his wounds, war in the parchments and the blazonry of his ancestors, war in the large cuirassed portraits hung up in an old mansion in Beauce. I saw in the nobility a great family of hereditary soldiers, and I thought of nothing but raising myself to the height of a soldier.

My father related his long wars with the profound observation of a philosopher and the grace of a courtier. Through him I became intimately acquainted with Louis XV. and the great Frederick: I would not affirm that I had not lived in their time, familiar as I was with them from so many narratives of the Seven Years' war.

He entertained for Frederick II. that enlightened admiration which can view extraordinary faculties without being astonished beyond measure by them. He infused into me from the first the spirit of this view, telling me at the same time that too warm enthusiasm for this illustrious enemy had been a fault of the officers of his time; that they were thus half-conquered when Frederick advanced, magnified by French exaltation; that the successive dissensions of the three powers and of the French generals with one another had been of service to him in the brilliant fortune of his arms; but that his greatness chiefly consisted in knowing himself thoroughly, in appreciating the elements of his elevation at their real value, and in doing the honours of his victory with the modesty of a sage. He appeared sometimes to think that Europe had purposely spared him. My father had opportunities of closely observing this royal philosopher on the battle-fields of Clostercamp and Crefeldt,\* where his brother, the eldest of my seven uncles, had been killed by a cannon-ball; he had frequently been received by the king under the Prussian tent with a grace and a politeness abso-

\* This is a small blunder. Frederick was neither at Clostercamp nor Crefeldt. The Brunswick Princes were the heroes of *those* fields.—

lutely French, and had heard him talk of Voltaire and play the flute after winning a battle.

I am dilating here, almost in spite of myself, because this was the first great man whose portrait was thus drawn for me *en famille*, from nature, and because my admiration for him was the first symptom of my useless love of arms, the primary cause of one of the most complete deceptions of my life. This portrait is still radiant in my memory with the brightest colours, and the physical portrait not less so than the other. His hat pulled down over a powdered brow, his back arched when riding, his sarcastic and severe mouth, his invalid cane in the form of a crutch—there was nothing but what I was acquainted with; and, after listening to these particulars, I was vexed to see Bonaparte assume the like hat, snuff-box, and gestures: at first he appeared to me a plagiary, and who knows whether, on this point, that great man was not so in some degree? Who can estimate how much of the actor there is in every public man who is always in sight? Was not Frederick II. the prototype of the great modern tactician, of the royal philosopher and organizer?

Such were the first ideas that were awakened in my mind; and I found myself transported to other times, narrated with a truth teeming with sound lessons. I still hear my father quite incensed at the dissensions between the Prince de Soubise and M. de Clermont; I still hear his vehement indignation against the intrigues of the *Œil de Bœuf*, which caused the French generals to abandon one another on the field of battle, preferring the defeat of the army to the triumph of a rival; I hear him deeply moved by his old friendship for M. de Chevert and for M. d'Assas, with whom he was in camp on the night of his death. The eyes which had beheld them put their image into mine, and also that of many other celebrated persons who had died long before I was born. Family narratives have this advantage, that they sink deeper into the



memory than written narratives ; they are living like the revered relater, and they extend our life backward, as the imagination that anticipates is capable of extending it forward into the future.

I know not whether I shall some day commit to writing for myself all the minute details of my life : but here I mean to speak only of one of the pre-occupations of my soul. Sometimes, with a mind tormented by the past, and expecting but little from the future, men yield too easily to the temptation of amusing a few idlers with their family secrets and the mysteries of their hearts. I can conceive how it happens that some writers have taken pleasure in enabling all eyes to penetrate into the interior of their lives and even of their consciences, opening and even suffering them to be surprised by the light, all in disorder, and, as it were, littered with familiar recollections and with darling faults. There are such works among the finest books in our language, and which will be left us like those beautiful portraits of himself that Raphael was incessantly painting. But those who have thus represented themselves, either veiled or with uncovered face, have had a right to do so ; and I do not think that one is authorized to make one's confessions aloud, before one is either old enough, illustrious enough, or penitent enough, to interest a whole nation by one's sins. Till then one ought not to pretend to more than to be useful to it by one's ideas or one's actions.

Towards the end of the empire, I was a thoughtless pupil of the Lycée. War was afoot in the Lycée ; the drum drowned to my ears the voice of the masters, and the mysterious voice of books spoke to us but a cold and pedantic language. Logarithms and tropes, were in our eyes, but steps to mount to the star of the Legion of Honour,—for boys the brightest star in the heavens.

No meditation could long engage heads turned incessantly by cannon, and bells, and Te Deums. When one of our



comrades, who had quitted college a few months before made his appearance again in hussar uniform and his arm in a sling, we were ashamed of our books, and flung them at the heads of the masters. The masters themselves never ceased reading to us the bulletins of the grand army; and our shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* interrupted Tacitus and Plato. Our teachers were like heralds at arms, our rooms for study like barracks, our recreations like manœuvres, and our examinations like reviews.

I was then seized more than ever with a really inordinate fondness for military glory—a passion so much the more unfortunate, as it was precisely the time when, as I have observed, France was beginning to be cured of it. But the storm still raged; and neither my studies, severe, forced, and too precocious, nor the noise of the great world, into which, in order to divert me from this predilection, I had been thrown when quite a youth, could take from me this fixed idea.

I have very often smiled with pity at myself, on seeing with what force an idea lays hold of us, how it makes a dupe of us, and what a time it takes before it is worn out. Satiety itself served only to make me disobey this, not to destroy it within me; and this very book proved to me that I still take pleasure in fondling it, and that I should be very liable to a relapse:—so profound are the impressions of boyhood, and so deeply was the burning mark of the Roman eagle engraven on our hearts!

It was not till very late that I perceived that my services were a long mistake, and that I had carried a wholly contemplative nature into a wholly active life. But I had followed the bent of that generation of the Empire born with the century, and to which I belong.

So clearly did war seem to us to be the natural state of our country, that when, on escaping from the classes, we threw ourselves into the army, following the accustomed

course of our torrent, we could not believe in the durability of the quiet of peace. It appeared to us that we risked nothing by making believe to rest ourselves; and that inaction was not a serious evil in France. This impression lasted so long as the Restoration lasted. Every year brought with it the hope of war; and we durst not relinquish the sword, for fear that the day of our resignation might be the eve of a campaign. In this manner we dragged on, and wasted precious years, dreaming of fields of battle in the Champ de Mars, and exhausting a powerful and useless energy in parade exercises and private quarrels.

Overwhelmed by a listlessness which I had not expected in a life so ardently desired, it then became a necessity for me to steal away at nights from the wearisome and vain bustle of military days. From those nights, when I increased in silence the stock of knowledge which I had derived from our tumultuous and public studies, sprang my poems and my books; of those days I have left me these reminiscences, the principal traits of which I here collect around one idea. For, depending neither on the present nor the future for the glory of arms, I sought it in the recollections of my companions. The little that has befallen me will serve only as the frame to these pictures of the military life and manners of our armies, all the traits of which are not known.

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## EDITOR'S REMARKS

ON

### CHAPTER I.

THE Introduction to the work of the Count Alfred de Vigny, contains some assertions which, although they may apply to foreign armies, do not correctly describe that of England, and it appears to me desirable that the distinctions

which are so favourable to the latter should be clearly pointed out, as they set the character of the British army as much above that of the continental troops (supposing the account given of the latter by Count Alfred de Vigny to be correct), as the English constitution is superior to the constitution of every other nation. I beg it to be understood that I do not speak with disparagement of the courage, discipline, or other qualities, belonging to the continental armies, especially to that of France. I speak merely of the *constitution* of armies, to which Count de Vigny refers when he laments that, in the "organization of modern armies, the soldier is separated from the citizen; that he is unhappy and ferocious, because he feels that his situation is bad and absurd. It is lamentable," continues he, "that, while everything is changing among us, the destiny of the soldier should alone undergo no modification."

Upon these assertions I must observe that, as I have not witnessed the ferocity of the French soldiers as a mass, I do not believe it to be their general character; on the contrary, I have known innumerable instances of their kindness and generosity—I have myself experienced both, and I believe them to be brave and honourable.

It is true that, though ferocity does put forth its tiger fangs and claws in modern warfare, yet that ferocity is greatly diminished, when compared with the horrors which were committed in ancient times: formerly ferocity was the rule, now it is the exception; and the spirit of the age denounces all unnecessary cruelty in the prosecution of war.

But there are some things that may be abolished, still farther to assuage the injustice and asperities of war; among these, two are particularly striking. With respect to one of them there are various opinions; the other, all condemn. The *first* is the seizure of private merchant ships. The *second* is the sacking of towns taken by storm.

With regard to the first, it is an authorized act of

severity, a premeditated "doing of evil that good may come of it," which indeed is the case with most of the operations of war. The second is one sometimes tolerated, generally forbidden, but rarely, if ever, prevented, whatever may be the exertions of the commanders to effect this humane purpose.

The seizure of merchant ships by vessels of war has been both reprobated and defended by men so capable of handling the subject, that I shall not presume to say much upon a matter which, at first sight, appears to be so unjust; but, alas! there is much to be said in proof of the expediency of this cruel proceeding. In war we must weaken the enemy, and the soldier and sailor have a right to say—"Are we to risk our lives in battle, while you, our rulers, allow the enemy to gain strength by commerce? we die, because you spare his merchant vessels, and enable him to keep up the war by his traffic." In short, it will scarcely be admitted by the power which rules the sea, that her strongest means to force a peace can be abandoned; especially as this proceeding, however severely it may fall upon the individuals who suffer, is not attended with bloodshed. To destroy an enemy's commerce is a step towards peace. By allowing it to continue free, war must be prolonged, and the quantity of bloodshed is increased.

I will support my opinion by a well-known fact. When we went to war with America, in 1811, the United States were anything but *united*. The Northern States, in consequence of their commercial relations, were adverse to the war; the Southern States were for it. The English Government, whose operations across the Atlantic form a chain of diplomatic exploits which few cabinets could rival, and of which the southern link is formed by the twenty millions so *generously* bestowed on the slave-holders in the West Indies, and the northern, by the revolt of the

Canadas—our Government, I repeat, gave licences to the vessels of the Northern States to pass our cruisers unmolested, while the vessels of the Southern States were captured; our Government thinking, by this policy, to conciliate the Northern States, and excite a sort of personal tenderness and loving affection for us, in the bosoms of the northmen, that would make them quite obstreperous with their President. But, unhappily for our policy, Northern Jonathan, whose habits of thought are more given to the results of arithmetic than the effusions of sentiment, finding that his apprehensions for his ships were vain, and that, on the contrary, we fell upon his rivals the Southern States, while his own vessels arrived safely in port, found the war “quite comfortable.” He made a modest splutter about peace and patriotism, just to save appearances; but gave his President no trouble.

At last our Government discovered what every man across the Atlantic knew from the first; and our cruisers received orders to capture the Northern vessels. This quite altered matters, and the Northern States began to threaten the President with a separation. The President became embarrassed between the North and the South. A peace became necessary, and England might have dictated the terms. But, having been well thrashed both by sea and by land, and having disgraced our flag by buccaneering expeditions along the coast, we finished by being defeated in diplomacy as well as in war, and concluded a miserable peace at the moment when a little fortitude and perseverance would have given us the ascendancy! I do not refer to the justice or the policy of that war, because I deny that there was either the one or the other in it; but I give the foregoing as a strong instance, in which the seizure of merchant ships was not only advantageous in carrying on the war, but the means of producing an immediate peace.



What an opportunity we then lost of dealing with America! An able minister would have continued the war; the Northern States would have withdrawn from the Union, and, declaring themselves independent, have made a separate peace with Great Britain. The latter might then have raised the negroes of the South, and, at the head of an immense force of armed and disciplined Black regiments, dictated peace at Washington, erecting the Delaware into an independent Black State, in alliance with England, and supported by the Northern States, of which it would form the left flank against the Southern. Thus would America be too much divided to quarrel with England, while the powerful, if honest, mediation of the latter, would preserve peace between the Northern and Southern States—a peace that it would be the interest of all to cultivate, but most so of England, which country would, at the same time, have the greatest power to preserve harmony.

This line of policy may be adopted yet, if we have a war with the United States. It may be effected at any time while slavery exists; a nation, that is not governed by fools, may do what it likes against another nation in which it has two millions of true friends. 'Tis true they may be *Blacks*, but Blacks make capital soldiers. "But they would require to be drilled," cries the statesman (especially if he commands a corps of yeomanry). Yes, that is certain, but so would the free-born American citizens, the republican slave-drivers that are so proud of being without a standing army, without "paid cut-throats," as we are called. Now, from my knowledge of both, I will venture to say, that the docile, intelligent, eager, liberated slave, would be drilled in less time by half than the free-born slave-driver, who when the instructor of the drill politely says, "If you please, private Jonathan, have the goodness to shoulder your gun;" answers: "I guess now, Colonel, that it is a good joke of yours, but the sun is tarnation hot,



and I'll be d——d if I do! I calculate I'll lay down under yon tree." Before the free-born could get out of the awkward squad, an English officer would have his four hundred thousand Blacks able to manœuvre in battalions, brigades, and divisions, with British troops.

For the republican must not run away with the idea that our *soldiers* were beaten at New Orleans; they were ready to go on, and might have carried all before them; they retired *by order*. If the Americans had been a match for our troops in the field, they would have prevented a single British soldier from re-embarking! I should be sorry to detract from the merit and victory of General Jackson; but it was the victory of the *General*, not of the *troops*. The American army is brave, but it will always take a long time to discipline; a Black army would take very little time. To the one, discipline is odious, and against the feelings and habits of the men. To the other, discipline is delightful. The black slave, turned into a soldier, gains a great step in life: from the basest, he enters the noblest state of man—a soldier, armed for freedom! To the former, the military habit gives a feeling of degradation: to the latter it gives a feeling of honour. No doubt can be entertained, which will soonest be formed into an obedient, well-drilled, manœuvring force! But, to return from this digression, for which I must entreat the reader's pardon, in consideration of the interest of the subject:

In case of war, England can, in a great measure, monopolize commerce; and, while she can do this, the cries of outraged merchants will be borne away unheeded on the breeze that enables a British ship to capture them. But, while I maintain the necessity of this aggression on merchant ships, it is true that hard cases of this nature occur in our naval history. I will relate one. A small English brig of war, at the beginning of the last contest

with America, was in great danger. A large American merchantman hove in sight; the master was not aware that war had been declared; he bore down to save the brig, and gave her the necessary assistance. When safe, the English captain was obliged to inform the master of the merchantman that war had been declared between England and America; consequently, his duty obliged him to make a prize of his deliverer. The scene was distressing; the captured American sailors being also the owners of the ship. The captain and crew of the British man-of-war acted as generous sailors always act: they gave their share of the prize-money to the owners; but the ship could not be liberated.\*

With this fact I shall conclude the subject of seizing merchant ships in war. Some say it is unjust, others say nay, and there I leave it, siding with the latter party, if the war be just, as far as my judgment enables me to see my way in so intricate a question.

On the other evil of modern warfare, namely that of sacking towns, the view is less embarrassing. The pillage of a town is a necessary lure to the soldier, to compensate him for a desperate risk, and stimulate him to a courageous assault. I shall be told that honour should be sufficient excitement to all daring deeds—yes! it should be, but it is not; and we have, on such occasions, to deal with things as they are, not with things as they should be. If a high sense of honour and Christianity reigned paramount in the hearts of those who rule the kingdoms of the earth, we should have no war; the whole series of questions arising out of war would be expunged, and the word “*war*” forgotten!

But as rulers, and the people whom they govern, seek to gain some pecuniary advantages by war, so do those soldiers

\* For a strong case of hardship, arising out of these captures, see Sir H. Bunbury's *Life of Sir T. Hanmer*, in a note, page 409.

who are employed in that operation. In short, we operatives have an eye to self-interest as well as our rulers. The stimulus of "prize-money" is under various names, common to all. From the King to the cabin-boy, from the bishop to the curate, all worship Mammon! What are the Droits of Admiralty? But, as the soldier has a conscience quite as much alive to honour, mercy, and religion, as any other man, he wishes to get only such prize-money as has been agreed upon among nations, and he wishes to get it with as little pain to those who lose as is compatible with war. Moreover, soldiers throw all the blame of those sufferings which the inhabitants of a country undergo by war upon the rulers who make war, and who, while they send us to suffer its dangers live quietly at home and in safety, calling for blood, blood! as has been recorded on many occasions. If we sailors and soldiers inflict more suffering upon individuals than the success of our operation demands, *then* we become responsible to God, to our sovereign, to our country, and we deserve condign punishment. Now it is to prevent such outrageous conduct that I would propose to regulate the storming of towns by a military law; and to do this we know to be practicable, because it was done by the Romans for a merciless purpose, and therefore may be done by Britons and by Gauls for a humane purpose.

What I propose is this—to have a law established, ordaining that, whenever a town is stormed, the soldiers shall have the plunder of the said town; but that they shall not slay non-combatants, much less injure or insult the women and the children. Religion, honour, and humanity, peremptorily forbid the commission of such horrible deeds. But, as all these non-combatants are lawful prisoners, if the towns thus taken by storm belong to the enemy, they must be ransomed, and thus a compromise be made to satisfy the soldier for his danger. I propose, therefore:

That, in storming a town, no man should be allowed

to ill-treat the person of any but armed men who resist ;

That no soldier should dare plunder under the pain of death ;

That, after the assault, the people should be counted, and a poll-tax levied as ransom upon every man, woman, and child, that was preserved ;

That the value of all property, private and public, within the walls should be taken immediately, and the amount paid at once to the soldiers. At once, mind ; no "*Deccan prize-money*," no fraud upon the troops ; but immediate payment should be made ;

That all soldiers found in a drunken state should be instantly shot ;

That all individual plunderers, or men ill-using unarmed people, should be instantly shot ;

That a guard, called the "*Booty guard*," should follow the stormers, be under the command of the provost-marshal, and execute instant death upon all offenders : three military judges being attendant on the provost-marshal to put their *veto* upon immediate execution, in the event of a doubtful case arising, which might demand a farther inquiry, and call for a suspension of capital punishment.

By this law two things would be gained : First, the inhabitants of a town taken by assault would be saved from suffering ill-treatment personally, though a heavy pecuniary loss would be inflicted upon them ; Secondly, the brave soldier would be rewarded ; whereas, as things now are, the coward, who fears to mount the breach, steals in after it has been carried ; this villain then begins plundering that which the better man has won. Thus the brave and humane remain at their post and gain nothing, while the cruel and cowardly gain all. This is unjust ; the soldiers know it, and, were such a law as I now propose, in force, the good soldier would feel that the vile marauder, in robbing the townsmen, was robbing *him* ; because every act of robbery dimi-

nishes the good soldier's own share of the plunder ; and the "*Booty guard*" would then be assisted by every brave man in the army. It is true that some forty or fifty rascals would be shot in half an hour, the first time a town was stormed after the promulgation of this law. But what of that ? twice as many, ay, ten times as many innocent people would be saved ! and when the villains of an army found that the law was not to be trifled with, they would respect it : thus war would be rendered less ferocious to the helpless inhabitants of the country where it raged.

The principle upon which such a law would be founded, is one which secures its easy execution, viz., enlisting the interests of the *many* against the interests of the *few*. The good soldiers of an army predominate ; but they cannot keep the bad soldiers in subjection, unless backed by the force of such a law, which makes the good soldier see in every marauder the robber of his own property ; the man whom he is by personal interest, by honour, and by military law, bound to act against ; and he does so accordingly.

The good soldiers of an army are somewhere about ten to one, compared to the bad soldiers ; and of the bad ones, probably not above five out of ten are of such desperate character as to commit the cruelties perpetrated upon the inhabitants of a town taken by assault. It is but a small band that do these deeds. A law of the nature which I propose would be among the most useful that rule an army.

The Count Alfred de Vigny says : " at the present day, all that conquered towns have to apprehend is the payment of contributions ;" had the Count ever witnessed the storming of a town, he would not have hazarded so erroneous an assertion. The dreadful scenes which took place on these occasions during the last war are too notorious to require being enumerated ; and any French or English officer who served in the Peninsula will undeceive him. For example,



let him ask for the details of what passed when the French army took Oporto in 1809; or when the English army took St. Sebastian in 1811. Such things would not take place if the law which I have proposed were to be in force.

The next sentence which strikes my attention is the following:—

“It is impossible to hasten too much the period when armies shall be more identified with the nation.” So says the Count Alfred de Vigny; and he is right as regards his own and other continental armies; but in England the army is already “identified with the nation.” An English army forms a portion of the constitution of the country; its pay is voted annually by the direct will of the people, expressed through their representatives in the House of Commons; the army is thus created by the breath of the nation, and dies at its will. It is therefore under the complete control of, and cannot be more identified with, the nation.

The essence of an army is *obedience* to its chief; the chief of the English army is the sovereign. But its existence depends upon the nation. Let me exemplify what I mean.

Suppose that some measure should become popular; such, for instance, as the abolition of the corn-laws, and that the parliament rejected a motion made by some popular member for the abolition of those laws. Suppose, furthermore, that a large portion of the nation were discontented; that the motion failed; and that among the manufacturing towns a tumultuous assembly of fifty thousand people, rendered furious by distress and disappointment, proceeded to those acts of violence which an ungovernable and angry multitude are apt to commit. Suppose, further, that the general officer commanding the troops in the neighbourhood of such a tumult was the identical man who, as a member of parlia-



ment, made the motion to abolish the corn-laws. Here, surely, the author will admit that the troops are sufficiently identified with the people; their commander being the popular member in the House of Commons; the soldiers being to a man voluntarily enrolled, and having fathers, brothers, and other relatives, among the rioters. The union with the people cannot be more close. "Yes," says some flimsy reasoner, "the army might join the multitude, and carry the abolition of the corn-laws by force of arms." Let us examine this; for, as *that* is the only way in which Count de Vigny's wish can be accomplished more than is now the case with the British army, it is necessary to prove its absurdity.

The popular member and general of the troops, being united in the same person, is thus addressed by the leader of the rioters: "Having failed in the House, join us and force the abolition of the odious corn-laws by arms; let us unite, and march to London." But the general would not do this; he would say to the leader of the rioters: "Would you have me break all the existing laws of England and her constitution to help a mob of fifty thousand in an attempt to repeal a law, which repeal the representatives of twenty millions of people have rejected! Will you, fifty thousand angry and misled men, break the laws of England? You are pursuing a *right* object, perhaps, but you do so in a *wrong* way, and thus oppose twenty millions of your fellow-subjects who disapprove of the Bill? What though your Bill be right, is this the way to carry it? No! does not the constitution say you must seek reform by the petitions of great associations, and by returning members who represent your wishes? Yes! then, if we soldiers join you, we break the constitution which is the pride and glory of the English people, and we deserve to be shot as traitors."

And is it "identifying the soldier with the nation," to join fifty thousand against twenty million, in destroying that

freedom and excellent constitution which the nation has gained by ages of struggling? Certainly not; it would be to identify him with the *minority*, not with the *nation*.

Then, what should the commander and troops do to prove that they are perfectly identified with the people? There can be but one answer: obey the orders of the sovereign set over them by the people, in order to protect the laws and the constitution of England, in all its integrity. The general must stand by the magistrates of the land, and say to the fifty thousand rioters: "You are not the people of England; your object may be just or unjust—with that, I, as the leader of these troops, have no concern. Petition and remonstrate, as the constitution decrees; but offend not the laws of the land, which the nation has placed me here to protect; and, by such a defence of the crown and laws, I and my troops are 'identified with the nation.'" "But," says an adversary, "suppose that a majority of the people demand a repeal of the corn-laws? and that the parliament vote those laws should be repealed; that the sovereign refuses; that a quarrel takes place; and that the House of Commons refuses supplies for the payment of the troops?" Well, what then? The army, if not paid, dissolves, and there is no longer an army; and it is still, as I say, identified, in its life and in its death, with the nation.

If the sovereign chooses to hoist a royal standard against the parliament; if the parliament chooses to hoist the standard of revolt against the sovereign; then two armies arise, neither of them being the constitutional army of England, but two unconstitutional and hostile armies, tearing the nation to atoms; and about such armies, which are not recognized by the constitution of England, I cannot speak: they would be monsters of destruction.

If I am right in this view, then the present constitutional army of England is, like its sovereign, perfectly "identified with the nation," and can only cease to be so, when it

ceases to be paid by the representatives of the nation, and ceases to obey the sovereign.

How different was the constitution of the French army in the time of Charles X. ! for that King did not command the army of the country ; he commanded his own army. It came in collision with the people, and was broken to pieces. The French soldiers, during the " Three Days," had their King on one side, their countrymen on the other. They were shaken with doubts and fears. Some held fast by the King ; some joined the people ; some were neuter. None were sure what it was right to do. This can never be the case with the army of England ; its duties are distinct. The militia of England, the yeomanry of England, have both been called, and justly called the " national force of the country ;" but they are not one whit more national than the regular army of England, as at present constituted.

Count de Vigny says " that Frederick the Great's greatness chiefly consisted in knowing himself thoroughly, in appreciating the elements of his elevation at their real value, and in doing the honours of his victories with the modesty of a sage." There are men who take a pleasure in finding a fanciful way of accounting for great men's actions by some small rule of their own. I would ask the author, why he could not say plainly that Frederick's greatness consisted in his being a very clever fellow, and in his being also a despotic sovereign, which enabled him to give the full effect to his great abilities? *That* was what his greatness consisted in. M. de Vigny says that he was vexed to see Bonaparte ape Frederick in his hat, snuff-box, and gestures : this is puerile. Why should the greater man ape the lesser? Neither M. de Vigny, nor any one else, will set up Frederick as the equal of Napoleon ! But the cocked hat ! Well, it was that of the time—Napoleon could not go bare-headed, or wear a red night-cap, because

Frederick wore a cocked hat; but, suppose Napoleon's hat to have been like that of Frederick's, what then? Would any one have had him give up his time to direct the operations of his hatter, that he might not make a cocked hat like Frederick's? or to his tailor, that he might not make his breeches like Frederick's breeches? Then, Napoleon took snuff, and Frederick took snuff;—imitation again! And his gestures too! poor imitative Napoleon! he was not to walk, or ride, or sneeze, &c., because Frederick walked, and rode, and sneezed!

There are men, clever men too, and Count Alfred de Vigny seems to be one of them, who think it unphilosophical to admire a great man: the vulgar admire him; it is too common, and it is much more wise to discover his failings and peculiarities! these are the primary matters, in the consideration of such philosophers: upon these they fix, and these they dissect. The great deeds of Napoleon and Frederick, the powers of their minds, which make the universe resound, and will reverberate through revolving ages, are but secondary matters for contemplation in the minds of our minute philosophers. Immortal victories are passed by unheeded, and the cocked hats of the heroes are placed before us in all their squareness. Rosbach, Prague, Austerlitz, Marengo, are lost in the wondrous cock of the hat, expelled by the pungency of snuff, or beaten by the crutch-like cane!

I cannot believe, with Count Alfred's father, that a warm admiration for able generals, like Frederick the Great or Napoleon, can make bad officers; on the contrary, it leads men to study, and to merit their approbation, though enemies, and to learn their wisdom.

I must once more differ from the author, who says, he regrets that his passion for military glory began when "France was beginning to be cured of it." I have lately spent two years in France, and, though I admit that Count

de Vigny ought to be a better judge than myself, yet I saw no symptom of France being cured of the desire for military glory. I think that "*young France*" teems with it, and only wants a leader, to blaze forth in all the wildness of war. The love of military glory is a strong disease in all countries, but an incurable one in the heart of a Frenchman. In this world we are formed by circumstances. The force of England is in her commerce, and on the ocean she is, therefore, strong. Englishmen are essentially sailors.

The force of France, jammed in, as she is, between the continental powers, is in her army, and Frenchmen are, therefore, essentially soldiers. England fights for her commerce. France fights for her frontiers; defeat and partition seem to be synonymous with France. It was Napoleon, not France, who was conquered at Waterloo; and Napoleon was only conquered because France was divided. Her republicans abandoned their country and their sovereign to gain power for themselves. But, debating under the points of half a million of foreign bayonets in possession of Paris, was not the way to gain a free constitution. The treachery of these Jacobins prevented Napoleon from heading the army of the Loire. He did not wish to raise a civil war for his own aggrandisement. He had formerly, when very young, refused to command a republican army against the people of La Vendée—a proof of the sincerity of his patriotism. After Waterloo, he, a second time, refused to mix in civil war. This detestation of civil war was a strong characteristic feeling in the heart of that great sovereign. Glory—ambition—France! these he loved; but none of these could be served by civil war, and, therefore, he rejected it. The same horror of it reigns in the breast of his conqueror: a civil war is a hell upon earth. But for this hatred of civil war in the breast of Napoleon, the Allies would soon have discovered that France was not



conquered, though Paris might be taken. They well knew this, or France would have been partitioned in 1815.

No : France is not cured of the passion for military glory, nor England of her passion for commerce. But the two governments have virtuously (thanks to their want of money) planted the olive ; the two people, no longer deceived as to each other's characters, are closely united by a bond of peace ; while a determination to force, step by step constitutional governments upon all the world, seems to be the order of the day ; checks and difficulties there are, but the progress of liberal opinions is incessant. It is, as all men proclaim, and all passing events prove, the spirit of the age — and autocrats yield reluctantly, but still they yield, under its constant pressure—forcing itself into every weak part which despotism presents. Printing and rail-roads gave the death-blow to tyranny. But it is impossible to believe, that the despots of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, will surrender their undue power without a struggle ; and the first war will show Count de Vigny whether or not France be cured of her passion for military glory.

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## CHAPTER II.

### ON THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE ARMIES.

THE Army is a nation in a Nation ; it is a vice of our times. In ancient times the case was different ; every citizen was a warrior, every warrior a citizen ; the men of the army did not assume a different aspect from the men of the city. The fear of the gods and of the laws, fidelity to the country, austerity of manners, and, strange as it may seem, the love of peace and order, were more prevalent in the camps than in the towns,



because it was the *élite* of the nation that inhabited them. Peace brought with it severer toils than war for these intelligent armies. By them the territory of the country was studded with public buildings, or intersected by high roads; and the Roman cement of the aqueduct was mixed, and Rome herself built, by the hands which defended her. The repose of their soldiers was productive and beneficial, in the same degree that the repose of ours is sterile and pernicious. The citizens felt neither admiration for their valour nor contempt for their idleness, because the same blood circulated incessantly in the veins of the Nation and in the veins of the Army.

In the middle ages, and, still later, down to the reign of Louis XIV., the army still belonged to the Nation, if not by all its soldiers, at least by all their officers; because the soldier was the retainer of the noble, raised by him on his own estate, taken along with him to the army, and dependent on him alone: his lord was, of course, a landed proprietor, and lived in the very bowels of the mother-country. Swayed by the wholly popular influence of the priest, he did nothing during the middle ages but devote himself, life and fortune, to the country, often in hostility to the crown, and incessantly revolting against a hierarchy of powers, which would have introduced too much abasement into obedience, and, consequently, too much humiliation into the profession of arms. The regiment belonged to the colonel, the company to the captain; and both were ready enough to take away their men, when their consciences as citizens condemned the orders which they received as soldiers.

This independence of the Army lasted in France till the time of M. de Louvois, who first subjected it to the control of *bureaux*, and delivered it up, bound hand and

foot, to the sovereign power. This he accomplished without encountering much resistance, and the last defenders of the generous liberty of the military were those plain, rough gentlemen, who would not lead their family of soldiers to the Army unless to go to war. Though they had not spent the year in teaching automata the everlasting drill exercise, I find that both they and their men behaved extremely well in Turenne's battles. They particularly disliked the uniform which gives the same look to all, and subjects minds to the dress and not to the man. They were fond of dressing in red on days of battle, that they might be more conspicuous to their own troops, and afford a better mark to the enemy; and I take a delight in calling to mind, on the authority of Mirabeau, that old Marquis de Coëtquen, who, rather than appear in uniform at a review by the king, suffered himself to be broke by him at the head of his regiment. "Fortunately, sire," said he afterwards, "the pieces are left me." It was something to make such a reply to Louis XIV.

I am aware of the thousand defects of the organization which then expired; but I assert that it surpassed ours in this, that it allowed the national and martial fire of France to burn and blaze more freely. This sort of Army was a very strong and very complete armour, with which the Country covered the Sovereign Power, but all the pieces of which could drop off of themselves one after another, if that Power attempted to employ them against it.

The destiny of a modern army is totally different from that, and the centralization of the powers has made it what it is. It is a body separated from the great body of the Nation, and which seems to be the body of an infant, so backward is it in point of intelligence, and so completely is it prevented from growing. The modern army, as soon as it ceases to be at war, becomes a sort of gendarmerie. It feels, as it were, ashamed of

itself, and knows neither what it does nor what it is; it is incessantly asking itself whether it is the slave or the ruler of the state; this body is everywhere seeking its soul, but never finds it.

The paid man, the Soldier, is a glorious pauper, victim and executioner, a scapegoat daily sacrificed to his people and for his people, which plays with him; he is a martyr at once ferocious and humble, whom Power and the Nation, ever at variance, bandy from one to the other.

How often, when I have been forced to take an obscure but active part in our civil disturbances, have I felt my heart swell with indignation at this inferior and cruel condition! How often have I compared this existence to that of the gladiator! The people is the indifferent Cæsar, the sneering Claudius, to whom the soldiers incessantly cry as they file past: *Those who are going to die salute thee!*

Let but a few workmen who have become more and more wretched in proportion to the increase of their toil and their industry, raise a riot against their employer, or a manufacturer take a fancy to add this year a few hundred thousand francs to his income; or let merely a *good city*, jealous of Paris, be bent on having also its three days' fighting; and both parties cry out for help. The government, whatever it may be, replies with great good sense: "The law does not permit me to judge between you; all of you are in the right: I can do no more, for my part, than send you my gladiators, who shall slaughter you, and whom you shall slaughter." Accordingly, away they go; they kill, and are killed. Peace is restored, the parties embrace and compliment one another, and the hunters of hares boast of their cleverness in picking off soldier and officer. When the account comes to be made up, there are merely a few dead to subtract; but the number of the soldiers are never stated, they are not counted.

No one concerns himself about them. It is taken for granted that men who die in the uniform have neither father nor mother, neither wife nor sweetheart, to break their hearts after them. Theirs is anonymous blood.

Sometimes—and it is now-a-days too frequently the case—the two parties that have fallen out join to overwhelm with hatred and maledictions the unfortunate wretches who have been condemned to quell them.

Thus, the pervading sentiment of this book will be that which caused me to commence it—the wish to avert from the head of the Soldier that malediction which the citizen is frequently ready to hurl at him, and to invoke for the Army the forgiveness of the Nation. There is nothing more admirable after inspiration than devotedness, after the Poet than the Soldier; it is not his fault that he is doomed to the state of a Helot.

The Army is blind and mute. It strikes before it from the spot on which it is placed. It has no will of its own, and acts by means of springs. It is a mighty machine which is set in motion and which kills; but it is also a thing which suffers.

Hence it is that I have always spoken of it with an involuntary emotion. We are now cast upon severe times, when the cities of France are successively becoming fields of battle, and of late we have had much to forgive the men whose trade it is to kill.

On closely examining the life of those armed troops whom all the Powers that shall succeed one another will be daily urging upon us, we shall find, it is true, that, as I have said, the existence of the soldier is, next to the punishment of death, the most lamentable vestige of barbarism subsisting among men; but also that nothing is more worthy of the interest and the love of the nation than that sacred family, which sometimes confers on it so much glory.

## EDITOR'S REMARKS

ON

## CHAPTER II.

THE observations I have made on the first chapter apply, in some parts, to the second. In this chapter the author endeavours to prove that formerly the citizen and the soldier were one and the same; not separated as, he says, is the case with modern standing armies. Now, I believe that in no age was the English army more strictly national than at this moment or more honoured by the nation. Does not the respect paid to the Duke of Wellington, in spite of political feelings, and the reception lately given to Marshal Soult—a reception so honourable to the English character—show how Englishmen honour military greatness in friend and foe? And, however strongly many dislike a standing army, none are hostile to the soldiers, who are everywhere well received.

The Count Alfred de Vigny, with the true aristocratic spirit of ancient days, seems to approve of that system under which nobles led their followers against each other and against their sovereigns—days when every noble was a little king. Then every regiment did, indeed, as the author says, “belong to the colonel,” but it did not “belong to the nation,” as he erroneously adds: for under an oligarchy nothing “belongs to the nation.” An oligarchy divides the sovereign and the people from each other, keeping both in grievous subjection. I am surprised that so sensible a person as Count de Vigny should not perceive that, if each military chief were independent of the crown, the crown could not protect either itself or the people against the military chief; and that all the horrors of war must be multiplied, in



any country where an army so constituted may be employed. An oligarchy possesses all the objectionable parts of a kingly government. It does not possess one of the many advantages which belong to a monarchy. A monarch—unless he be a monster—naturally loves the people, and all he does is intended for their benefit. He may, and often does, commit faults, and is mistaken in his measures; but he loves the people, and their interests are identified with his own, both in his feelings and in fact. The monarch of England mounts the throne free, and is not obliged to make an electioneering pledge the rule of his government, as is the case with the leader of an oligarchy and the president of a republic. The members of an oligarchy are pledged to their party; they are the enemies of every man, woman, and child in the land, except those who belong to their own order, to enrich which the national revenue is laid under contribution. They are the bitter foes, and also the masters, of the king or chief magistrate, and of the people. In Venice, for example, they made a wretched puppet, called their *DOGE*, (*Dog* would have been a more appropriate title) put his son to death!

The interests of the crown and those of the people must ever be one and the same, and, therefore, that “independence of the army,” which the author boasts of as having formerly existed, and which, he says, M. de Louvois destroyed in France, was highly mischievous, and utterly at variance with Count Alfred’s own wish, that the soldier should be identified with the nation. M. de Louvois acted like a wise man and a patriot, when he “delivered it up, bound hand and foot, to the sovereign power;” for, it is surely better to be ruled by one despotic king than by hundreds of small but merciless tyrants.

Count Alfred’s “plain rough gentlemen” did not win battles for Turenne—Turenne won battles for them. When the Marquis de Coëtquen made the mutinous speech to



Louis XIV., quoted by Count de Vigny, the king ought to have answered: "Yes, I leave you the pieces, but as you will want a cord to tie them up, take it." And he should have hanged the insolent feudal lord and mutineer upon the spot. Such would have been the treatment given by a feudal lord to any of his poor vassals! M. de Louvois having taken the French army out of the hands of the "rough gentlemen," (I thank Count A. de Vigny for this handy expression) and placed it in those of the king, the author tells us that it and all armies, (for all continental armies are in the like predicament,) have become "Helots," and he wishes to see them more "identified with the nation." I have endeavoured to show that the English army is *not* composed of "Helots," that it *is* identified with the nation, and that, so far, we are superior to all European armies.

Believing our constitution to be the most perfect that man has yet invented to protect himself from violence and injustice, and thinking our army to be, practically if not theoretically, an essential branch of the executive part of our constitution, I should here stop; but having, as yet, referred only to Europe, I may be permitted to say a few words about America, her President, and her army; which last is only assembled when called upon by the pressure of the moment; that is to say, when America is threatened with invasion, or when she wishes to invade and destroy her unfortunate Indian neighbours, towards whom she seems resolved to pursue the example of the mother country; incessantly extending the effects of that unjust principle of conquest over the unhappy aborigines, which ruled the conduct of the first European invaders who settled in the New World, and has continued to influence both nations up to the present day. I must, however, observe here, in justice to the present Colonial Secretary,\* that he seems resolved to redeem the English

\* Lord Glenelg held that office at the time this was written.

name from the infamy which attaches to every civilized nation, that, preferring might to right, seizes upon the territory of helpless savages, without purchasing their lands; a purchase so easily made, that the cost would be scarcely worth mentioning, while the omission to make it is a disgraceful breach of the strongest principle of social existence—the inviolability of property. In England, a poor man's hut may not be worth five pounds, yet the government dare not take it from him, unless its value be paid, no, not even if required for the national safety. But the same government, with all the cant of pretended religion, and with a reckless injustice, have hitherto not only seized upon whole countries by force, but have treated the aborigines with indescribable cruelty.

To return from this digression. The American army is, as I have stated, assembled on the spur of the moment: it is not a standing army, and, because it repulsed our generals at New Orleans, the republicans all over the world rejoiced, and exclaimed: "What are regular armies good for? See how easily they can be defeated by free men, who rush to arms on the call of their country, and drive the hired red-coated butchers from the hallowed soil of America!" In short, America is said to be more free than England, and her armies, for that reason, superior to ours. I deny both these assertions: and I will endeavour to show that the English soldiers who attacked New Orleans were more free and more patriotic than the Americans who were opposed to them.

In the first place let me observe, that neither army had any right to be *there*—the land belonged to the poor Indians. Injustice pitched the camps of both armies: so far they stood upon equal ground. To show that our army was as free as the American army, and as patriotic, I must again refer to our constitutional superiority, to prove that the English were the more national troops of the two. We serve no des-

pot; we serve an hereditary constitutional sovereign, whose feelings and actions must have the good of the whole empire for their foundation; while, on the contrary, the army of America obeys an ephemeral king, who mounts the throne with less exalted principles and feelings.

The President of America must act under the influence of that faction which has raised him to his temporary throne. If we suppose virtue to be desirable in the first magistrate of a country, a constitutional hereditary sovereign is more likely to be virtuous than a temporary elective sovereign; because the real interests of the first are proverbially linked to the interests of the people, and men are generally virtuous in proportion as their interests depend upon their being so. Prejudice, bad education, human frailties, may, and often do, obscure the views and distort the conduct of an hereditary monarch; but the evil effect of these is reduced to a mere speck in a constitutional government like ours. Is the education of a first magistrate in America better? He is, or at least, he may be, educated as a slave-holder—the worst of all educations! The spread of knowledge daily shows all sovereigns that they and the people have a common interest. The case is different with an elective sovereign, who reigns for a very few years; for instance, the President of America. He has every temptation to be wicked; he is ambitious to be the king of a day, or he would not seek the Presidency; he must gratify the wishes of a strong party in order to obtain the object of his ambition—namely, his election. I have, therefore, a right to suppose that, when a man's views of politics gratify his ambition, his ambition, rather than his virtue, has created his views. An American President advocates slavery: would he do so if slavery was unpopular in America? No! "That is what I want," says the republican, "the chief magistrate governs by the wishes of the people." And if those wishes be erroneous, if they be horrible, would you have no check upon them?—no power to

make the majority reflect?—to give the virtuous minority time to put forth their arguments in the cause of justice? The republicans can hardly deny that such a check is necessary: and this is the use of a King, and of a House of Lords with a *suspensive power*: the use of a sovereign, *not* elective, and *not* the mere mouthpiece of a faction, as is the President of America. Let us suppose a case; it is imaginary, but within the bounds of probability. Suppose the slave-driving southern States of America to have more influence than the honester northern states; suppose that, to gain the votes of the slave States, some candidate for the Presidency furiously advocates, either sincerely or hypocritically, the cause of the most cruel slavery that ever disgraced a human institution. If he *sincerely* advocates this inhuman traffic in human blood, he is imbued with the principles of tyranny over his fellow-men; it is ingrafted into his very heart: the love of selling and flogging the poor and helpless is sucked in with his mother's milk: it has become a part of his very nature. If, on the contrary, believing it to be horrible, he, nevertheless, supports the damnable system from feelings of personal ambition, *then* he is a savage hypocrite. Suppose this citizen be elected President. Is he not elected on account of his devotion to tyranny or his simulation? Now, I ask my English reader whether he thinks such a sovereign desirable? The sovereign of a people, *two millions of whose working men are in chains*, and whom he has, with heart, word, and deed, doomed to chains for ever!—is he not opposed to the will of every honest man? of every Christian in his own nation? to the opinion of honest men in every nation? Again, I ask, can such vast power be safely confided to such hands? and yet, in such hands, the American power, as a great nation, may be placed! The Presidents of the United States may be honest men; I dispute neither their virtue, nor their great abilities; but a President may come who is not virtuous; and in truth, if virtue be allowed to any man who advocates a



continuance of the slave-trade, we concede such virtue to him in compassion for the unhappy prejudices of his education, and rather out of charity, than under the influence of any other feeling.

Now, I again ask that Englishman who admires the American constitution, whether he would like to have a President and a Legislature that advocate slavery? men that defend the torture of the innocent, by flogging, by selling the distracted mother to one ruffian, her screaming infant to another, the wretched husband and father to a third? And when the spirits of those miserable innocent beings are cast down to the lowest depths of human suffering, and they become silent under the pressure of astounding despair, the monsters, who have made the purchase, taunt them with being "sulky:" then swiftly descends the strong twisted thong, scoring their quivering flesh; and the bodily torture rivals the mental agonies of the shrieking victims. But this is not all—I could state far more than this, if decency did not bid me draw a veil over scenes of cruelty and obscenity too dreadful to recount. Nor will I describe the roasting alive of M'Intire, an untried, unconvicted, working man, executed by "*Lynch Law*," and to such Law are two millions of the working classes exposed in America! English admirer of American freedom, how wouldst thou like to have a judge on the English bench charge the jury to acquit men who had burned alive an innocent working man? Yes, innocent! for all are so that are untried. And for what were these accused men acquitted, or, at least, not punished? Because they were falsely accused? No! But because a *multitude* committed the horrible crime and could not be *all* arrested. Therefore, the ruffians, whom the executive power *were* able to seize, and who *were* proved in a court of justice to have been guilty of committing murder in the most revolting manner, were turned loose into society, upon the atrocious principle of American law (as the judge is said to

have told the jury, while the real cause of the wretched man's treatment was his colour!) that when a *multitude* were engaged in a crime, it was impossible to punish *all*, because *all* could not be arrested; consequently, it would be unjust to punish the few that *were* arrested! This is Lynch Law: this is the *republic* of the United States: this is the freedom of the New World!

That there are dreadful cases of slavery among us, is true—that of manufactory children, for example, which is revolting; but such cases of slavery are against the principles of the English constitution; they are abuses, and not principles of the constitution, as in America; with us they form the dirt that obscures the gold, but do not prove any baseness in the metal. Peace and reform be to the Americans; but Heaven defend us from their constitution!

I have endeavoured to show that every American President is likely to have his own private interest at heart, and that his private interest is not, necessarily, the interest of the great American nation; it may be accidentally so, but this is not probable, because a man of talent and ambition, and who is at the head of a government, strikes out some great system for his own and his nation's glory, and such a system could not be executed during the short rule of an American President, who, knowing this, will therefore pursue his private interests and those of his faction.

It does not, therefore, appear probable that a consistent principle of rule will continue to actuate the government of the American nation, for any great length of time.

But let us contrast with this an hereditary sovereign, and a nobility forming an order in the state; they give a connecting chain which unites the operation and plans of successive parliaments, and this holds them in one steady and consistent course. Neither the crown nor the nobility, if their power is justly limited, and if they have no privileges which exempt them from bearing all the burdens of the state



in common with the labouring class, can have any real interest separate from that of the poorest man. If the people thrive the crown must thrive, for, as the sovereign is elevated above his people so his people being raised, necessarily raise him, for his relative elevation above them continues, and all stand united on commanding ground. The sovereign of a great people must always be invested with their grandeur.

But any attempt to degrade the people must also lower the power and dignity of the crown ; nor do their ignorance and poverty offer any excuse for depriving men of their rights ; poverty being a misfortune, gives a man, if possible, a stronger claim to that which, of right, belongs to him ; and as “to the ignorance of the people”—pooh ! *Magna Charta* was gained by men among whom were some, it is said, that could neither read that charter nor sign their names to it, although they were barons of England ! But mother-wit told them what was necessary for their own safety. Why, the great Duke of Marlborough could hardly read or write ! When the people are refused their rights (of which they can judge, as well as King John’s Barons, without knowing how to read and write), danger is abroad ; force, cruel expedients, and exasperating policy then become the weapons of government, till at last the people, like the “stern gentlemen” (but not scholars) of Runnemede, use the same means : they rebel. The labouring class always suffer privations. If the rich are just towards them, they are content and social ; they feel that God has made them poor, and they do not repine, for, as our Saviour says, they are more religious and more moral than the rich. In consequence of possessing their rights, they become more noble in their thoughts and in their deeds. But if the rich educate the multitude, and, while they teach the poor man to estimate his rights, teach him also to see that he is deprived of them : if, while the rich do this, they expect the poor to suffer in patience, not what God inflicts, and with it sends the power to bear, but what the rich

inflict, and send no power to bear; then do the poor feel vilified and injured: they become base and revengeful. Fear may long prevent open violence; but it generates hypocrisy and all that demoralization which renders men devilish and dreadful. To bestow upon man his rights, and instruct him how to value and to use them, is to cultivate all the nobleness of human nature. It is a fearful thing so to depress men, so to impoverish them, and, at the same time, so to cut off relief, that they revolt. Woe be to those who push a nation to such straits, for the state of society *then* becomes deplorable. Men who succeed in seizing their rights by force have seldom any regard for the rights of others; they are filled with a spirit of vengeance: in the fulness of success they become detestable tyrants. If they fail in the struggle, they sink into hopeless baseness. Governments should have that moral courage which makes them boldly just: it is not men that *receive* justice, but those who *take* it, that are to be feared; why will not governments see that their force to hold the multitude in due subjection to the laws is quadrupled by giving men their rights? To do this makes the power of a government gigantic. To refuse, gives to it the feebleness of decrepitude, and to its foes the fierceness of tigers! Truly it is not the act of a wise government to deny the people justice, for the denial of justice leads to revolt: it may come sooner, or it may come later, but the result is as certain as that the night follows the day.

The degradation and impoverishment of the labourer are the ruin of a nation, injuring equally the monarch and the people; for, as I have already said, the sovereign and the labourer must rise and fall together; the one eats the bread which the other makes, and, in eating it, the king gives a pledge that he will protect the producer by the established laws, and secure to him so much of the "staff of life" as is necessary to his health and strength. To give this protection forms the sovereign's part of the bargain with his

people, and a most awful one it is, in the eyes of God and man. The kingly office is not a sinecure. The whole strength of mind and body, and the whole life of the elevated being who fills a throne, scarcely suffice to redeem the awful pledge given to the people. This strong reciprocal duty between the throne and the nation; this interchange of laborious but grateful offices; this patriarchal feeling on one side, and filial veneration on the other; should produce a degree of consistency and durability in the English constitutional hereditary monarchy and aristocracy, that does not belong to the American republic. The Queen of England is, under certain conditions, a proprietor. The President of America has only a four years' lease. The Queen would not willingly injure her property. The President turns his four years' lease to the best advantage for his own personal interest, and he cares not for the evil consequences which such conduct produces to the land; they will not fall upon his child, for his child is not his heir; and, as to his successor, he may be his mortal foe.

If I am correct in the foregoing views, both the victorious and the defeated armies at New Orleans fought upon a territory to which *neither* had a right: the land belonged to the Indians. So far the belligerents were equal; circumstances which neither could control placed both there, and brought them into collision. Accident gave the victory to the American army. But the British soldier was decidedly the man who served under the more free constitution of the two. He was strictly a national warrior. Had the British soldier defended the coast of Great Britain against invaders, as the American soldiers did New Orleans, his countrymen would have flocked, as one man, to his assistance. The American soldier, on the contrary, though he behaved well in the lines of New Orleans, was, with great difficulty, brought thither by the brave and able General Jackson, whose energy and abilities overcame a want of vigour in the laws, united

as it has been confidently asserted, to apathy and treason among the citizens; and, had that brave and celebrated officer been defeated, numbers of his countrymen were prepared to join the English army, and two millions of enslaved working people were ready to rise in arms, and aid the invaders against a constitution and a government which held and still holds them in chains. I say again, that the British soldier is more the soldier of the nation, more thoroughly the soldier of freedom, and, *collectively*, more honourable in his service, than the American soldier—I say *collectively*, because the American soldiers are, *individually*, as brave and honourable as the British; nor can any man entertain a higher respect for them than myself. I do not criticise the Americans, but I criticise the principles of their constitution. Here then I come again to the point. We have the best and most free of *all* constitutions that have ever been seen, whether European or American, unless, indeed, the fossil remains of a better can be found by the geologists, one appertaining to the world which Moses forgot to tell us of, and the history of which has not yet been discovered; but, referring to our own alive and biblical world, this our English constitution is magnificent. Thus, thinking it the best, I hold that soldiers cannot be called “Helots,” but are armed citizens, who defend what is, and ought to be, so dear to us; nor can I be justly accused of an unnecessary digression, in comparing this constitution with that of the American republic, because every nation is justified in seeking that constitution which gives the greatest happiness to the people; and, if the American constitution could make our nation more happy than the English constitution, it is natural for the people of England to wish for it, and to consider that army which would oppose its introduction as the “Helots” of a despot. I have, therefore, a right to show why I think, in common with my



countrymen, that our constitution is far superior to, and more free than, that of America, and that we are bound by reason and loyalty to defend it, and also to defend the British soldiers against the accusation of being "Helots."

The author goes on to say, "I am aware of the thousand defects of the organization which then expired; but I assert that it surpassed ours in this, that it allowed the national and martial fire of France to burn and blaze more freely." Yes, it did, and men were sacrificed whenever a few fiery nobles chose to make war upon each other. The slaying of poor men was nothing: they were only base-born vassals!

The Count continues: "This sort of army was a very strong and a very complete armour with which the country covered the sovereign power, but all the pieces of which could drop off of themselves, one after another, if that power attempted to employ them against it." Now what a proof we have here of the folly and weakness of such armour! Suppose that the king should enter upon a just war, and, at a critical moment, one of these pieces of armour being sulky, or bribed, or frightened at reverses, which threatened to draw the enemy upon this piece of armour's own particular territory, or, having some affront of its own, it drops off, and other pieces, for similar reasons, follow its example; then the sovereign and the nation are left naked and defenceless. When the foe has smitten the king, he next proceeds to batter each of these doughty pieces of armour, one after another, and does his will upon them at leisure. How France was rent and mangled by these pieces of armour is well known. Armagniacs, Burgundians, Kabochians, were all pieces of good proof armour, according to Count de Vigny; but it would be difficult for him to say how they were useful to the crown, or to the people of France; unless he

thinks that the massacres they committed, and the battle of Agincourt, were advantageous to that country. Even in Turenne's time, the "*rough gentlemen*," those pieces of self-willed armour, played a strange part in "*covering the sovereign power*." The "*national and martial fire of France*," burned freely enough, but not very advantageously for the sovereign power, or for the country, when the rough gentlemen led Frenchmen to cut each other's throats under Turenne and Condé in the faubourg Saint Antoine! However, it is needless to pursue this matter any farther.

The Count Alfred may have just cause to blame the present constitution of continental armies, but, thanks to our Saxon ancestors and ourselves, his observations do not apply to the present national army of England. The British soldier enters the service of the crown with his own free and unbiassed will; and not only that, but every precaution is taken to make him *reflect* before he enlists. Within a certain time he may retract; he enlists deliberately; and the free constitutions of his country then order him implicitly to obey the crown. So that he has *himself*, by his representative in Parliament, laid this injunction *on himself*, and virtually serves *himself* in serving his sovereign. If a riot happens, and his aid is demanded, he is only obeying the social laws as a special constable in a red coat. Some foolish laws there are, which counteract each other, and, at times, render the situation of the military man somewhat critical. But, if such laws entrap the soldier, the constitutional power of his sovereign and of the representatives of the nation, united to the general feeling of justice, will always be strong to secure indemnity for, and protect, the soldier, whose conduct in such situations has been good. The continental armies are, on the contrary, distinct from the people; the soldier is forced into *their* ranks: therefore, the Count's endeavours to



“avert from the head of the soldier that malediction which the citizen is frequently ready to hurl at him, and to invoke for the army the forgiveness of the nation,” are highly praiseworthy, and the author has done his work with much talent. But this relates not to the British soldier; he stands fearless and proud amidst his nation; obedient to, and honoured by, his sovereign and by his fellow-subjects; he craves no forgiveness; he is not a Helot; he is free, virtuous, patriotic. He must, indeed, feel a proud confidence in his own high position as a military man; he must feel proud that, every time he pulls the trigger, he fires in the cause and with the approbation of his country; he must feel that every blow he strikes with his matchless bayonet is struck for the constitution of England and for her constitutional sovereign. He slays no fellow-creature for the caprices of a tyrant; he is not the hired assassin of a despot. He is the patriotic soldier of the nation. The British army is neither “blind” nor “mute.” It sees the road of duty, broad and plain: and its charging war-cry is re-echoed by the shout of an applauding country.

But the continental soldier has a wavering conscience: he strikes for the king; but his king and his country are not *one!* and the victory he gains for the first is but another rivet on the fetters with which the last is bound. Victory for his despotic master is defeat to himself; he is, indeed, a Helot, and his blow wavers! Need I say more to account for that intrepidity shown by British soldiers in battle, and which drew forth the admiration of the brave and eloquent General Foy, who calls the British that “astonishing infantry?”

When the Emperor Napoleon ruled France, his soldiers fought for a *constitutional monarch*: whether despotic or not despotic, signifies nothing; he was, past dispute, the chosen sovereign of France. That was enough. And what

was the result? His troops fought with the desperation of men whose hearts were in the cause. Then came a king who was *not* the chosen of France: a king who tyrannically broke her constitution—a constitution which his kingly word was pledged to preserve unbroken, and upon the faith of which promise, and by foreign armies to back him, he had been placed upon the throne of that great country. The insult roused the nation. He foolishly attempted to maintain his perjury and injustice by force of arms. Then the men who fought for Napoleon at Waterloo, with desperate valour and with united hearts, wavered in the streets of Paris when fighting for Charles X., and were beaten by the half-armed citizens. A national army is the most terrible in battle, and, to be thoroughly national, it must not only be composed of natives, but be headed by a constitutional monarch. Such is the British army, and such is the secret of its great prowess in combat. If ever a monarch could justly exclaim: “I am the state!” it is the sovereign of England. If there be a firm throne in Europe, it is that of the Queen of England. The English throne is like the head of the human body; whatever injures it injures the whole frame and endangers life; every care is taken for its protection, every anxiety felt for its safety. Other thrones are not like the heads, but like wens: they are excrescences, and the body wishes to be rid of them: habit makes them bearable, but reason condemns them. As to America, she is covered with a congregation of heads—an ill-looking, despotic kind of Hydra, who insists upon being called free, but snarls and lacerates with its fangs every one that presumes to have an opinion of his own. The anomalous monster whirls round its many heads the chains for binding two millions of working men, who groan in hopeless slavery. England alone is free, and, but for the national debt, would be happy. Purify, but change

not. Let us be assured that our own Herculean constitution is more powerful and more noble than the slave-guarding hydra of America. In England, opinion is free, and each man may frankly speak his own. Not so in America. There, Lynch Law attends the free expression of an unpopular opinion. There the hydra-headed serpent twists round the negro Laocoon, and spirts its venom at all who beg for mercy to the Black. But let war come, and we shall see what the dingy race can do against the slave-drivers in the southern States. America fears war; does England fear war? Let it come, and we shall see which constitution is the best. But the American army is, nevertheless, a constitutional army. It excludes the slaves, and is composed purely of freemen; it is therefore brave, and will call forth all the ability and courage of an enemy.

I have indulged in these reveries, because they tend to prove the weakness of despotism, whether seated in one king, as in Prussia, or in many kings, as in America, when compared with the strength and vigour of a free constitution like that of England. In Prussia, the army fights for the king, not for the country; 96,000 Prussians fled at the battle of Ligny! It is a weak army. The American army in war must guard 2,000,000 of its domestic slaves, while it meets the enemy in the field. It is brave—but it serves a constitution that is not free; therefore, it also is a weak army. The English army fights for the crown and the whole free nation. It has no thought but how to conquer; its very spine is patriotism—its very essence is freedom. It is a strong army. That various results may arise from the errors or the abilities of the respective leaders of these armies, is nothing to the purpose; *that* is accidental and common to all; but the generals of a republic are more likely to be defeated than those which serve a monarch. Hannibal was ruined, and Carthage ruined with him, by self-styled republicans. Marlborough

was baffled by republican Dutch deputies ; and France was lost, after Waterloo, by republicans, who generally sacrifice their country to their jealousy of a great man : an imaginary form of government is more dear to them than their country.

Washington succeeded, not by help of republicans, but in despite of republicans. His strength was not in the new form of government, but in the folly and injustice of England, whose government broke the principle of her constitution, and endeavoured to oppress a colony too powerful to submit to injustice. It is not strange that *individuals* should forget the proverb "that honesty is the best policy," because our passions blind us to the truth ; besides, the punishment of dishonesty is often delayed till after death, and the other world is, we erroneously think, afar off : but that a representative government should deliberately neglect this apophthegm is not easily comprehensible. It must know that injustice is weak, and all governments wish to be strong ; yet it does such bad things, well knowing that the punishment will not be long in coming. America, Ireland, and India, are troublesome to England. Poland is the feeble part of Russia. Slavery is the curse of America. South America ruined Spain ; Spain avenged herself on Napoleon : our war of aggression on France has produced the national debt. Unjust principles have always a re-action, yet governments will not abandon them.

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## CHAPTER III.

OF THE SERVITUDE OF THE SOLDIER, AND OF HIS INDIVIDUAL  
CHARACTER.

THE words of our familiar language are many of them admirably expressive of their meaning. To obey and to command an army—what is this but to serve! This Servitude must be deplored, but it is right to admire those slaves. All of them accept their lot, with all its consequences; and, in France especially, men acquire with extreme facility the qualities necessary for the military profession. All that activity which is natural to us subsides at once, and gives place to a certain sedateness and sadness that I cannot describe.

The soldier's life is dull, monotonous, regular. The hours sounded by the drum are as empty and as dreary as itself. The step and look are uniform, like the dress. The vivacity of youth and the sedateness of mature age at length acquire the same gait, and this is that of the *arm*; and whether that *arm* be infantry, cavalry, or artillery, it forms the mould into which each throws his character, where it is changed and melted down, that it may take a general form imparted to it for ever. The man is effaced by the soldier.

Military Servitude is heavy and unbending as the iron mask of the nameless prisoner, and gives to every soldier a cold and uniform face.

Thus, at the mere aspect of a *corps d'armée*, you perceive nothing but listlessness and discontent in the general features of the military visage. Fatigue adds its wrinkles, the sun its sallow tint, and a premature old age furrows faces of thirty. Nevertheless, an idea common to all has frequently imparted to this assemblage of serious men an extraordinary



character of majesty, and that idea is *self-denial*. The self-denial of the warrior is a heavier cross than that of the martyr. A man must have borne it long, before he knows its magnitude and its weight.

Self-sacrifice must certainly be the most admirable thing in the world, since it has so much beauty in the simple men who frequently have no notion of their merit, or of the secret of their life. It is this that causes a factitious but generous character, the traits of which are grand and good, like those of the antique medals, to spring from that life of annoyance and disgust.

The complete denial of self, to which I am alluding, the continual and indifferent expectation of death, the entire renunciation of the freedom of thinking and acting, the delays imposed upon a limited ambition, and the impossibility of amassing wealth, produce virtues that are more rare in the free and active classes.

In general, the military character is simple, kind, patient, and somewhat boyish is to be found in it, because life in regiments has some resemblance to life in colleges. The traits of roughness and sadness which darken it, are imprinted by *ennui*, but chiefly by an ever false position in regard to the nation, and by the necessary farce of authority.

The absolute authority exercised by one man forces upon him a perpetual reserve. He cannot smooth his brow before his inferiors, without allowing them to take a familiarity which derogates from his power. He cuts himself off from free intercourse and friendly chat, for fear of some confession that might be turned against him, or of some weakness that might set a bad example. I have known officers who have locked up their thoughts in as close silence as Trappists, and whose grave lips never stirred their moustache but to give a passage to a command.

At the time of the Empire, such was almost universally

the countenance of the superior officers and of the generals. The example of it has been set by the master, and the custom had been rigidly and reasonably observed; for, to the necessary consideration of repelling familiarity was superadded the need which their old experience had to keep up its dignity in the eyes of youth better educated than itself, pouring forth incessantly from the military schools, and arriving with heads crammed full of figures, and with an assurance imparted by academic honours, which nothing but silence was capable of curbing.

I never liked the class of young officers, even when I belonged to it myself. A secret instinct of truth taught me that, in every circumstance, theory is nothing in comparison with practice, and the grave and silent smile of the old captains put me on my guard against all that paltry science which is acquired by a few days' reading. In the regiments in which I have served, I was fond of listening to those old officers, whose arched back still had the attitude of the back of the soldier, laden with a knapsack full of clothes and a cartouche-box full of ammunition. They told me of old stories of Egypt, of Italy, and of Russia, which taught me more of war than the ordinance of 1789, the regulations of service, and the interminable instructions, commencing with those of the great Frederick to his generals.

I found, on the contrary, something disgusting in that confident, indolent, and ignorant self-sufficiency of the young officers of that period, everlasting smokers and gamblers, attentive only to the smartness of their appointments, skilled in the cut of a coat, orators of the coffee-house and the billiard-room. Their conversation had in it nothing more characteristic than that of all the ordinary young men of the fashionable world; only its licences were rather grosser.

In order to derive some benefit from the society around me, I lost no opportunity of listening, and I rarely

missed the hours of regular promenades, when the old officers take a pleasure in the interchange of their recollections. They were not unwilling, on their part, to inscribe in my memory the particular histories of their lives; and, finding in me a patience equal to their own, and a silence equally serious, they always showed a readiness to open themselves to me. We frequently walked of an evening in the fields or in the woods around the garrisons, or on the sea-shore, and the general aspect of nature, or the slightest accident of ground, furnished them with inexhaustible reminiscences; it was either a sea-fight, or a celebrated retreat, or a fatal ambushade, or a combat of infantry, or a siege; interspersed with a regret for a time of dangers, respect for the memory of some great general, honest praise for some obscure name which they deemed illustrious; and amidst all this a touching simplicity of heart, which filled mine with a sort of veneration for this manly character, forged in continual adversities and in the doubts of a false and vicious position.

I have the gift, frequently a painful one, of a memory which time never impairs; my whole life, with all its days, is present to me like a picture that cannot be effaced. The traits are never confounded with one another; the colours never grow faint. Some are black, and lose none of their intensity, which afflicts me. Some flowers are there too, whose corollas are as fresh as on the day of their blowing, especially when an involuntary tear drops from my eyes upon them, and gives them a brighter tint.

The most unprofitable conversation of my life is always present to me at the moment when I call it up; and I should have too much to say, if I meant to relate stories which have no other merit than that of simple truth; but full of friendly pity for the wretchedness of armies, I shall choose from among my recollections, such as appear to me to be a garb sufficiently decorous and of a form worthy

to clothe a chosen thought, and to show how many situations adverse to the development of character and intelligence result from the gross servitude of standing armies, and the great distance at which their manners remain behind the spirit of the age.

Their crown is a crown of thorns, and among those thorns I do not think that there is one more painful than that of passive obedience. This shall be the first that I intend to make the reader feel the keenness of. I shall begin with it, because it furnishes me with the first example of the cruel necessities of the army, in following the order of my years. When I go back to my earlier recollections, I find in my military childhood an anecdote which is present to my memory, which I will repeat as it was told to me, without seeking, but without avoiding, in any of my narratives, those minute traits in the military life and character, which, I cannot too often repeat it, are both behind the general spirit and the march of the nation, and, consequently, both impressed with a certain stamp of puerility.

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## EDITOR'S REMARKS

ON

### CHAPTER III.

THE sad picture of a soldier's life, which Count Alfred has painted with great strength of colouring in his third chapter, is an imaginary portrait; I see nothing of that lugubrious cast in the reality which makes the warrior a melancholy, listless being, dreary and discontented. For my part,

“ I love that drum's harmonious sound,  
Parading round, and round, and round.”

So British soldiers sing, so they feel—merry. They are generally, I think, a happy and a joyous band. That “the

self-denial of the warrior is a heavier cross than that of the martyr," as the author asserts, may be true, and that "a man must have borne it long before he knows its magnitude and its weight" is also probable, if it be a cross. For my part, it is one of which I never felt the weight, and, after forty-four years of such martyrdom, I like it as well as ever. I see so many trying to enlist, that I really cannot think the soldier leads a gloomy life. When I was in France, the French soldiers seemed to be happy fellows too. However, Count de Vigny knows best. I only vouch for the English soldier, who has more of the merry than the mournful in his constitution.

But let us follow the Count farther. He says that the soldier is "blind, mute, sad, sedate, listless, discontented, sallow, a martyr; that the character of the man is effaced by the soldier:" and out of this he issues, according to the author, "a factitious, but general character," the traits of which are "grand and good, like those of the antique medals," and then "the entire renunciation of thinking and acting" produces "virtues that are more rare in the free and active classes." It is not so easy to understand how the "entire renunciation of thought" should produce any virtue. What the Count means by the "necessary farce of authority" is quite beyond my comprehension. If a thing is necessary, I can see nothing farcical in it. Then Count de Vigny having made out the "military character" to be so serious, so grave, so austere, and so gloomy, adds that there is "something boyish to be found in it, because life in regiments has some semblance to life in colleges." Why surely the life led in colleges is not gloomy—not what he paints the life of a soldier—yet college life is exactly like the life of a soldier in point of what good fellowship which reigns through both, according to my version of a military life. The author then gives a good account of the gravity and self-importance which the superior officers of the French army assume, and



says that they all copy Napoleon. I conclude that his description is just, and it is extremely well done; his pictures are vivid and full of spirit. This assumed gravity and silent demeanour, entrenched chin-deep in cold formalities, is not peculiar to the French army; I have often observed it in some of our own officers, and confess I always laughed at it as a mask which they put on to hide their ignorance. Why should men in command assume a taciturnity and a reserve that are not natural to them? Why should their thoughts be, to use the author's words, "locked up in as close a silence as a Trappist's?" It may be wise, but it is for the individual *only* that it is wise: "it is not good for the service: a man so conscious of his inferiority to those under his orders is not likely to command with good effect: he thinks that those under him are abler than himself, and, if *he* feels incapable of command, what must *they* think of him? Even if such a man should possess ability, how is he to study the characters and ascertain the knowledge possessed by those under his orders, if he enters into no converse with them? The knowledge of men's characters is a difficult science, and no man is so clever that he can afford to give up one of his senses when he applies himself to the study. It is true that he may listen without speaking. I grant that: but if he be so silent he will have nothing to listen to. A man in command must draw forth those under him; for, if he be solemn and silent, they will be as solemn and silent as himself. I have ever observed that this affectation of dignity is very apt to be accompanied by great secret curiosity, which, not being able to satisfy itself by conversation, does so by spies, and some artful knave supplies the food in abundance. Into this knave's hands, Don Pomposo quickly falls. At the same time, observe that what I say only applies to the affectation of silence and reserve. A man who is naturally so, never casts a wet blanket upon society. On the contrary, his native modesty elicits the freedom of conversation. Such a man

affects nothing ; his nobleness inspires respect and confidence, and those under his command seek to display before him the "small ware" that forms their stock. He throws them off their guard : he knows them by heart : he reads their every word : his mind, not being pre-occupied, like that of Don Pomposo, with acting the part of dignity and grandeur, is calm and full of observation and clear judgment. He courts familiarity, but his officers fear to take too much ; they are checks upon themselves, because they feel that he would silently disapprove of their conduct, were they to pass the bounds of proper respect, and to lose his good opinion is what they most fear. Such a man is born for command.

We do not find that great men affected dignity. Cromwell, we are told, was so far from being affected, that he was not only familiar with those under his command, but was so to a degree almost amounting to boyishness. Marlborough was also without affectation. Wolfe (as I was told by a friend of his, who was also a captain in his regiment) used to amuse himself with his officers as if he were an ensign. Sir Ralph Abercrombie too—there was no affectation in that great soldier. Neither was there in Lord Cornwallis, a man remarkable for the noble simplicity of his character. Sir John Moore was equally destitute of affected dignity. He entered into the society of those under his command as their equal, confident that his vast superiority as a man would, at all times, raise him above them more than even his great rank could do : he required no external aid. There was, among his officers, an awe of him ; but it was not inspired by any reserve or haughtiness of manner on his part, though I have seen him put down pert and self-sufficient men by a degree of sarcasm which few could withstand ; those who could, were not likely to provoke it. His manners were extremely polished and agreeable, and, at times, even playful. I recollect once standing in the street at Lisbon, looking at a very pretty woman who was at a window, when some one

gently laid hold of both my ears, saying, in a joking tone : " Ah ! caitiff ! have I caught you ? what right have you to look at such an ugly woman as that ? I will put you under arrest." Turning round, I saw it was the commander-in-chief. " I will thank you for the punishment, Sir," said I, " if you will place the ugly old woman over me as sentry." Another time, when going from his quarters in the village of Sandgate to the evening parade, on the heights of Shorneliff, the ascent being steep, Moore said to six or eight officers who were with him : " Now for a race to the top of the hill !" and away we all started. Neil Campbell (afterwards with Napoleon at Elba) beat us all, and Moore was second. These are trifling matters, but they mark the unaffected and social feelings of a great man, and, as such, the reader will, perhaps, pardon them. Regard, admiration, and, in very many instances, gratitude for the deep interest he took in their welfare, were the feelings which were entertained for Moore by those who served under his command. There were some characters whom no man liked, and they disliked Moore ; but such men had another feeling, which kept them in their proper places—fear. Moore's nature was unaffected, kind, gentle, benevolent : nor was he roused to severity, until provoked by great want of zeal for the public service or by great criminality.

It would not be proper to speak much of those who are alive, but I may so far venture as to say that no man will accuse the Duke of Wellington, and many others among our military leaders, of affectation. That there are some charlatans in the army must be admitted, for, as General Lloyd says, "*all professions have their quacks*;" what I maintain is, that no great mind has an affectation of dignity. Great men attend to that which they are about, to the matter in hand, and not to their looks. Whether grave or cheerful in their manner, they follow the natural bent of their character. It is true that most great men have a certain air about them

which is called "dignity." Their abilities have made them pass their lives in the transaction of great affairs, and these demand deep thought, producing a gravity of manner; the body conforming to the mind. But when mere rank, a blue ribbon hanging from the pedestal of an empty skull, affects a dignified demeanour, then men laugh at the fool. Such dignity is not real; it is made by their tailor.

But Count Alfred de Vigny says, that all soldiers are affected and pompous in France. I did not perceive this among those whom I had the honour to be acquainted with, and I knew several among the most renowned officers of France, such as Marshals Soult and Ney, Generals Laborde, Ricard, Loison, Armagnac, and others. I saw no affectation among them; however, M. de Vigny is the better authority, and affirms that this affected dignity was assumed in imitation of their master. Now, what does Napoleon say on this subject? I speak from memory, for I have not his memoirs by me: he says that, being only twenty-five years of age when first promoted to the rank of a general, and to the command of a large army, beaten, disorganized, filled with many older officers than himself, men of high rank, many of whom had also seen much service, while he had seen scarcely any, they, for that reason, naturally gave themselves the airs of superiority, placing themselves above their boy-commander. This being the case, he was obliged to assume a severe reserve, in order to prevent his being treated as a child by these veterans. His commanding genius, and a few battles, soon taught them to bow before their and Europe's master. Had he not acted thus at first, he could not have preserved the integrity of his command, and, moreover, the vast actions which he then achieved demanded so much thought, that there could be but little affectation in this reserve, to say nothing of the misfortune to which every general is doomed who has a civil government over him. This, of all misfortunes and impediments to war, is the greatest, and enough



to make any general grave. It is the misfortune of misfortunes. Look at the history of all wars, where the sovereigns did not command in person: look at Napier's history of that in the Peninsula, how the Duke of Wellington was embarrassed by British, Spanish, and Portuguese governments on both sides of the Atlantic! Civil governments *make* wars and *mar* wars. Either I am right in this assertion, or all history is wrong: the reader must decide for himself. If a general succeeds in war, he is too much pleased to make complaints; if he be defeated, no one will listen to them, and so the faults of government escape notice. It is fair, however, to add that the general gets all the credit in the hour of triumph: if he gets more than he merits, which is seldom the case, the overplus is taken from his troops, not from the civil government, which, more or less, always does mischief. Now, Napoleon's "*government at home*," called **THE DIRECTORY**, had but one thought, from the time he gained his first victory. That thought was how to guillotine General Bonaparte. Happily for himself and for France, he was too strong for the Directory; but when a man has a "*government at home*," with all its spies at its back, and an enemy's army, three times the strength of his own, in his front, he may well look grave; he is something like the poor Irishwoman, described by the entertaining and reverend author of "*Martin Doyle*." The poor woman came in utter despair to the great lady. "*Oh! my lady! I'm lost! I'm ruined! I've two bums upon me, my lady! I've two bums! och hone! what will I do?*" The English reader must be told that a *bum-bailiff* is *always* cut in two, and *sometimes* shot in Ireland; the one being considered as a matter of convenience in speaking, and the other as a matter of necessity in living, and, indeed, though I am far from defending the impropriety of bisecting the Queen's English, still, I think, if a word *be* cut in two, people have a right to make use of which half they please. Now, Napoleon had "*two*



*bums*' upon him. The one took the shape of the Austrian army, the other that of the French Directory; and he treated them both in the Irish fashion; he shot one, and cut the other in two: and, in performing such serious feats, his gravity was very natural, till, this last operation having been successfully performed at St. Cloud, on the 18th Brumaire he became lively and natural, as may be assumed from the account of the Duchess of Abzantes, who says he used to pull off his coat and play at "*prison-bars*" at Malmaison, after he became First Consul. Every authentic account that we have describes him to be unaffected and benevolent.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### AN ADVENTURE ON THE ROAD.

THE high road to Artois and Flanders is long and dreary. It runs in a straight line, without trees, without ditches, through a level country, covered in all seasons with a yellow mud. In the month of March, 1815, I was travelling along this road, and what I then fell in with I shall never forget.

I was alone, on horseback; I had a good cloak, a black helmet, pistols, and a large sabre. It had poured with rain for the four days and four nights that I had been on the road, and I remember that I was singing *Joconde* at the top of my voice. I was then very young. In 1814, the king's household troops had been filled up with boys and old men: the Empire seemed to have swept off and destroyed all between the two.

My comrades were before me, on the road escorting King Louis XVIII.; I saw their white cloaks and their scarlet uniforms quite at the horizon to the north; Bonaparte's

lancers, who watched and followed our retreat step by step, showed from time to time the tri-coloured flag of their lances at the opposite horizon. My horse had lost a shoe, and I had been obliged to stop to get it replaced: he was young and strong; I urged him on to overtake my squadron; and off he went at full trot. I clapped my hand to my belt—it was well lined with gold; I heard the iron sheath of my sabre clank against the stirrup, and I felt extremely proud and perfectly happy.

It continued to rain, and I continued to sing. Presently, however, I gave up, tired of hearing nothing but my own voice, and then I could hear only the rain and the splashing of my horse's feet in the puddles. We came to a part of the road that was not paved: my horse began to sink in it, and I was obliged to take a foot pace. My great boots were covered outside with a thick crust of mud as yellow as ochre, and inside they were full of water. I looked at my bran-new gold epaulettes, my pride and my consolation; they were tarnished by the wet, and that vexed me.

My horse stooped his head; I did the same. I fell to thinking, and asked myself for the first time whither I was going. About that matter I knew absolutely nothing, but it did not occupy me long; I was certain that my squadron was there, and that there, too, was my duty. As I felt in my heart a profound and unalterable tranquillity, I was grateful for it to that ineffable sentiment of duty, and strove to account for it to myself. Seeing how many unaccustomed hardships were cheerfully borne by heads so flaxen or so white, how the most flattering prospects were so cavalierly risked by so many men fond of indulgence and worldly enjoyments; and, taking my share of that miraculous satisfaction imparted to every man by the conviction that he cannot withdraw himself from any of the debts of honour, I comprehended that **SELF-DENIAL** is a thing more easy and more common than one would imagine.

I asked myself if this self-denial be not a sentiment that is born with us: what is that influence which forces us to obey and to resign our will to other hands as a heavy and cumbrous burden; whence proceeds the secret happiness that we feel on getting rid of this load; and how it happens that human pride never revolts against all this. I certainly saw this mysterious instinct binding up, on all sides, families and nations into mighty bundles, but nowhere did I see the renunciation of one's actions, one's words, one's wishes, and almost one's thoughts, so complete and so terrible as in the army. Everywhere else I saw resistance possible and customary, the citizen having, in all places, a clear-sighted and intelligent obedience, which examines and knows where to stop. I even saw the tender submission of woman ceasing where evils begin to be enjoined her, and the law taking up her defence; but military obedience, at once passive and active, receiving and executing orders, striking blind-fold, like the Fate of the ancients! I followed in its possible consequences this self-denial of the soldier, without limit, without conditions, and leading sometimes to the most painful duties.

My thoughts were thus engaged while letting my horse take his own pace, looking at my watch, and seeing the road still run on in a straight line, without a tree, and without a house, intersecting the plain to the horizon like a long yellow stripe on a grey carpet. Sometimes this yellow stripe became more diluted than the liquid soil that surrounded it; and, when a somewhat less pale light brightened the face of this dreary tract of country, I found myself amidst a muddy sea, floundering on in a current of slush and slime.

On examining with attention this yellow stripe of the road, I perceived, at the distance of about three quarters of a mile, a small dark speck moving along. I was pleased at this sight; it was somebody, of course. I observed that

this black speck was going like myself towards Lille, and that it moved in a zig-zag, which indicated a wearisome march. I quickened my pace, and gained upon the object, which gradually appeared longer and larger. I again put my horse into a trot on a firmer soil, and I thought that I could distinguish a sort of little black vehicle. I was hungry; I hoped that it might be the cart of some suttler, and, considering my poor horse as a boat, I plied the oars with might and main to reach the fortunate island in that sea, in which he sometimes sank up to the saddle-girth.

At the distance of about a hundred paces, I could clearly discern a little cart of white wood, covered with three hoops and a black oil-cloth. It looked like a little cradle placed on two wheels. The wheels sank up to the axle in mud: a little mule that drew it was led with great toil by a man on foot, who had hold of the bridle. I approached him, and looked at him attentively.

He was a man of about fifty, with moustaches, tall and stout, his back curved after the manner of old infantry officers who have carried the knapsack. He wore the uniform of one, and from beneath a short threadbare blue cloak I got a glimpse of the epaulette of *chef de bataillon*. His features were hard but benevolent, such as you often meet with in the army. He looked at me askance from beneath his bushy black eye-brows, and in a twinkling took out of his cart a musket which he shouldered, passing at the same time to the other side of his mule, of which he made a rampart. Having seen his white cockade, I merely showed the sleeve of my red coat, on which he replaced the musket in the cart, saying:—"Ah! that alters the case; I took you for one of those chaps that are running after us. Will you take a whet?"

"Willingly," said I, approaching him; "it is twenty-four hours since I had anything to drink."

He had slung round his neck a cocoa-nut shell, formed

into a bottle with a silver neck, and which he seemed to be not a little proud of. He handed it to me; I drank a little thin white wine with great pleasure, and returned the flask.

“To the King’s health!” said he, drinking; “he has made me an officer of the Legion of Honour; it is but right that I should follow him to the frontiers. Of course, as I have but my epaulette to live by, I shall rejoin my battalion afterwards—it is my duty.”

While thus speaking, as it were to himself, he set his little mule a-going again, observing that we had no time to lose, and, being of his opinion, I too began to move on a couple of paces from him. I kept my eyes upon him, but without asking any questions, having never liked that babbling indiscretion so common among us.

We walked on thus without speaking for half a mile, or rather more. As he then stopped to give a moment’s rest to his little mule, which I could not look at without pain, I stopped to squeeze out the water that filled my jack-boots, like two reservoirs in which my legs were steeping.

“Your boots begin to stick to your legs,” said he.

“It is four nights since I had them off,” I replied.

“Pooh! in eight days you would think nothing of it,” rejoined he, in his harsh voice: “it is something to be alone, let me tell you, in times such as these that we live in. Do you know what I have in there?”

“No,” said I.

“It is a woman.”

“Aha!” I responded, without showing too much surprise, and I began to move on quietly at a foot pace. He followed me.

“This trumpery wheelbarrow did not cost much,” he resumed, “nor the mule either; but it is as much as I want, though this road is a rather long *tail-ribbon*, I must say.”



I gave him the offer of mounting my horse when he should feel tired : and, as I talked to him only seriously and with simplicity about his equipage, which might, he feared, afford a subject for ridicule, he felt at his ease at once, and, coming close to my stirrup, he patted my knee, saying :—“ Well, you are a good lad, though you do belong to the Reds.”

From the bitter tone in which he thus alluded to the four Red Companies, I perceived how many resentful prepossessions the luxury and the appointments of those corps of officers had excited in the army.

“ And yet,” he added, “ I shall not accept your offer, because I know nothing of riding, and it is no affair of mine.”

“ But, commandant, the superior officers like you, are obliged to ride.”

“ Pshaw ! once a year, at the inspection, and then on a hired horse. For my part, I was always first a seaman, then a foot-soldier ; I never could ride.”

He proceeded about twenty paces, looking aside at me from time to time, as if expecting a question, but, as I uttered not a word, he continued :—“ You are not inquisitive, I see. And yet what I have just said must surprise you.”

“ I have learned not to be much surprised at anything,” said I.

“ Oh ! but if I were to tell you what made me quit the navy, we should see.

“ Well,” I replied, “ why don’t you try ? That will warm you, and it will make me forget that the rain is pouring in at my back, and running down to my very toes.”

The good *chef de bataillon*, with boyish pleasure, made due preparations for commencing his story. He re-adjusted his cap covered with oil-skin, and he gave that shirk of the shoulder, which only those who have served in the

infantry can figure to themselves—that shirk which the soldier gives to raise his knapsack, and to lighten its weight for a moment : it is a habit of the soldier, which, when he becomes an officer, he cannot break himself of. After this convulsive gesture, he took a sip of his wine in the cocoa-nut shell, gave a kick of encouragement on the belly to his little mule, and began.

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## CHAPTER V.

### HISTORY OF THE RED SEAL.

You must know, in the first place, my lad, that I was born at Brest : I began life in the army, earning my half-ration and my half-pay at the age of nine years, my father being a soldier in the Guards. But, as I was fond of the sea, one fine night, while I was on furlough at Brest, I stowed myself away in the hold of a merchantman bound for India ; I was not discovered till the ship was out at sea, and the captain chose rather to make me a cabin-boy than to throw me overboard. When the Revolution came, I had made some way, and had in my turn become captain of a small tight merchant vessel, having skimmed the sea for fifteen years. As the old royal navy—a good old navy, faith!—was suddenly stripped of officers, the captains of the merchant navy were taken to supply their places. I had done some business in the privateering line, which I shall tell you about by-and-by. I was appointed to the command of a brig of war called the *Marat*.

On the 28th of Fructidor, 1797, I received orders to sail for Cayenne. I was to carry out sixty soldiers, and one person condemned to transportation, the only one left out of one hundred and ninety-three by the *Decade* frigate, which had taken all the others on board a few days before.

I had orders to treat this person with indulgence ; and the first letter of the Directory inclosed a second, sealed with three red seals, one of which was as big again as the other two. I was forbidden to open this letter till I should reach the first degree of north latitude, and the twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth of longitude, that is to say, till I was near passing the Line.

This large letter was of a very particular shape. It was long, and so closely folded that I could not read anything on peeping in at the ends, or through the envelope. I am not superstitious ; but I really did feel a dread of that letter. I put it in my cabin, under the glass of a shabby English clock fixed up over my cot. That cot was a real seaman's cot—you must know what kind of one I mean. But, what am I saying ! you are not above sixteen at most ; you cannot have seen anything of that sort.

The bed-chamber of a queen cannot be kept more tidy than that of a seaman, be it said without meaning to boast of ourselves. Everything has its particular place and its particular nail. Nothing must be stirred. Let the ship roll as much as she will, nothing can be deranged. The furniture is made to suit the form of the ship, and of the little chamber that one occupies. My bed was a coffer. When it was opened I lay down on it ; when it was shut, it was my sofa, and I smoked my pipe upon it. Sometimes it was my table, and then we made seats of two or three little barrels that were in the cabin. My floor was waxed and rubbed, like mahogany ; it shone like a diamond ; it was a real mirror. Oh ! it was a snug little cabin ! And my brig, too, was not to be sneered at. We often had rare fun on board, and the voyage this time commenced agreeably enough, only that — : but I must not forestal my story.

We had a fine north-north-west wind, and I was just engaged in putting that letter under the glass of my clock

when my prisoner entered my cabin, leading by the hand a charming creature of seventeen. He told me that he was himself nineteen—a handsome lad, though rather pale, and too fair for a man. He was a man for all that, and a man who behaved himself on the occasion much better than many older ones would have done, as you shall hear. Well, his pretty wife was hanging upon his arm; she was fresh and frolicsome as a child. They looked, for all the world, like a pair of turtle-doves. It was quite delightful to see them, that it was.

So I said to them: “Well, children, you are come to pay a visit to the old captain; ’tis very kind of you. I am carrying you a great way; but so much the better, we shall have time to get acquainted. I am sorry to receive the lady without my coat; but I was just going to nail this great lubberly letter up yonder. Perhaps you will help me a little.”

The good young creatures actually set about it directly. The husband held the hammer and the wife the nails, and handed them to me as I asked for them; and she said, laughing the while, “To the right—to the left—captain!” according to the motion given to my clock by the lurching of the ship. I fancy I hear her still with her sweet voice: “To the left—to the right—captain!” She was making game of me. “Ah!” said I, “you little rogue, I’ll set your husband to scold you; see if I don’t.” And then she jumped up to his neck and kissed him. Indeed, they were good creatures, and that was the way our acquaintance began. We were at once the best of friends.

We had a capital passage, too. I always had weather made on purpose. As I had never had any but black faces on board, I made my two young lovers dine with me every day. This cheered me. When we had finished our biscuit and our fish, the young couple would sit looking at each other as though they had never seen

one another before. I then burst into a hearty laugh, and rallied them. They then laughed along with me. You would have laughed too, had you seen us like three idiots, not knowing what ailed us. It was really funny to see them so fond of one another. They were always contented anywhere, and always satisfied with what was given them. And yet they were upon allowance, like all of us; I merely added a little Swedish brandy when they dined with me; but only a small glass, to keep up my rank. They slept in a hammock, where the ship rolled them about, like those two pears, which I have yonder in my wet handkerchief. They were brisk and happy. I did like you—I asked them no questions. What need had a seafaring man like me to know their name and their affairs. I was carrying them to the other side of the sea, as I should have carried a couple of birds of paradise.

By the time we had been a month at sea, I could not help looking upon them as my children. Every day, when I called them, they came and sat down beside me. The young man wrote on my table, that is to say on my bed, and, when I asked him, he assisted me to take my observation: he could do it soon as well I could: I was sometimes quite astonished at it. His young wife seated herself on a little barrel and fell to sewing.

One day, when we were sitting together in this way, I said to them: "I can't help thinking, my young friends, what a pretty family picture we make here: I don't mean to question you, but probably you have not more money than you need, and you are both too delicate to dig and to delve, as the people transported to Cayenne do. 'Tis a horrid country, I tell you, frankly; but I—an old dried wolf's skin—could live there like a lord. If you have, as it seems to me—mind I have no wish to question you—some little friendship for me, I would cheerfully quit my old brig, and settle there with you, if you like. For my part, I have no



family whatever but a dog; I am tired of this sort of life; you would be company for me. I could assist you in many ways; and I have picked up a tolerable sum by very honest smuggling, on which we might live, and which I would leave you whenever I should turn up the whites of my eyes, to speak politely."

They eyed one another in the utmost astonishment, looking as though they thought I was not telling the truth; and the girl ran, as she always did, and threw her arms about the other's neck, and seated herself on his knees, with a face as red as your coat, and weeping at the same time. He clasped her very close in his arms, and I saw tears in his eyes too: he gave me his hand, and turned paler than usual. She spoke to him in a low tone, and her long fair hair, having got loose, dropped over his shoulder like a cable that is suddenly uncoiled, because she was brisk as a fish—that hair—ah! had you but seen it! it was like gold. As they continued to talk low, the young man kissing her forehead every now and then, and she weeping, I began to be impatient.

"Well," I said to them at last, "how do you like my proposal?"

"But —— but, captain, you are very kind," said the husband, "but you forget—you could not live with persons condemned to transportation," and he cast down his eyes.

"I know not," said I, "for my part, what you have done to be transported; but you will tell me some day, or let it alone, just as you please. You do not look to me to have a conscience that is very heavily burdened, and I am very sure that I have done worse things in my life than you, poor innocents. However, while you are in my custody, you shall not be taken from me, don't imagine that; I will cut your throats first, like a pair of pigeons. But the epaulette once thrown off, I care neither for admiral nor for anything else."

"But," replied he, sorrowfully, shaking his brown, though

somewhat powdered head, as was still the fashion of that time, "I cannot help thinking it would be dangerous for you, captain, to appear to know us. We laugh, because we are young; we look happy because we love one another; but I have wretched moments when I think of the future, and know not what will become of my poor Laura."

He pressed anew the head of his young wife to his bosom. "That was what I was to say to the captain, was it not my dear? You would have said the same thing, would you not?"

I took my pipe and rose, because I began to feel my eyes somewhat moist, and that is not at all in my way.

"Come, come," said I, "this will all be cleared up hereafter. If the smoke annoys the lady, I will shift my quarters."

She rose, her face all in a glow, and wet with tears, like that of a child who has been scolded.

"But then," said she, looking at my clock, "the letter!—though you two seem to think nothing of it."

I felt something strike all through me, something tugging at my heart, as she said this.

"By my troth," said I, "I thought nothing of it for my part. And a pretty piece of business I should have made of it. If we had passed the first degree of north latitude, the only thing I could do would be to throw myself overboard. Surely I am to be lucky, since that girl has reminded me of the rascally letter."

I then turned to my chart, and when I saw that we had still a week good at least, I felt my head relieved, but not my heart, though I knew not why.

"Indeed," said I, "the Directory does not jest on the article of obedience. Come, I am all right again for a while. The time has run away so quick, I had clean forgot that."

Well, sir, there we all three stood, with our noses cocked up in the air gaping at that letter, as if we expected it to

speak to us. What particularly struck me was, that the sun, darting through the bull's-eye, fell upon the glass of the clock, and made the great red seal more conspicuous: it looked exactly like a face that one sees in the fire.

"Would not one swear that the eyes were starting out of the head?" said I, to amuse them.

"O, my friend," cried the young woman, "that looks like stains of blood!"

"Pooh! pooh!" said the husband, giving her his arm, "you are wrong, Laura; it looks like a letter to give notice of a wedding. Come, rest yourself, my love, come: why should that letter disturb you?"

Away they started, as if a ghost had been behind them, and went up to the deck. I was left alone with that big letter; and I recollect that, while smoking my pipe, I continued to look at it, as if its red eyes had fascinated mine, as those of serpents are said to do. Its great pale face, its third seal, larger than the eyes, wide open, gaping like a wolf's jaws, put me into an ill humour. I took my coat, and hung it before the clock, that I might neither see the hour nor the evil-boding letter.

I went upon deck to finish my pipe, and there I remained till night.

We were then off the Cape de Verd Islands. The Marat was running with the wind astern, at the rate of ten knots, without distressing herself. The night was the finest I ever saw in my life near the tropics. The moon was rising above the horizon, as large as a sun; the sea cut her in two, and became quite white, like a sheet of snow, sprinkled with little diamonds. I watched it, seated on my bench, smoking my pipe. The officer of the watch and the seamen said nothing, and looked like me at the shadow of the brig on the water. I was glad that I did not hear anything. I am fond of silence and order, for my part. I had forbidden all

noise and all fires. I perceived, however, a small red line, nearly under my feet. I should have flown into a passion directly, but, as it was in the cabin of my young prisoners, I determined to ascertain what they were about before I got angry. I had but the trouble of stooping down, when I could see through a large crevice into the little cabin.

The young woman was on her knees, saying her prayers. There was a little lamp, which lighted the place. She was stripped to her chemise; I could see her bare shoulders, her little naked feet, and her long loose fair hair. I would have drawn back; but I said to myself, "Pooh! an old soldier! what does it signify?" and I kept looking on.

Her husband was sitting on a little trunk, his head resting upon his hand, looking at her, praying. She lifted up her face, as if to heaven, and I saw her large blue eyes swimming in tears, like those of a Magdalen. While she was praying, he laid hold of the end of her long hair, and kissed it, without making any noise. When she had finished, she made the sign of the cross, and smiled so sweetly, as if she were going to paradise. I observed that he, too, made the sign of the cross, but as if he were ashamed of it. In fact, it is singular for a man.

She rose upon her feet, kissed him, and stretched herself first in the hammock, into which he lifted her, without speaking, as one would put a child into a swing. The heat was suffocating: she seemed pleased to be rocked by the motion of the ship, and appeared to be just dropping to sleep. Her small white feet were crossed and raised to the level of her head; and her whole body covered with her white chemise. She was a love, that she was!

"My dear," said she, half asleep, "are you not coming? It is very late, you know."

He still continued, his brow resting on his hands, without replying. She began to be rather uneasy—the poor young

creature ! and, putting her head out of the hammock, like a bird out of its nest, she looked at him with mouth half-open, not daring to speak.

At length he said to her : “ Ah, my dear Laura, the nearer we approach to America, the sadder I grow, and I cannot help it. It appears to me, I cannot tell why, that the time spent in this voyage will have been the happiest part of our lives.”

“ So it seems to me, too,” said she. “ I should like never to get there.”

He looked at her, clasping his hands with a transport of which you can form no conception.

“ And yet, my angel, you always weep while you are praying,” said he ; “ that distresses me exceedingly, because I know what you are thinking of, and I fancy that you repent what you have done.”

“ I repent !” said she, with an expression of acute pain, “ I repent having accompanied you, my dear ! Do you suppose that I love you the less for having belonged to you so short a time ? Is one not a woman, does one not know one’s duty, at seventeen ? Did not my mother and my sisters say that it was my duty to go with you to Guiana ? Did they not declare that in doing this I should be doing nothing extraordinary ? I am only astonished that you should be so deeply touched by my conduct : why, it is but perfectly natural. And now I cannot imagine how you can think that I have anything to repent of, when I am with you, to help you to live, or to die with you if you die.”

All this she said in so sweet a voice that you would have sworn it was music. I was melted. The young man began to sigh, and kissed a delicate hand and a bare arm which she held out to him.

“ O, Laurette ! my Laurette !” said he, “ when I consider that, if we had delayed our marriage but four days longer, I should have been arrested alone—I should have been sent off alone—I cannot forgive myself.”



The lovely girl then stretched her two beautiful white arms, bare to the shoulders, out of the hammock to him, fondling him and stroking his forehead, his hair, his eyes; and then she took hold of his head, to draw it to her and hide it in her bosom. She laughed like a child, and said a number of tender things, such as I had never heard the like of. She clapped her hands over his mouth, that she might have all the talk to herself. She said, while toying and taking her long hair, by way of handkerchief, to wipe his eyes:

“Tell me, my dear, is it not a great deal better to have with thee a wife who loves thee? I am content, for my part, to go to Cayenne; I shall see savages, and cocoa-nut trees, like those of Paul and Virginia, shall I not? We will each plant one for ourselves. We shall see who will be the best gardener. We will build a little hut for us two. I will work all day and all night, if you wish it. I am strong; look at my arms; see, I can almost lift you. Don’t make game of me. I am a good hand at embroidery besides; and surely there must be a town somewhere or other, where I can get employment. Then I will give lessons in drawing and in music, too, if they want them; and if there are people who can read, thou wilt write for them, wilt thou not?”

I recollect that the poor fellow was so cut that he gave a loud cry when she said this.

“Write!” cried he, “write!”

And he laid hold of his clenched right hand with the left, and grasped it tight.

“Ah, write! why did I ever learn to write! Write! it is the profession of a madman! . . . I believed in their liberty of the press! . . . Where did I pick up wit? And how was it employed? For printing five or six poor ideas, read only by those who are fond of such things, thrown into the fire by those who dislike them; answering no other end than to draw persecution upon us! As for me, well and good! but for thee, darling angel, who hadst been scarcely four days a

wife! . . . . What hadst thou done? Tell me, I beseech thee, how I could ever suffer thee to carry thy kindness to such an extent as to accompany me hither. Dost thou even know where thou art, my poor Laurette? Knowest thou whither thou art going? Ere long, my love, thou wilt be sixteen hundred leagues from thy mother and thy sisters . . . . And for my sake! all this for my sake!"

She hid her head for a moment in the hammock; and I, from above, could perceive that she was weeping; but he, being lower, could not see her face. And when she put it forth again from under the sheet, it was already smiling for the purpose of cheering him.

"In fact, we are not rich at present," said she, laughing heartily; "look you, here is my purse; I have but a single louis left. And you?"

He fell a-laughing too, like a child.

"Why, faith, he replied, "I had a crown, but I gave it to the lad who carried your trunk."

"Pshaw! what signifies that?" said she, making her little white fingers snap like castagnettes, "one is never in higher spirits than when one has nothing; and then, have I not in reserve the two diamond rings which my mother gave me? Those are serviceable everywhere, and on every occasion, are they not? Besides, I do think that kind creature, the captain, has not told all his good intentions towards us, and that he well knows what is in the letter. It must surely be a recommendation for us to the governor of Cayenne."

"Perhaps," said he: "who knows?"

"It must be so," replied his young wife. "Thou art so good, that I am certain the government has banished thee only for a short time, but means thee no farther harm."

She had said this so prettily, calling me that kind creature the captain, that I was quite moved and softened, and I even rejoiced in my heart that she had perhaps guessed right. They then began kissing again, when I

stamped pretty hard upon the deck to make them have done.

“Don’t you know, my young friends,” I cried, “that orders have been given to put out all lights on board? Blow out your lamp, if you please.”

They blew out the lamp, and I heard them tittering and chatting quite low in the dark, like schoolboys. I again began walking the deck alone, while smoking my pipe. All the stars of the tropics were at their posts, large as little moons. I looked at them while breathing an air which felt fresh and sweet.

I said to myself, that those poor young things had certainly guessed the truth, and the thought was quite a cordial to my spirits. I could have laid any wager that the five Directors had changed their minds, and recommended them to me; I could not well explain to myself in what manner, because there are state affairs that I never understood, not I; but, in short, I believed this, and without knowing why, I was easy.

I went down to my cabin, and looked again at the letter under my old uniform. It had quite a different aspect; it seemed to smile, and the seals appeared to be rose-coloured. I had no farther doubt that it was favourable, and I had a little sign of friendship to it.

Nevertheless, I put my old coat over it again: it annoyed me.

We never once thought of looking at it for several days, and we were merry: but when we approached the first degree of latitude, we began to be silent.

One fine morning, I awoke a good deal surprised to feel no motion in the ship. To confess the truth, I never sleep but with one eye, as they say, and, missing the rolling of the ship, I opened both eyes. We had got into a dead calm; and we were in the first degree of latitude and the twenty-seventh of longitude. I put my nose upon deck:

the sea was smooth as a tub of oil ; all the sails flapped against the masts like empty bladders. I said immediately, "Come, I shall now have time to read thee !" looking askance towards the letter. I waited till evening, till sunset. But, as I should be forced to come to the point at last, I opened the clock-case, and snatched the sealed order out of it ! Well, my dear fellow, I held it in my hand a full quarter of an hour before I could take courage to read it. At length, said I to myself, "This is too silly !" and I broke the three seals with my thumb, and pounded the great red seal to powder.

After I had read the paper, I rubbed my eyes, thinking that they must have deceived me. I read the letter over again from beginning to end ; I read it a third time ; I then began with the last line and went up to the first. I could not trust my senses. My legs shook a little under me ; I sat down. I felt a certain trembling in the skin of my face ; I rubbed my cheeks with rum, which I poured into the hollow of my hands. I pitied myself for being so stupid as that ; but it was the affair of a moment ; I went up into the air.

Laurette was so handsome that day that I would not go near her : she had on quite a plain white dress, arms bare, and her long hair flowing as she always wore it. She amused herself with dipping her other dress, fastened to a cord, in the sea, and laughed while striving to catch a kind of sea-weed, resembling bunches of grapes, which floats upon the waters of the tropics.

"Come and look at the grapes ! come quick !" she cried ; and her husband went close to her and leant over her, but did not look at the water, because he was looking at her with an air of deep emotion.

I made a sign to the young man that I wanted to speak to him on the quarter-deck. She turned about. I know not what my face was like, but she dropped her cord,

grasped him strongly by the arm, and said: "Oh! don't go; see how pale he is!"

That might well be the case; it was enough to make one turn pale. He came to me, nevertheless, on the deck; while she leaned against the main-mast and watched us. We walked up and down a considerable time without speaking. I was smoking a cigar, which I thought bitter, and I flung it into the water. He followed me with his eyes; I took him by the arm. I felt choking, by my faith, 'pon my word of honour, I was choking.

"Come now, my young friend," said I to him at last, "tell me something of your history. What the devil have you done to those sons of bitches of *lawyers*, who stick themselves up like five bits of kings? It seems they are desperately enraged against you. 'Tis very odd!"

He shrugged his shoulders, drooping his head, with so mild a look—poor lad!—and said to me: "Good God, captain, no great matter! why, a few verses on the Directory, that's all."

"Not possible!" said I.

"True, I assure you, and the verses were none of the best either. I was arrested on the 15th of Fructidor, taken to La Force, tried on the 16th, and at first sentenced to death, and afterwards to transportation, out of kindness."

"'Tis droll," said I. "Those Directors are very tetchy fellows; for that letter which you have seen is an order to me to shoot you."

He made no answer, but smiled, and kept up a very good countenance for a youth of nineteen. He merely looked at his wife, and wiped his forehead, on which the perspiration stood in big drops. I had at least as many on my face, and other drops in my eyes.

"It appears," I continued, "that those citizens did not choose to settle your business on land; they have thought that here it would be less noticed. But it is a most painful



thing for me ; for, good fellow though you are, I am forced to obey : the death-warrant is there, all regular, and the order for execution signed and sealed—nothing is wanting.”

He bowed to me very politely, reddening at the same time.

“ I ask no favour, captain,” said he, with a voice gentle as usual ; “ I should never forgive myself if I were to cause you to violate your duty. I should merely like to say a few words to Laura, and I beg you to protect her, in case she should survive me, which I do not think she will.”

“ Oh ! as for that, it is but fair, my lad,” said I. “ If it is your wish I will take her to her family, on my return to France, and I will not leave her till she insists on seeing me no more. But I can’t help thinking you may flatter yourself that she will never get over this blow—poor dear little creature !”

He laid hold of both my hands, pressed them, and said : “ My good captain, you suffer more than myself, I am aware, from what you have yet to do ; but there is no help for it. I rely upon you to take care of the little that belongs to me for her, to protect her, and to see that she receives what her aged mother may leave her—will you not ?—to preserve her life, her honour, will you not ?—and also that attention may be paid to her health. Stay,” he added in a lower tone, “ I have to tell you that she is very delicate ; her chest is often affected to such a degree that she faints several times in a day ; she ought always to wrap herself up well. In short, you will supply the place of father and mother and myself to her as much as possible—won’t you ? If she could keep the rings that her mother gave her, I should be glad. But if there is a necessity of their being sold for her, why then they must. My poor Laurette, see how beautiful she is !”

As this began to be a great deal too tender for me, I felt annoyed, and could not help frowning. I had talked to him in a cheerful way to keep up my firmness ; but I could stand it no longer. “ ’Tis enough,” said I, at last, “ between

honourable men. The rest follows of course. Go and speak to her, and let us cut the matter short."

I gave his hand a friendly squeeze, but he did not let go mine, and eyed me with a singular look. "I'll tell you what," I added, "if I have a piece of advice to give you, it is to say not a word to her about this matter. We will arrange the thing without her knowing anything about it, or you either; be easy, that's my affair."

"Ah! that alters the case," said he; "I was not aware: that will be better indeed. Besides, that leave-taking, that parting, upsets one."

"Yes, yes," said I, "don't be a child; that is much better. Don't kiss her, my friend, don't kiss her, if you can avoid it, or that will spoil all."

I gave him another hearty shake of the hand, and left him alone. Oh! it was a cruel task for me, this!

He appeared to me to keep the secret closely enough, faith! for they walked about arm in arm for a quarter of an hour, and came back to the ship's side, to lay hold again of the cord with the dress, which one of my cabin-boys had fished up out of the water.

Night fell at once. This was the moment which I had resolved to seize. But that moment has lasted for me till this very day, and I shall drag it after me all my life, like a cannon-ball.

Here the old commandant was obliged to pause. I abstained from speaking, lest I should divert the current of his ideas. He resumed, striking his breast: That moment, I tell you, I cannot yet comprehend. I felt anger pulling me by the hair, and at the same time some power or other urged me on and forced me to obey.

I called my officers, and I said to one of them: "Hoist out a boat; since we are now executioners. Put that young woman into it, and push off from the ship till you hear the firing of small arms. You will then return."

To obey a scrap of paper! for what more was it! There must certainly have been something in the air that threw a spell upon me. I saw the young man from a distance—oh! it was terrible to see!—kneeling before his Laurette, and kissing her hands and her feet. Don't you think I was the most miserable of wretches?

I cried like a madman: "Part them! we are all villains! Part them! . . . . The poor Republic is a dead body. Directors, Directory, are the vermin preying upon it. I will quit the sea. I fear not all your lawyers; let them be told what I say, for aught I care." But I did care for them, though. Oh! how glad I should have been to have them in my power! I would have had all five of them shot, the scoundrels! By Heaven, I would too! I should have made no more account of their lives than of the rain that is now falling, not I . . . . I did care about them . . . . Such a life as mine . . . . Ah, yes, indeed, a miserable life! . .

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The voice of the commandant gradually died away, and became as indistinct as his words were incoherent; and he walked on, knitting his brows and biting his lips, in a fearful fit of fury and abstraction. He had little convulsive motions, and struck his mule with the sheath of his sword, as if he meant to kill him. What astonished me was to see the sallow skin of his face turn to dark red. He unbuttoned and pulled open his coat at the breast, uncovering it to the wind and the rain. We thus continued to walk on in profound silence. I saw plainly that he would not speak again of himself, and that I must make up my mind to question him.

"I can easily imagine," said I, as if he had finished his story, "that, after so cruel an adventure, a man would conceive a horror of his profession."

“Oh! the profession! are you mad?” said he, sharply. “It is not the profession. Never will the captain of a ship be forced to play the part of executioner, but when there shall come governments of murderers and robbers, which shall take advantage of the habit that a poor man has of obeying blindly, of obeying in all cases, of obeying like a mere machine, in spite of his heart.”

At the same time, he took from his pocket a red handkerchief, held it to his face, and began to weep like a child. I pulled up for a moment, as if to put my stirrups to rights, and, falling behind the cart, I walked after it for some time, feeling that he would be too much humbled if I were to observe too closely his passion of tears.

I had judged rightly; for, in about a quarter of an hour, he too came behind his lowly equipage, and asked me if I had any razors in my portmanteau. I simply replied that, having as yet no beard, razors would only be a useless encumbrance. But he did not stop there; it was to talk of something else that he had come. I perceived with pleasure that he was about to revert to his history for he said abruptly: “Mayhap you never saw a ship in your life?”

“I never did,” answered I, “unless at the Panorama in Paris, and I cannot boast much of the nautical knowledge that I have derived from it.”

“Of course you do not know what the cat-head is?”

“I can’t say that I do,” I replied.

“It is a large piece of timber projecting from each bow, from which the anchor is suspended, before letting go. When a man is shot, he is usually placed there,” added he, in a lower tone.

“Ah! I understand; because then he falls at once into water.”

Without making any reply, he began to describe all the kinds of boats that a brig carries, and their position in the ship; and then, without any order in his ideas, he continued

his narrative with that affected air of indifference which long service invariably imparts, because it is requisite to display, before inferiors, contempt of danger, contempt of men, contempt of life, contempt of death, and contempt of one's self; and hence it is that under a rough envelope is almost always concealed profound sensibility. The harshness of the military man is like an iron mask over a noble face, like a dungeon of stone enclosing a royal prisoner.

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Those boats, he resumed, hold six men. They got into them, carrying Laura along with them, before she had time to cry out or to speak. Oh! here's a thing for which no honest man can forgive himself, when he is the cause of it. 'Tis of no use talking! one never can forget such a thing! . . . Ah! what weather we have! . . . What devil has urged me to tell this story? When I begin it, I never can stop—but it is just finished. 'Tis a story that gripes one like Jurançon wine.—My God, what weather!—My cloak is wet through.

I was telling you, I believe, about my dear little Laurette.—Poor young creature!—What awkward people there are in the world! The officer was stupid enough to take the boat ahead of the brig. After all, it is but fair to admit that one cannot foresee everything. I calculated, for my part, that night would hide the affair, and never thought of the flash from a dozen muskets firing at once. And so, faith, she saw from the boat her husband fall into the sea, shot.

If there is a God above, he knows how all that I have been telling you came to pass: I know nothing about it, not I—but people did see it and hear it, as I see you and hear you. At the moment of firing, she clapped her hand to her head, as if a ball had struck her brow, and sat down in the



boat without fainting, without shrieking, without speaking, and returned to the brig with the crew when they pleased and how they pleased. I went to her; I talked to her a long while, and in the best fashion I could. She seemed to listen to me, and looked me in the face, at the same time rubbing her forehead. But she did not understand me: and her brow was red and her face pale as ashes. She trembled in every limb, as if afraid of everybody. This never left her. She does so still, poor little thing: idiot, or crazy, or lunatic, whichever you please. Never has a word been drawn from her, unless when she tells one to take out something that is in her head.

From that moment I grew as melancholy as herself, and I heard something within me saying: *Stay with her as long as she lives, and take care of her.* I have done so. On my return to France, I desired to be removed with my rank to the land forces, having taken a dislike to the sea, because I had cast innocent blood into it. I sought out Laura's family. Her mother was dead. Her sisters, to whom I took the poor creature, would not have her, and proposed to me to send her to Charenton. I turned my back on them, and I kept her myself.

Ah, my God! if you would like to see her, comrade, you may: wait, stop a moment! Ho, ho, mule!

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## EDITOR'S REMARKS

ON

### CHAPTER V.

THE "*Red Seal*," in the author's fifth chapter, is a sad story! In the *first* place, Englishmen do not allow the government to send people on board a ship, with a letter to the captain, desiring him to blow their brains out when he arrives at a certain latitude.

In the *second* place, Englishmen enter the army *voluntarily*. Now, an honest man should obey any government that he serves under, but he should not serve a government which is in the hands of men like Marat and his cut-throat associates. He should not be a soldier under any but a constitutional government, like our own. A man must obey Him who is greater than kings and rulers; occasions may befall, when he must set man at defiance and obey God. Military discipline is good, and obedience is necessary; but even our code, rigid as it is, confines our obedience to that which is *lawful*. There is a limit to the world, and to all things that it contains, and, among the rest, to obedience. If, for example, my superior officer were to order me to shoot one of my daughters, I would make a slight alteration in the command, and shoot him instead! When a man agrees to obey, it is understood that he is to obey as far as a man can obey.

“Magnificent Don Ferdinando  
Cannot do more than a man can do!”

There are moral, as well as physical, impossibilities, and they often depend upon education, temperament, and circumstances. A story is told of three sovereigns at the congress assembled at Vienna. They were arguing about obedience, each claiming for his army the superiority in that point. Sending for three of their soldiers, the King of Prussia ordered his man to leap out of the window. The Prussian soldier opened the window, looked out, and then, with a rhodomontade, about the pleasure it would give him to die in battle for his majesty, refused to break his neck out of a window. Then came the Austrian. He curled his whiskers, looked fiercely at the window as if he would eat it, if a window could be eaten, then rolled his eyes upon the Emperor, refused, and fell at his master's feet, craving mercy. Now came the Russian soldier's turn: “jump out of that window,” said Alexander. The man instantly crossed himself, ejacu-

lated a short prayer, and proceeded to cast himself out. This story may be true or false, but it answers my purpose, which is to show that obedience may be pushed to such an extreme as to become nonsense. There are cases in which a man's reason must guide him, but he must take the risk of that punishment which attends disobedience, for that is a matter of course. Had I been the commander of the "Marat," I should have considered the Republican Government as composed of men who had, by fraud and violence, possessed themselves of the supreme power against the consent of my country, and deemed it my duty to save as many of their victims as I could. The tyranny of the privileged classes gave the French people the right to overthrow those privileges; the tyranny of such men as Robespierre, Danton, Marat, gave every Frenchman a right to overthrow *them* likewise. The French had rebelled to obtain justice; and if injustice was to be the result, they should have rebelled again, they should have always rebelled against the men who slew Louis XVI. They should have reasoned thus: "We have got a free constitution, and a good man for our king, possessing an hereditary title, sanctioned by time; therefore we are now the enemies of every man who is not loyal; for a nation cannot have a better constitution. With these feelings and a clear conscience, I, for one, should have joined the people of La Vendée, till Napoleon became the chosen monarch of France. Had the commander of the "Marat" acted thus, his conscience would not have had so much to answer for. It is not every upstart government that has a claim upon a soldier's obedience, because that soldier happens to be in the army at the moment when such a government usurps the rule. If he chooses to enter its service, because he approves of it, well and good, but, unless it be there placed by the avowed will of the whole nation (as King William III. is said to have been), it has no claims upon his service. The Prince of Orange was, as we are told, the

choice of the nation ; but, had the latter been governed by the true principles of the constitution, I much doubt whether it would have joined the standard of the Dutch chief ; it would have remained firm to King James, and demanded the impeachment of those who were constitutionally responsible. That “ The King can do no wrong,” appears to be the pivot upon which our constitution turns ; all else may change, but that must be fixed.

Nothing can be more dangerous, both to the sovereign and the people, than to break this sacred principle, and allow the responsibility of ministers to become a dead letter. To admit that the crown can do wrong is to invest the majesty of the throne with human frailties, and expose it to be arraigned by every member of Parliament who chooses to insult the sovereign.

The great prerogative of the English crown, a prerogative arising out of its limitation, and right of inheritance, is its irresponsibility. Without *that*, ours would be the most degraded and unstable throne in Europe ; instead of being, as it is, the greatest, the noblest, the firmest. It would be continually suffering martyrdom for its ministers. The Queen would be placed in the unjust position of being responsible, without power. But this is far from being the case. “ *The Queen can do no wrong*”—this is her *right*, the prerogative which she has received from the nation ; and every radical reformer is bound to protect her right with his pen, and his sword if need be. It is not exclusively justice for the Commons, justice for the Lords, justice for the Crown, that a loyal Englishman demands : it is “ justice for all ;” and he who flinches from this is a traitor to the Queen and to the country. Now this brings me to the point.

Louis XVI. had signed a free constitution at the demand of the French nation. He had been murdered while under protection of the nation, as a constitutional monarch, (I should say “ King,” for the word monarch, though used in

common parlance, is erroneously applied to a constitutional king, as it implies absolute power), and thus I argue that I have proved my assertion to be correct, viz. : The republican government of France (having destroyed the constitution, and the constitutional King of France), had no claim to the obedience of the commander of the "Marat." He was not warranted in shooting his prisoner, who was the victim of the "Reign of Terror." The captain did not obey from a sense of duty to his country, not from patriotic feeling : had he acted upon principle, he would have cast his "Red Seals" into the sea, and with them his obedience to "The Reign of Terror." The author gives us the story as true, therefore, we must be so uncharitable as to conclude that the old master of the privateer or pirate (they are not very different!) was not a patriot, but a murderer ; in short, that poor Laura was too pretty !

I may be told that I do not get out of the difficulty by this, and that a constitutional sovereign may order some horrible deed to be done, and that the soldier must obey. I admit this, but it is not probable, and upon a constitutional king there are *checks* which appear to me sufficient guards. First, A constitutional sovereign has but little power to indulge in acts of personal vengeance, and has every interest in gaining the affections of a free people for himself and his family. He speaks with the voice of the nation. Secondly, The sovereign must have the concurrence of responsible ministers. Thirdly, They all know that he who obeys may, while obeying, remonstrate boldly, and the nation will raise its voice against any atrocity. The press will not be silent. Fourthly, Both the king and the ministers must adhere to *law*. Now I deem these and other checks to be strong, and always to be in operation. But such governments as that of France was, between the death of Louis XVI. and the reign of Napoleon, had no responsibility. Paris ruled France ; a mob ruled Paris ; and some cut-throat ruled the mob !



There was no check ; all were without responsibility. Who dared remonstrate ? In a constitutional monarchy a man may freely express his opinions ; he may avow himself to be of any party in politics ; for the sovereign is of no party. But he could not so express his honest feelings under the republican government of France ; nor could he call the slave-trade “an infamous traffic” were he in America, without suffering the guillotine in the first country, or Lynch law in the latter : such are the republics, compared with constitutional monarchies.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### HOW I CONTINUED MY ROUTE.

So he stopped the poor mule, which appeared to be delighted at this proposal. At the same time, he lifted up the oil-cloth of his little cart, as if to put to rights the straw which almost filled it, and I beheld a very melancholy sight. I saw two blue eyes, of extraordinary size, admirable in point of form, starting from a long, pale, emaciated face, inundated by perfectly straight, fair hair. I saw, in truth, nothing but those two eyes, which were all that was left of that poor woman, for the rest of her was dead. Her forehead was red, her cheeks hollow and white, and bluish on the cheek-bones. She was crouched among the straw, so that one could just see her two knees rising above it, and on them she was playing all alone at dominoes. She looked at us for a moment, trembled a long time, smiled at me a little, and began to play again. It seemed to me that she was striving to make out how her right hand beat her left.

“Look you,” said the *chef de bataillon* to me, “she has been playing that game for a month. To-morrow she will perhaps begin another, that will last as long. ’Tis droll, faith !”

At the same time he began to replace the oil-skin of his cap, which the rain had somewhat deranged. "Poor Laurette," sighed I, "thou hast lost for ever!"

I drew my horse up to the cart, and offered her my hand. She gave me hers mechanically, and with a smile of great sweetness. I remarked with surprise that she had diamond rings on her fingers; I had no doubt they were the same which she had received from her mother, and asked myself how poverty could have left them there. For an entire world I would not have made this observation to the old commandant; but, as he followed me with his eyes, and saw mine fixed on Laura's fingers, he said to me with a certain air of pride:

"They are very fine diamonds, a'n't they? They might be of service in case of need, but I never could bear to think of her parting with them, poor girl. When one touches them, she weeps; she never takes them off. For the rest, she never murmurs; and she works with her needle now and then. I have kept my word to her poor dear husband, and indeed I don't repent it. I have never left her, and have every where given out that she was my daughter who was deranged. This was a safeguard to her. In the army things are managed more easily than people suppose in Paris. She has made all the Emperor's campaigns with me, and I have always brought her out of the scrape. I keep her constantly warm. With straw and a little carriage, that is never impossible. She has always been kept very tidy; and I, being *chef de bataillon*, with good pay, my pension of the Legion of Honour, and the Napoleon month, the pay for which was double, in time I got quite used to the business, and she was no inconvenience whatever to me. On the contrary, her childish ways sometimes raised a laugh among the officers of the 7th light."

He then went up to her, and patted her on the shoulder as he would have done to his little mule.

“ Well, my dear, speak ; say something to the lieutenant here ; look you, just a little sign with your head.”

She turned again to her dominoes.

“ Oh !” said he, “ she is rather out of humour to-day, because it rains. However, she never catches cold. Mad people, to be sure, are never ill—a convenient thing, in that respect. At the Beresina, and during the whole retreat from Moscow, she went bareheaded. Come, my dear, play away ; never mind us ; do as you please, do, Laurette !”

She took his hand, which he had placed upon her shoulder—a large, brown, wrinkled hand—raised it timidly to her lips, and kissed it like a poor slave. My heart was wrung by that kiss, and I abruptly turned my horse’s head another way.

“ Shall we continue our march, commandant ?” said I. “ Night will overtake us before we get to Bethune.”

The commandant carefully scraped off with the point of his sword the yellow mud that covered his boots, then mounting the foot-board of the cart, he drew over Laura’s head the hood of a cloth cloak which she wore. He took off his black silk cravat, and tied it round the neck of his adopted daughter ; after which, he gave the usual kick to the mule, and, with the accustomed shirk of his shoulder, said, “ On, lazy-bones !” So away he went again.

The rain still fell dismally ; the grey sky, and the grey earth, stretched away without end : a sort of dull light, a pale sun, drowned in haze, was sinking behind some great mills that were not going. We fell again into profound silence.

I looked at my old commandant. He strode on with yet undiminished vigour, while his mule was quite knocked up, and even my horse began to hang his head. This brave fellow took off his cap, from time to time, to wipe his bald brow and the scanty grey hair of his head, or his bushy eyebrows, or his white moustaches, dripping with rain. He

cared not what effect his narrative may have produced upon me. He had not made himself a whit better or worse than he was. He had not deigned to draw his own portrait. He thought not of himself; and, in about a quarter of an hour, he commenced in the same tone a much longer story of one of Marshal Massena's campaigns, in which he had formed his battalion into a square, against I know not what cavalry. I did not listen to him, though he took great pains to demonstrate to me the superiority of the foot to the horse soldier.

Night came on; we could not proceed fast. The mud became thicker and deeper. Nothing upon the route, and nothing at the end of it. We halted at the foot of a dead tree, the only tree by the road-side. He attended first to his mule, as I did to my horse. He then looked into the cart, as a mother would do in the cradle of her infant. I heard him say: "Here, my dear, wrap this coat about your feet, and try to sleep. Come, that's right; she has not had a drop of rain upon her. Ha! the devil! she has broken my watch, which I left about her neck! Oh, my poor silver watch! Come, never mind, my child, try to sleep. We shall have fine weather presently. 'Tis odd, she always has a fever; that is the way with mad people. Stay, here is some chocolate for thee, my dear."

He backed the cart against the tree, and we sat down between the wheels, under shelter from the ceaseless rain, having only a very small loaf a-piece for our scanty supper.

"I am very sorry that we have nothing else," said he, "but this is better than the horse-flesh, roasted under the ashes, and gunpowder sprinkled over it instead of salt, as we ate it in Russia. The poor little woman! I must give her the best I have; you see, I always keep her apart. She cannot bear to have a man near her, since the affair of the letter. I am old, and she seems to believe that I am her

father; nevertheless, she would strangle me, if I were to attempt merely to kiss her forehead. Education always leaves them something, it seems, for I never saw her forget to hide herself like a nun. 'Tis odd, faith."

As he thus spoke, we heard her sigh, and say: "Take away this ball; take this ball from me!" I rose: he made me sit down again.

"Don't move, don't move," said he; "it is nothing. She often says that, because she fancies that she feels a ball in her head. This does not prevent her from doing anything one tells her, and that too with great meekness."

I listened sadly to him, without replying. I began to calculate that, from 1797 to 1815, in which we then were, eighteen years had thus been passed by this man. I remained long in silence by his side, striving to comprehend this character and this destiny. At length, I abruptly seized his hand, and shook it with enthusiasm. He appeared quite surprised at this movement.

"You are a worthy man!" I exclaimed.

"Why, how so?" he asked. "Is it on account of this poor creature? You are aware, child, that it was a duty. 'Tis a long while that I have practised self-denial;" and he then began to talk about Massena.

By daylight next morning we reached Bethune, a small, ugly, fortified town, the ramparts of which had, you would say, by contracting the circle, squeezed the houses one upon another. All was confusion there: it was the moment of an alert. The inhabitants were beginning to remove the white flags from the windows, and to sew together the three colours in their houses. The drums were beating to arms, and the trumpets sounding *To horse!* by command of the Duke de Berry. The long Picard waggons, carrying the Cent-Suisses and their baggage, the cannon of the Gardes du Corps hastening to the ramparts, the carriages of the princes, the squadrons of the Red Companies that were



forming, encumbered the town. The sight of the king's gendarmes and of the mousquetaires made me forget my old fellow-traveller. I joined my company, and I lost in the crowd the little cart and its humble owners. To my great regret, it was for ever that I lost them.

This was the first time in my life that the recesses of a real soldier's heart were laid open to my view. This meeting revealed to me a character to which I was a stranger, and which the country neither appreciates nor treats well; I placed it thenceforward very high in my esteem. I have since frequently looked around me for another man resembling this, and capable of the like complete and reckless self-denial. Now, during the fourteen years that I have spent in the army, it is only there, and especially in the poor and slighted ranks of the infantry, that I have met with men of that antique character, pushing the sentiment of duty to its utmost consequences, feeling no remorse on account of obedience, no shame on account of poverty, simple in manners and language, proud of the glory of their country and careless of their own, burying themselves with pleasure in their obscurity, and sharing with the unfortunate the black bread which they pay for with their blood.

For a long time I knew not what had become of this humble *chef de bataillon*. He had not told me his name, neither had I asked him for it. At length, one day, in 1825, I think it was, being in a coffee-house with an old captain of infantry of the line, to whom I described him while waiting for the parade, he said: "Ah, my dear fellow, I knew that poor devil well. A brave man he was too: he was taken off by a cannon-ball at Waterloo. He had, in fact, left along with the baggage a sort of crazy girl, whom we took to the hospital at Amiens on our way to the army of the Loire, and who died there raving, at the end of three days."

“I am not surprised at that,” said I; “she had lost the father who nursed and provided for her.”

“What is it you say?—*father!*—nonsense!” added he, with a look meant to be at once shrewd and licentious.

“I say that they are beating the *rappel*,” replied I, rising and leaving the house—and I too practised self-denial.

## PART II.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### ON RESPONSIBILITY.

I STILL recollect the consternation which this story produced in my soul; herein lay perhaps the principle of my slow cure for that disease—military enthusiasm. I felt all at once humbled at being obliged to run the risks of crime, and in finding in my hand the sword of the slave instead of the sabre of the chevalier. Many other similar facts came to my knowledge, and branded in my estimation that noble class of men whom I would fain have seen consecrated solely to the defence of the country.

Thus, during the Reign of Terror, it happened that another captain of a ship received in common with all the navy, from the committee of public welfare, the atrocious orders to shoot all prisoners of war: he had the misfortune to take an English vessel, and the still greater misfortune to obey the order of the government. On returning to the port, he rendered an account of its disgraceful execution, retired from the service, and died in a short time broken-hearted. This captain commanded the *Bordeuse* frigate, which had formerly sailed round the world under the command of M. de Bougainville. That great navigator shed tears over the tarnished honour of his old ship.

Will there never come a law that shall serve, on such occasions, to reconcile duty and conscience? Is the public voice in the wrong, when it is raised from age to age to absolve and honour the disobedience of the Vicomte d'Orte, who, when Charles IX. ordered him to extend the Parisian

massacre of St. Bartholomew to Dax, replied: "Sire, I have communicated your majesty's command to your faithful inhabitants and men at arms; I have found among them only good citizens and brave soldiers, but not one executioner."

And if he was right to refuse obedience, how is it that we live under laws which we deem reasonable for inflicting death on any one who refuses this same implicit obedience! We admire the man who exercises freedom of judgment, and we put him to death: such an absurdity cannot prevail much longer. Means must be devised for determining under what circumstances deliberation shall be allowed to the armed man, and down to what rank the understanding shall be left free, and with it the exercise of conscience and of justice. Our system, in regard to all this, must some day be changed.

I am perfectly aware that this is a question of extreme difficulty, and which affects the very foundation of all discipline. So far from wishing to weaken that discipline, I am of opinion that it needs strengthening on many points among us, and that, before the enemy, the laws cannot be too Draconian. When the army turns its steeled breast towards the foreigner, let it march and act like a single man—that is quite right: but when it has faced about, and has only the mother-country before it, then, at least, it is fitting that it should find provident laws, which allow it to have filial bowels. It is also to be wished that immutable limits should be fixed, once for all, to those absolute orders given to the armies by the supreme power, which has so frequently, in our history, fallen into unworthy hands. Let it never more be possible for a few adventurers, raised to the dictatorship, to transform into murderers four hundred thousand men of honour by a law which, like their reign, is but for a day!

Frequently, it is true, I perceived in the customs of the service that, owing perhaps to French carelessness and to the

good-nature of our character, there prevailed in the armies, as if by way of compensation, and together with that misery of military Servitude, a sort of freedom of mind which soothed the humiliation of passive obedience; and, remarking in every soldier something open and nobly easy, I thought that this proceeded from a mind at rest and relieved from the enormous weight of responsibility. I was then very young, and I felt by degrees that this sentiment lightened my conscience: I looked upon every commander-in-chief as a sort of Moses, who had his terrible account to render to God alone, after he had said to the sons of Levi: "Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate, throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour; and there fell of that people that day about twenty-three thousand men," says Exodus, xxxii, 27; for I knew the Bible by heart, and that book and I were so inseparable, that in the longest marches, it always accompanied me. The reader sees what was the first consolation that it afforded me.

I thought that I must be excessively unfortunate if one of my gold-laced Moses' were to order me to slay my whole family; and, in fact, no such thing ever happened to me, as I had very sagely conjectured. I thought too that, even if the impracticable peace of the Abbé de St. Pierre were established on earth, and though he himself were appointed to regularize that universal liberty and equality, he would want for this task a few regiments of Levites, whom he could order to gird on the sword, and whose obedience would draw down upon them the blessing of the Lord.

I sought thus to capitulate with the monstrous resignations of *passive obedience*, by considering to what divine source it was to be traced back, and how all social order seemed to be founded upon obedience; but I had need of many arguments and many paradoxes, before I could allow it to gain a footing in my soul. I was fond enough of inflicting it, but I disliked



having to pay it; I thought it admirably wise under my feet, but absurd above my head. I have since known many men reason in the same manner, who had not the excuse which I had then—I was a Levite of sixteen.

I had not yet extended my views to the entire father-land of our France; or to that other father-land which surrounds it, Europe; or to the father-land of humanity, the globe, which fortunately is becoming smaller every day, compressed by the hand of civilization. It had not yet occurred to me how much lighter the heart of the warrior would be in his bosom, if he were to feel in himself two men, one of whom should obey the other; if he knew that, after acting his wholly rigorous part in war, he should have a right to a part wholly beneficent and not less glorious in peace; if, on attaining a certain rank, he possessed the right of election; if, after being long mute in camps, he had his voice in the city; if he were the executor in the one of the laws which he should have made in the other; and if, to hide the blood-stained sword, he could put on the toga. Now, it is not impossible that all this may come to pass some day.

We are really destitute of pity to expect any man to be strong enough to be singly responsible for that armed nation which is put into his hand. It is a dangerous thing for governments themselves; for the present organization, which thus hangs upon one finger that whole electric chain of passive evidence, may, under certain circumstances, render the total overthrow of a state much too easy. Such a revolution, half formed and recruited, would but have to gain a minister at war in order to complete itself entirely. All the rest would follow of course, according to our laws, without a single link being able to withdraw itself from the commotion communicated from above.

No, I appeal to the heavings of conscience in every man who has seen the blood of his fellow-citizens spilt, or who has caused it to be spilt—a single head is not enough to

support so heavy a weight as that of so many murders; so many heads as there are combatants would not be too many. In order to be responsible for the law of blood which they execute, it would be right that they should at least have thoroughly understood it. But the better institutions called for here will, themselves, be but very transient; for, once more I repeat it, armies and war have nearly had their day! in spite of the words of a sophist to whom I have elsewhere adverted, it is not true that, even against foreign foes, war is *diviné*; it is not true that *the earth is athirst for blood*. War is accursed of God, and even of the men who wage it, and who have a secret horror of it, and, if the earth cries to heaven, it is only to beg of it the fresh water of its rivers and the pure dew of its clouds.

It is not, however, in early youth, all devoted to action, that I could have asked myself if there were not modern countries in which the man of war was the same as the man of peace, and not a man cut off from the family and set up against it as an enemy. I did not examine what it might be serviceable to us to borrow from the ancients on this point; many plans of a more rational organization of armies have been broached to no purpose. So far from putting any of them into execution, or merely bringing them forth to the light, it is probable that Power, be what it may, will be more and more averse to them, having an interest in surrounding itself with gladiators in the struggle that is incessantly threatening; the idea will, nevertheless, assume a form and gain ground, as every necessary idea sooner or later does.

In the present state of things, how many good sentiments are there to cherish, and which might be elevated still more by the sentiment of a higher personal dignity! I have stored up many instances of this kind in my memory. I had about me, ready to furnish them, a great number of intimate friends, so cheerfully resigned to their reckless sub-

mission, so free in mind under the slavery of the body, that this recklessness seized me for a moment as it had done them, and with it that tranquillity of the soldier and the officer, that tranquillity which is precisely like that of the horse nobly measuring his step between the bridle and the spur, and proud of not being at all responsible.

Let me then be permitted to give, in the simple history of a brave man, and of a soldier family of which I had but a momentary glimpse, an example more soothing than the first of those long resignations of a whole life, full of honour, modesty, and urbanity, very common in our army, and the sight of which refreshes the mind when one lives, as I did, in an elegant world, from which one descends with pleasure, to study more natural manners, as far as they may be behind the spirit of the times.

The army, such as it is, is a good book for him to open who would study humanity. There he learns to put his hand to everything, to the lowest as well as to the highest. The most delicate and the most opulent are forced to observe closely how poverty lives, and to live with it, to measure its coarse bread, and to weigh out its meat to it. But for the army, many a scion of nobility would not suspect how a soldier lives, thrives, and keeps himself in a good case all the year round upon nine sous per day, and a jug of fresh water, carrying at his back a knapsack, which, with all its contents, costs the country forty francs.

This simplicity of manners, this careless and joyous poverty of so many young men, this vigorous and sound existence, without false politeness, or false sensibility, this manly tone given to everything, this uniformity of sentiment imparted by discipline, are of course bonds of habit, but difficult to break, and which are not destitute of a certain charm unknown to other professions. I have seen officers contract such a passionate fondness for this existence as not to be able to leave it for any time without *ennui*, even

to return to those more engaging elegancies of life to which they have been accustomed. The regiments are convents of men, but itinerant convents. Whithersoever they go, they carry with them their habits, stamped with gravity, silence, reserve, and scrupulous punctuality in fulfilling the severe vow of obedience.

The character of these recluses is indelible as that of monks, and never have I again seen the uniform of any of my regiments without a stronger pulsation of the heart.

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## CHAPTER II.

### A SOLDIER'S SCRUPLES OF HONOUR.

ONE evening, in the summer of 1819, I was walking in the interior of the fortress of Vincennes, with Timoleon d'Arc \* \* \*, like myself, a lieutenant in the Guards. We had been, according to custom, to the polygon, attending the exercise in firing *à ricochet*, calmly listening to and relating stories of war, and entering into discussion on the Polytechnic School, on its formation, its utility, its defects, and the men of sallow complexion who had sprung from that geometrical hot-bed. Timoleon, too, wore the pale colour of that seminary. Those who knew him will recollect, like me, his regular and rather thin face, his large dark eyes and the arched brows that shaded them, and the serene gravity, so rarely ruffled, of his Spartan countenance. He was deeply intent that evening of our very long conversation on Laplace's system of Probabilities. I remember that he had under his arm that book, for which we had a high esteem, and with which he often worried himself. Night slowly descended upon us—a beautiful night in August. I looked with gratification at that chapel erected by St. Louis, and at that crown of mossy and half-

ruined turrets which then served to adorn Vincennes ; the keep rose above them like a monarch amidst his guards. The little crosses of the chapel gleamed among the first stars, at the top of their tall pinnacles. The fresh and agreeable smell of the wood was wafted to us over the ramparts, and there was nothing, to the very greensward of the batteries, but exhaled the breath of a summer evening. We seated ourselves on a great gun of Louis the Fourteenth's, and looked in silence at some young soldiers trying their strength in lifting a bomb by turns at arm's length, while others were slowly going off and crossing the drawbridge by twos or by fours, with all the listlessness of military inoccupation. The courts were full of artillery-waggons, open and laden with powder, prepared for a review to be held on the following day.

On one side of us, near the door next to the wood, an old adjutant of artillery was opening and shutting, often with evident uneasiness, the very slight door of a small tower, at once a powder-magazine and arsenal, belonging to the foot artillery, and full of barrels of gunpowder, arms, and munitions of war. He saluted us in passing. He was a man of tall stature, but somewhat bent. His hair was thin and white, his moustaches white and bushy, his face, still ruddy, his look healthy, his countenance open, kind, and happy. He held three large papers in his hand, and was examining long columns of figures.

We asked him why he was busy so late, contrary to his custom. He answered, with the composure and tone of respect which mark the old soldier, that a general inspection was to be held on the morrow, to commence at five in the morning ; that he was responsible for the powder, and that he could not help going over his accounts again and again, to make sure that he had not left the slightest occasion for reproach on account of negligence ; that he was, therefore, anxious to avail himself of the last glimpse of daylight, as



there was a very strict prohibition against going at night into the powder-magazine with a torch, or even with a close lantern; that he was extremely vexed at not having had time to see every thing, as he had some bombs left to examine; and that he should much like to be able to come back in the night: and he looked with somewhat of impatience at the grenadier who was just then placed as sentry at the door, and whose duty it would be to prevent him from entering.

After giving us these details, he knelt down and looked under the door, to see if there was any powder scattered about. He was afraid lest a spark from the spurs or the tips of the officers' boots might set fire to it on the following day.

"It is not that which gives me most concern," said he, rising, "but my lists;" and he looked at them with regret.

"You are too scrupulous," said Timoleon.

"Ah, lieutenant! when one is in the Guards, one cannot be too scrupulous about one's honour. One of our quartermasters blew out his brains last Monday, because he had been taken to the police-office. It is my duty to set an example to the inferior officers. Since I have been in the Guards, my superiors have not had a single fault to find with me, and a punishment would make me most miserable."

It is true that those brave soldiers, selected from among the *élite* of the *élite* of the army, would deem themselves dishonoured by the slightest fault.

"Go along," said I, slapping him on the shoulder, "you are all puritans of honour."

He saluted us, and retired towards the barracks in which he lived; and presently, with an innocence of manners peculiar to the honest race of soldiers, he returned, bringing some barley in the hollow of his hands, to a hen, which was rearing a brood of a dozen chickens under the old brass cannon on which we were sitting.

It was certainly the handsomest hen I ever saw in my life. She was quite white, without a single spot, and this

brave man, with his clumsy fingers, mutilated at Marengo and Austerlitz, had stuck upon her head a small red tuft, and put round her neck a little silver collar having a plate with his initials attached to it in front. The pretty hen was at once proud and grateful for the distinction. She knew that the sentinels always protected her, and she was afraid of nobody, not even of a little sucking pig and an owl which had a lodging near her under the next cannon. The hen was a pet of the gunners, and would take crumbs of bread and bits of sugar from all of us when we were in uniform, but she had a horror of the civic dress, and, not recognizing us in that disguise, she took refuge with her family under Louis the Fourteenth's cannon—a magnificent cannon, on which was engraven the everlasting sun with his *NEC PLURIBUS IMPAR* and the *ULTIMA RATIO REGUM*. And beneath this cannon dwelt—a hen!

The good Adjutant spoke of her in very high terms. She supplied him and his daughter most liberally with eggs; and he was so fond of her, that he had not the courage to kill one of her chickens, for fear of grieving her. While he was telling us about her engaging ways, the drums and trumpets together sounded the evening call. The bridges were about to be raised, and the keepers already rattled the chains. We were not on duty, and we left the fortress by the door next to the wood. Timoleon, who had all the while been making angles in the sand with the point of his sword, had risen from the cannon, sorry to leave his triangles as I was to leave the white hen and my Adjutant.

We turned to the left, along the ramparts: and thus passing the turf-mound raised for the Duke d'Enghien over his riddled body and his head smashed with a paving-stone, we proceeded along the fossés, looking at the little white path which he had followed to reach this spot.

There are two sorts of men who can walk together for

five successive hours without opening their lips: these are prisoners and officers. Doomed to be continually in each other's sight, when they are all met, each is alone. We walked on in silence, with our arms behind our backs. I remarked, by the moonlight, that Timoleon kept incessantly turning a letter, first one way and then another: it was a small letter, of oblong form. I knew the shape and the female writer, for I was accustomed to see him muse for a day together, over the small, neat, elegant hand. In this manner we reached the village facing the castle; we had ascended the stairs of our little white house; we were just going to part on the landing of our contiguous apartments, without having spoken a word. It was not till then that he, all at once, said to me: "She absolutely insists on my quitting the service; what do you think of it?"

"I think," said I, "that she is beautiful<sup>d</sup> as an angel, because I have seen her; I think that you love her to distraction, because I have seen you just the same for two years past as you are this evening; I think that you have a handsome fortune, to judge by your horses and your appointments: I think that you have sufficiently established your character to retire, and that in time of peace is no great sacrifice; but I think one thing more."

"What is that?" said he, with a bitter smile, because he guessed what I meant.

"That she is married," said I, in a graver tone: "you know it better than I, my poor friend."

"It is true," said he: "no prospect."

"And your military duty sometimes serves to make you forget this," I added.

"Perhaps so," he replied; "but it is not probable that my star will change in the army. Take notice that never in my life have I done a good thing but it has remained unknown or been misconstrued."

“You might read Laplace every night,” said I, “and not find any remedy there for that.”

And I shut myself up to write a poem on the man with the iron mask—a poem which I entitled *THE PRISON*.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### ON THE LOVE OF DANGER.

THE seclusion of those men whom some demon or other haunts with the illusions of poetry can never be too complete. Profound silence and thick shade rested on the towers of old Vincennes. The garrison had been a-bed since nine in the evening. All the fires had been extinguished at six by order of the drums. Nought was to be heard save the voices of the sentinels sending forth and repeating one after another their drawling melancholy cry: *Sentinelle, prenez garde à vous!* The daws in the turrets replied in a still sadder tone, and, as if they felt themselves no longer safe there, they flew higher to the top of the keep.

There was now nothing to disturb me, and, for all that, something did disturb me; it was neither noise nor light. I tried to write, but could not. I felt something in my thinking faculty like a flaw in an emerald; it was the idea that there was one watching near me, and watching without consolation, in the anguish of despair. This made me uncomfortable. I was sure that he wanted to open his heart to me, and I had abruptly declined his confidence, from a desire to give myself up to my favourite ideas. I was now punished for it by the disturbance of those very ideas. They did not fly freely and cheerily; their wings seemed to me to be heavy, wetted perhaps by the secret tear of a forsaken friend.

I rose from my arm-chair. I threw open the window,

and inhaled the balmy air of night. A forest smell was wafted to me over the walls, slightly mingled with the faint smell of powder: this reminded me of that volcano upon which three thousand men lived and slept in perfect security. I perceived upon the wall of the fort, separated from the village by a road, forty paces wide at most, a light thrown by the lamp of my young neighbour; his shadow passed and repassed on the wall, and I could see by his epaulettes that he had not even thought of going to bed. It was midnight. I suddenly left my apartment and went into his. He was not at all surprised to see me, and he told me at once that, if he was still up, it was to finish reading a passage in Xenophon, which strongly interested him. But, as there was not a single open book in his apartment, and he still held the neat little letter in his hand, I was not his dupe, though I affected to believe him.

We went to the window, and, endeavouring to bring by degrees my ideas into contact with his, I said: "I was studying too; and I was endeavouring to account for that kind of magnet which there is for us in the steel of a sword. It is an irresistible attraction, which retains us in the service in spite of our teeth, and keeps us in continual expectation of some event or of a war; I know not—and I just came to talk to you on the subject—whether it would not be true to say and to write that there is in armies a passion which is peculiar to them, and which gives them life; a passion independent either of the love of glory or of ambition: it is a sort of fight, hand to hand, with Fate; a combat, which is the source of a thousand enjoyments unknown to the rest of mankind, and whose secret triumphs are full of magnificence; it is, in short, the LOVE OF DANGER!"

"It is true," replied Timoleon, and I proceeded.

"But for this, what would support the sailor upon the ocean! what would cheer him under that listlessness which is felt by a man who sees none but men! He sails; he



bids adieu to land, adieu to the smiles of woman, adieu to her love, adieu to the chosen friendships and to the tender charities of life; adieu to old, affectionate parents; adieu to the beauties of Nature, to the fields, to the trees, to the greensward, to the flowers and their fragrance, to the dark rocks, to the melancholy woods, tenanted by silent and savage animals; adieu to great cities, to the perpetual bustle of the arts, to the sublime agitation of all the thoughts in a life of leisure; to the elegant, mysterious, impassioned relations with the world; he bids adieu to everything and goes. He meets with three enemies—water, air, and man; and, every moment of his life, he has to combat one or other of them. That magnificent disquietude delivers him from *ennui*. He lives in a perpetual victory: it is a victory merely to cross the sea, and not to be upset and swallowed up; it is a victory to go whithersoever he pleases, and to plunge into the arms of a contrary wind; it is a victory to run before the storm, and to make it follow him like a valet; it is a victory to sleep and to set up his study on board his ship. He lies down with the feeling of his royalty, upon the back of Ocean, like St. Jerome upon his lion, and enjoys the solitude to which indeed he is wedded.”

“It is grand,” said Timoleon, and I observed that he laid the letter upon the table.

“And it is this love of danger which nourishes him, which causes him never to have an idle moment, which makes him feel that he has a struggle to maintain, an end to accomplish. It is the struggle that we continually need; if you were in the field, you would not suffer as you do now.”

“Who knows?” said he.

“You are as happy as you can be. You cannot advance another step towards your happiness. An impassable barrier crosses your way.”

I heard him murmur : “ Too true !—too true ! ”

“ You cannot prevent her having a young husband and a child ; and you cannot conquer more liberty than you have : that is your torment. ”

He pressed my hand. “ And to be always lying ! ” said he. . . . “ Do you think we shall have war ? ”

“ I think nothing of the sort, ” replied I.

“ If I could but know whether she is at the ball to-night ! I did certainly forbid her to go. ”

“ But for what you have just said, ” I replied, “ I should not have perceived that it is past twelve o'clock. You have no need of Austerlitz, my friend, you are sufficiently occupied. You can dissemble and *lie* a few years longer. Good night. ”

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FAMILY CONCERT.

As I was retiring, I paused, with my hand upon the lock of his door, listening with surprise to music that was very near, and that came from the castle itself. Heard at the window, it seemed to us to be formed by the voices of two men and one female and a piano. To me it was an agreeable surprise at that hour of the night. I proposed to my comrade to go nearer to listen to it. The little drawbridge, parallel with the large one, and destined to afford a passage to the governor and the officers during part of the night, was still down. We entered the fort, and, sauntering through the courts, were guided by the sound till we were close to some open windows, which I knew to be those of the good old Adjutant of artillery. These large windows were on the ground-floor, and, stopping opposite to them, we could perceive at the farther end of the apartment the simple family of this honest soldier.

There was at that extremity of the room a small piano of mahogany, with old-fashioned brass ornaments. The Adjutant, aged and simple as he had at first appeared to us, was seated before this piano, and playing a series of chords, with accompaniments and simple modulations, but harmoniously connected together. His eyes were raised to heaven, and he had no music before him; his mouth was half open with delight, under his thick and long white moustaches. His daughter, standing on his right, was just going to sing or had just ceased; for she was looking anxiously, with her mouth half open, like his. On his left, a young officer of the light artillery of the Guards, in the severe uniform of that fine corps, had his eyes fixed on the girl, as though he was still listening to her.

Nothing could be more calm than their attitudes, nothing more decorous than their demeanour, nothing more happy than their countenances. The light that fell from above on those three faces showed not the slightest expressions of care; and the finger of God had written upon them nothing but kindness, modesty, and love.

The rubbing of our swords against the wall apprised them that we were there. The Adjutant saw us, and his bald brow reddened with surprise, and, if I mistake not, with satisfaction too. He hastily rose, and, taking up one of the three candlesticks that lighted him, came and opened the door and begged us to sit down. We requested him to continue his family concert, and, without making any excuses, without soliciting indulgence, he said with a noble simplicity to his children: "Where did we leave off?" And the three voices were raised in chorus with a harmony that I cannot express.

Timoleon listened and remained motionless; while I, covering my brow and eyes with my hand, fell a-musing with an emotion which, I cannot tell why, was really sad. What they were singing carried my spirit into the region

of tears and of melancholy felicities ; and pursued perhaps by the annoying idea of my evening occupation, I changed the shifting modulations of the voices into shifting images. What they sang was one of those Scotch choruses, one of those ancient melodies of the bards, which is still sung by the sonorous echo of the Orkneys.

For me this melancholy chorus rose slowly, and suddenly evaporated, like the mists of Ossian's mountains—those mists which gather over the feathery foam of the torrents of Arven, gradually thicken, and seem to be swollen and increased, as they rise, by an innumerable host of phantoms, whirled and twisted by the winds. These are warriors, with the helmet still upon their heads, who are incessantly musing, and whose tears and blood fall drop by drop into the black waters of the rocks : they are pale beauties, whose long hair streams behind like the tail of a distant comet ; they pass swiftly by, and their feet, shrouded in the vapoury folds of their white robes, vanish ; they have no wings, and yet they fly. They fly, holding harps in their hands ; they fly with downcast eyes, and mouth half-open with innocence ; they utter a cry as they pass, and are lost, as they rise, in the mild light of the moon which calls them. They are aërial ships, which seem to run against dark shores, and to plunge into thick billows ; the mountains bow their crests to mourn them, and the blag dogs raise their deformed heads and howl long and loud, looking at the disk which trembles in the sky, while the sea shakes the white pillars of the Orkneys, which are ranged like the pipes of an immense organ, and fling over the ocean a stunning harmony that is a thousand times repeated in the cavern in which the waves are pent up.

The music was thus transformed into sombre images in my soul, still very young, open to all sympathies, and, as it were, enamoured of fictitious sorrows.

It was, however, but falling in with the idea of him who

had invented these sad and powerful songs, to feel them in that manner. The happy family itself experienced the strong emotion which it communicated, and a profound vibration sometimes made the three voices tremble.

The music ceased, and a long silence succeeded. The damsel, as if fatigued, had leant upon her father's shoulder: she was tall, slight, and somewhat bent, as if from weakness; she looked as if she had grown too fast, and her lungs seemed to be rather affected in consequence. She kissed her father's bald, broad, wrinkled brow, while she permitted the young sub-officer to take her hand and press it to his lips.

I took care, out of self-love, not to utter my secret thoughts; I contented myself with coolly saying:—"May Heaven grant long life and all sorts of blessings to those who have the gift of translating music literally! I cannot marvel enough at a man who finds in one symphony the fault of being too Cartesian, and in another that of leaning towards the system of Spinoza; who cries up the pantheism of a trio, and the utility of an overture to the improvement of the condition of the labouring classes. If I had the happiness to know how an additional B flat can render a quartett of flute and bassoons more a partisan of the Directory than of the Consulate and of the Empire, I would give up talking, I would do nothing but sing; I would trample upon words and phrases, which are fit at most for only about a hundred departments, while I should have the felicity of proclaiming my ideas in the clearest manner to the whole world with my seven notes. But, not possessing that science, my musical conversation would be so limited that the only course for me to take is to express to you in homely language, the gratification which I derive more especially from the sight of you and from that evident union of simplicity and goodness of heart which prevails in your family. In fact, that which most delights me in your little



concert is the pleasure that you take in it yourselves : your souls seem to me more harmonious than the most exquisite music that Heaven ever heard ascending to it from our wretched and ever-groaning earth."

I gave my hand, with emotion, to this good father, and he pressed it with the expression of cordial acknowledgment. He was but an old soldier, yet he had in his language and manners a certain tincture of the old *bon ton* of good society. This, the history which he afterwards gave me of his life, enabled me to account for.

"You see, lieutenant," said he to me, "the life that we lead here. We go to rest singing, my daughter, myself, and my future son-in-law." At the same time he cast upon the young people a look of affection beaming with happiness. "Here," he added, with a more serious look, pointing to a miniature, "is my daughter's mother."

We looked at the plastered and whitewashed wall of the humble apartment, and there we actually saw the most graceful and lovely peasant-girl to whom Greuze ever gave large blue eyes and cherry lips.

"It was a very great lady that formerly had the goodness to paint that portrait," said the Adjutant, "and a curious history it is, that of my poor dear wife's dowry."

And, on our first request that he would relate the history of his marriage, he thus commenced over three glasses of cider, which he took care previously and ceremoniously to offer us.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE CHILDREN OF MONTREUIL AND THE STONE MASON.

You must know, lieutenant, that I was brought up at Montreuil by Monsieur le Curé of Montreuil himself. He had taught me a few notes of music in the happiest time of my life,

the time when I was a singing boy, had plump red cheeks, which everybody patted as they passed, a clear voice, light powdered hair, a round frock, and wooden shoes. I do not often look at myself, but I don't imagine that I have now much resemblance to that picture. Such however I was then ; and I never liked to leave a sort of harpsichord, a crazy instrument, and sadly out of tune, which the old Curé had in his house. I tuned it as well as a tolerably good ear enabled me ; and the good Father, who had formerly gained some reputation at Notre Dame for singing and teaching church music, made me learn my gamut.

When he was satisfied with me, he used to pinch my cheeks till they turned black, and say to me : " I'll tell thee what, Mathurin, thou art but the child of peasants, but if thou learnest thy catechism and thy gamut properly, and wilt give up playing with that rusty gun in the kitchen, we may make a music-master of thee, after all. Go thy ways." This gave me courage ; and I used to thump away with both fists at the poor harpsichord, almost all the keys of which were mute.

There were hours when I had permission to walk and run about ; but my favourite recreation was to go and sit down at the farther end of the park of Montreuil, and eat my piece of bread with the masons and workmen, who were building, by command of the Queen, a little music pavilion, on the avenue to Versailles, about a hundred paces from the barrier.

It was a charming spot, which you may see on the right of the Versailles road, just as you get there. Quite at the extremity of the park of Montreuil, in the middle of a lawn surrounded with tall trees ; if you perceive a pavilion that looks like a mosque, or a *bonbonnière*, that is what I went to see them building.

I took with me by the hand a little girl of my own age, called Pierrette, whom Monsieur le Curé taught to sing too, because she had a pretty voice. She used to carry with her

a large tart, that was given to her by her mother, who was the Curé's housekeeper ; and we went to look at the men at work on the building erecting for the Queen, who meant to give it to Madame.

At this time, Pierrette and I were about thirteen. She was already so handsome that people would stop by the way to pay her compliments ; and I have even seen fine ladies alight from their carriages to talk to her and to kiss her.

When she had on a red frock, pulled up through the pocket-holes, and made to sit tight round the waist, it was easy to see how handsome she was likely to be some day. She thought nothing about that herself, and she was as fond of me as if I had been her brother.

From our earliest childhood, we always held each other by the hand when we went abroad ; and such was the force of this habit, that in all my life I never gave her my arm. Our custom of going to look at the workmen brought us acquainted with a young stonemason, older than ourselves by eight or ten years. He made us sit down on a block, or on the ground, beside him, and when he had a great stone to saw, Pierrette threw water on the saw, and I laid hold of it at the other end to help him ; and so we came to be the best friends in the world. He was a lad of a mild, quiet disposition, sometimes disposed to mirth, but not often. He had made a little song upon the stones which he cut, and on their being harder than Pierrette's heart ; and he played off such whimsical conceits on the words Pierre (stone), and Pierrette, as made us all three laugh heartily.

He was a tall youth, still growing, pale and awkward, with long arms and legs, and sometimes he seemed to be thinking of something else than what he was doing. He liked his trade, he said, because he could earn his living at it, while thinking of other things till sunset. His father, an architect, had so thoroughly ruined himself, I know not how, that the son took up his business from the beginning, and submitted

very quietly to his lot. When he was cutting a great block, or sawing it lengthwise, he always began a little song containing a complete story, which he put together as he went on, in twenty or thirty stanzas, more or less.

Sometimes he told me to walk before him with Pierrette, and he made us sing together, teaching us to sing in parts; then he amused himself by making me kneel before Pierrette, with my hand on my heart; and he composed the words of a little scene, which he made us repeat after him. But, for all this, he understood his business well; and he was not at it a year before he set up for master-mason. With his square and his mallet, he had to support his poor mother and his two little brothers, who sometimes went with us to see him work. When he saw all his little folks round him, the sight gave him courage and spirits. We called him Michel, but, to confess the truth to you at once, his proper name was Michel Jean Sedaine.

“Alas!” said I, “there is a poet in his right place!”

The young female and the sub-officer looked at one another, as if vexed at my having interrupted their good father; but the worthy Adjutant, after pulling up first on one side and then on the other the black cravat that he wore folded over a white one, and tied in the military fashion, proceeded as follows.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### THE LADY IN PINK.

THERE is nothing of which I am more firmly convinced, said he, turning towards his daughter, than the care which Providence has been pleased to take to compose my life in the way that it has been composed. Amidst the numberless storms that have shaken it, I can declare, in the face of the

whole world, that I have never failed to trust in God, and to expect help from Him, after I have done all in my power to help myself. Hence, I tell you, when walking upon the agitated waves, I have not deserved to be called *man of little faith*, as the Apostle was; for when my feet sank, my eyes were lifted up, and I was relieved.

Here I looked at Timoleon. "What a lesson for us!" I whispered. He proceeded.

Monsieur le Curé of Montreuil was very fond of me. He treated me with such parental kindness, that I entirely forgot, though he was so frequently telling me, that I was the child of poor peasants, who had been carried off nearly at the same time by the small-pox, and whom I never had so much as seen. At sixteen, I was wild and stupid: but I had learned a little Latin, a good deal of music, and was found tolerably clever at all kinds of gardening work. My life passed on very happily, because Pierrette was always there, and I kept my eyes constantly on her while I was at work, but yet without saying a great deal to her.

One day, I was cutting boughs from one of the beeches in the park, and tying them up into a small faggot, when Pierrette said to me: "Oh, Mathurin, I am so frightened! Look at those two fine ladies coming towards us from the end of the alley. What shall we do?"

I looked, and sure enough there were two young ladies, walking at a great rate over the dry leaves, without holding each other by the arm. One of them was rather taller than the other, and wore a pink silk dress. Her walk was almost a run; while the other, though accompanying her, was a little behind. From instinct, I was as much frightened as Pierrette, poor young clown as I was, and I said to her: "Let us run away!"

But, pooh! we had no time; and I was still worse frightened to see the lady in the pink dress make a sign to Pierrette, who turned quite red, and durst not stir, but laid



hold of my hand quick, to keep up her courage. I, for my part, pulled off my cap, and clapped my back against the tree, quite aghast.

When the lady in pink had reached us, she went right up to Pierrette, and without ceremony chucked her under the chin, holding up her face to the other lady, saying: "Did I not tell you so, eigh! why it is precisely my milk-maid's costume for Thursday! . . . . What a pretty girl! . . . . My dear, you will give all your clothes, such as these, to the people whom I shall send for them, will you not? You shall have mine in exchange."

"Oh, madame!" said Pierrette, starting back.

The other young lady then began to smile with a look of such touching sweetness, tenderness, and melancholy, that I shall never forget it. She stepped up, and, gently taking Pierrette by the bare arm, she told her to come nearer, and said it was the duty of everybody to do what that lady desired.

"Don't make the least change in thy dress, my pretty girl," said the lady in pink, shaking at her a little gold-headed cane which she held in her hand. "There is a strapping lad who shall be a soldier, and I will have you married."

She was so handsome that I well remember the inconceivable temptation I felt to fall on my knees. You will laugh at this, as I have often inwardly laughed at myself; but had you seen her you would comprehend what I mean. She looked just like a good, kind fairy.

She spoke in a brisk, lively manner, and, giving Pierrette a little pat on the cheek, she left us there, both thunder-struck, both stupified, and not knowing what to do. We watched the two ladies follow the alley leading to Montreuil, till we lost sight of them behind the little wood in the park.

We then looked at one another, and, still holding each other by the hand, we returned to Monsieur le Curé's. We

said nothing, but we were in high glee. Pierrette was quite red, while I hung down my head. He asked us what was the matter. I said to him very seriously: "Monsieur le Curé, I will be a soldier."

He was well nigh upset—he who had taught me the gamut.

"What! my dear child," said he, "dost thou wish to leave me? Ah! good God! Pierrette, what has happened to him that he wants to be a soldier? Dost thou no longer love me, Mathurin? Dost thou no longer love Pierrette either? Say, what have we done to thee? and why wouldst thou throw away the good education that I have given thee? That would be time wasted, most assuredly. Answer me, then, good-for-nothing boy!" added he, shaking me by the arm.

I scratched my head, and, still looking down at my wooden shoes, I merely said: "I will be a soldier."

Pierrette's mother brought Monsieur le Curé a large tumbler of cold water, because he had turned quite red, and she burst out a-crying. Pierrette cried too, and durst not say anything; but she was not angry with me, because she well knew that, if I wanted to go, it was only that I might marry her.

At that moment, two tall powdered footmen entered with a waiting woman, who looked like a great lady, and inquired if the girl had got the things ready, as the Queen and the Princess Lamballe had desired her to do.

The poor Curé rose so agitated that he could not keep on his legs for a minute, and Pierrette and her mother trembled so violently that they durst not open a little box sent to them in exchange for Pierrette's dress, and they went to look up the things with much the same feeling as a man goes to be shot.

When left alone with me, the Curé asked me what had passed, and I told him nearly as I have told you, but somewhat more briefly.

"And is it for this that thou wouldst leave me, my child?"

said he, taking both my hands. "But consider that if the greatest lady in Europe has talked thus to a poor peasant boy like thee, it was only in jest, and that she will never think more of what she has said to thee. If any one were to tell her that thou hast taken this for an order or for a horoscope, she would say thou art a stupid blockhead, and that thou mayst be a gardener all thy life, for aught she cares. Whatever thou earnest by gardening, whatever thou mayst earn by teaching vocal music, shall be thine, my friend; whereas, what thou wilt earn in a regiment will not belong to thee, and thou wilt have a thousand occasions to spend it in pleasures forbidden by morality and religion; thou wilt lose all the virtuous principles that I have instilled into thee, and thou wilt force me to be ashamed of thee. Thou wilt return—if thou dost ever return—with a different character from that which thou receivedst at thy birth. Thou wast gentle, modest, docile; thou wilt be rough, impudent, and dissolute. Little Pierrette will certainly not submit to be the wife of a rake, and her mother will not let her if she would; and I, what could I do for thee, if thou utterly forgettest Providence? Thou wilt forget Providence, seest thou? To this pass, I assure thee, thou wilt come."

Still I remained with my eyes fixed on my shoes, my brows knitted, my lip pouting. Scratching my head, I once more said: "I don't care—I will be a soldier."

The good Curé's patience was exhausted, and, opening the door quite wide, he pointed to the high road with evident sorrow. I understood the pantomime, and departed. Had I been in his place, I should assuredly have done the same. But I think so now; then I did not think at all. I stuck my cotton cap over my right ear, I pulled up the collar of my smock-frock, I took my stick, and away I went straight to a little pot-house, in the avenue to Versailles, without bidding adieu to a creature.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE FIRST RANK POSITION.

IN this little public-house I found three brave fellows in gold-laced hats, white uniform turned up with pink, blackened moustaches, hair all bepowdered like hoar-frost, and whose tongues went as fast as an auctioneer's. These three brave fellows were an honest recruiting party. They told me that I had nothing to do but to sit down and dine with them, to have a correct idea of the perfect happiness that was invariably enjoyed in the Royal Auvergne. They made me eat along with them venison, chicken, and partridge, and drink claret and champagne, and excellent coffee; they swore to me upon their honour, that, in the Royal Auvergne, I should never have any other. I found in the sequel that they told me the truth.

They swore roundly too—for with them almost every word was an oath—that in the Royal Auvergne every man could do just what he pleased; that the common soldiers belonging to it were incomparably better off than the captains of other regiments; that they enjoyed the most agreeable society not only as to men, but also that of fine ladies; that they had plenty of music, and above all that any one who could play on the piano was sure to be made much of. This last circumstance decided me.

On the following day, then, I had the honour to be a soldier in the Royal Auvergne. It was a very fine regiment, it is true, but I saw neither Pierrette nor Monsieur le Curé. I asked for a chicken for dinner, and they gave me in its stead that savoury medley of potatoes, mutton, and bread, which is commonly called an Irish stew. They made me learn the position of the soldier without arms to such a degree of perfection that I afterwards served for the model to the artist who made the drawings for the plates to the ordinance of

1791, an ordinance which you know, lieutenant, is a masterpiece of precision. I was taught the manual and platoon exercise, so as to be able to execute charges in twelve different sorts of time as perfectly as the stiffest of the corporals of that King of Prussia, whom the old soldiers still remembered with the affection of men that are fond of those from whom they have received a sound drubbing. They even did me the honour to promise me that, if I behaved well, I should be admitted by-and-by into the first grenadier company. I soon had a powdered tail that hung down nobly enough over my white vest; but I saw nothing of Pierrette, or of her mother, or of Monsieur le Curé; and, as for music, I never touched an instrument.

One fine day, when I was on duty at these very barracks where we now are, because I had made three blunders in the exercise, I was placed in the position of the first rank for firing, one knee on the pavement, facing a magnificent broiling sun, which I was forced to take aim at, absolutely motionless, till very weariness made my arms sink, and I was encouraged to support my piece by the presence of an honest corporal, who, from time to time, raised my bayonet with the butt-end of his piece when it sank too low: this was a little punishment invented by M. de Saint Germain.

I had been twenty minutes striving to attain the highest possible degree of petrification in this attitude, when I saw at the end of my piece the kind, good-humoured face of my old friend Michel, the stone-cutter.

“Thou art come just at the right time, my friend,” said I to him; “thou wouldst do me a great service, by holding thy cane for a moment under my bayonet, if thou canst do it without being noticed. It would relieve my arms a little, and thy cane would be none the worse for it.”

“Ah, my friend, Mathurin,” said he, “thou art severely punished for leaving Montreuil! Thou hast now neither the advice nor the lessons of the good Curé, and thou wilt



entirely forget the music of which thou wert so fond, and which that of the parade will certainly not make amends for."

"I don't care," said I, raising the end of my pipe, and disengaging it from his cane, out of pride; "I don't care; every one has his whim."

"Thou wilt never more train the espaliers and raise beautiful peaches at Montreuil along with thy Pierrette, who is almost as ruddy as they, and whose lip is covered with a down as soft as theirs."

"I don't care," I repeated; "it is my whim."

"Thou wilt have to pass a long time on thy knees, firing at nothing, with a wooden flint, before thou art merely corporal."

"I don't care," said I again; "if my promotion is slow, at any rate I am certain to be promoted. He is sure to have luck who can wait long enough for it, as they say; and when I am sergeant, I shall be somebody, and then I'll marry Pierrette. A sergeant is a gentleman, let me tell you."

Michel sighed. "Ah, Mathurin, Mathurin!" said he, "thou art a simpleton, and thou hast too much pride and ambition, my friend. Shouldst thou not like to be released, if somebody would pay for a substitute for thee, and to come and marry thy little Pierrette?"

"Michel, Michel," said I, "thou art sadly spoiled in the world. I know not what thou canst be at; for thy appearance tells me that thou art not a mason now, since thou wearest a fine black coat instead of a working jacket: but thou wouldst not have talked thus to me at the time when thou wert continually repeating, 'Every man must carve out his own lot.' . . . For my part, I am determined not to marry her with any other person's money, and I am carving out my own lot, as thou seest . . . Besides, it was the Queen who put this into my head, and what the Queen judges right to be done, must be right. She said herself: 'He shall be a soldier, and I will have you

married,' and not, 'He shall come back after he has been a soldier.'"

"But," said Michel, "if it should so happen that the Queen were pleased to give you wherewithal to marry, would you take it?"

"No, Michel, I would not take her money, if, which is not possible, she were to offer it."

"And if Pierrette were to earn her dowry herself?" he rejoined.

"Why, then, Michel, I would marry her immediately," said I.

The good fellow seemed much affected.

"Well," he replied, "I will tell the Queen that."

"Art thou mad?" said I to him; "or perhaps thou belongest to the household?"

"Neither the one nor the other, Mathurin, though I have given up stone-cutting."

"What dost thou cut then?" I asked.

"Why, I cut paper, pens—I cut out plays."

"Pshaw!" said I, "is it possible?"

"Yes, my lad, I write little plays, that are very simple and easy to understand. You shall see them by-and-by."

"In fact," said Timoleon, interrupting the Adjutant, "honest Sedaine's works are not constructed upon very difficult questions; there you find no synthesis on the finite and the infinite, on final causes, on the association of ideas, or personal identity; there is no putting to death of kings and queens by poison or the scaffold; there you see no affectation of sonorous names, but such as *Blaise*, *L'Agneau perdu*, *Le Déserteur*, or *Le Jardinier et son Seigneur*, *La Gageure imprévue*; the *dramatis personæ* are simple creatures, who talk the language of truth and nature, who

are *philosophers without knowing it*, like Sedaine himself, a writer whom I rate far higher than the public has done."

I made no reply.

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The Adjutant resumed.

"Ah! so much the better," said I. "I like to see you at that kind of work just as well as stone-cutting."

"Nay," said he, "what I then built was more solid than what I am now constructing. That did not go out of fashion, and would remain standing a longer time. But, if it fell, it was liable to crush somebody: whereas this that I am about now, when it falls, neither hurts nor harms any one."

"No matter, I am very glad of it," said I.

Or rather, I would have said; for the corporal came and gave my friend Michel's cane such a furious blow with the butt-end of his piece, that he sent it down yonder, look you, yonder, close to the powder-magazine. At the same time, he ordered the sentry who had suffered a civilian to enter to be put under arrest for six days.

Sedaine was aware that it was high time for him to be gone. He quietly picked up his cane, and as he went off towards the side next the wood, he called out to me: "I assure thee, Mathurin, that I will tell all this to the Queen."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### A SITTING.

MY little Pierrette was a pretty girl, of a decided character, but calm and firm. She was not very easily disconcerted, and, ever since she had talked to the Queen, it was a difficult matter to make her learn her lessons; she had no hesitation to tell Monsieur le Curé and her mother that she

meant to be married to Mathurin, and she would get up at night to make things for the wedding, just as if I had not been turned out of doors for a long time, if not for my whole life.

One day, it was Easter Monday—poor Pierrette always remembered that, and she often told me the story—one day, then, as she was sitting at Monsieur le Curé's door, working and singing as if nothing was the matter, she saw a beautiful carriage coming at a great rate along the avenue. It was drawn by six horses, two of which were ridden by two little postilions, powdered, and in pink jackets, very handsome, and so small, that at a distance nothing could be seen of them but their great jack-boots. They had large nosegays at their bosoms; and the horses, too, had large nosegays at their ears,

Sure enough, the outrider, who scampered before the horses, stopped right before Monsieur le Curé's door; where, a moment afterwards, the carriage too thought fit to draw up, and the door was thrown wide open. There was nobody in it. Pierrette was staring at it with all her eyes, when the outrider, taking off his hat very politely, requested her to have the goodness to step into the carriage.

Do you imagine that Pierrette made any ceremony? Not she, indeed; she had too much good sense for that. She merely took off her wooden shoes, which she left on the step at the door, put on her leather shoes with silver buckles, neatly folded up her work, and got into the carriage, leaning upon the arm of the footman, as if she had never done anything else in her life; because, since she had changed dresses with the Queen, she was afraid of nothing.

She often told me, though, that she got two great frights in the carriage: the first, because it went so quick that the trees in the avenue of Montreuil seemed to run like mad one after the other; and the second, because she thought, by sitting on the white cushions in the carriage, her blue and yellow petticoat would leave marks of its colours upon

them. She therefore pulled it through her pocket-holes, and kept just on the edge of the cushion, feeling no sort of anxiety about what was to happen, and rightly guessing that, under such circumstances, it is best to do what one is desired frankly and without hesitation.

Agreeably to this just feeling of her situation, imparted by a happy, kindly disposition, inclining in everything to what was right and true, she cheerfully took the arm of the outrider, and suffered him to conduct her to Trianon, into the gilded apartments; where, however, she was careful to step on her toes, to spare the floors of citron and India woods, which she was afraid of scratching with the nails.

When she reached the last apartment, she heard a joyous laugh of two very sweet voices, which daunted her a little, and set her heart a-throbbing with violence; but, on entering, she recovered herself immediately; it was only her friend, the Queen. Madame de Lamballe was with her, but seated in the embrasure of a window, and having the materials for miniature painting before her. On the green cloth that covered her table lay a piece of ivory, ready prepared; close to the ivory lay brushes, and near the brushes stood a glass of water.

“ Ah, there she is!” said the Queen, with a holyday look; and she ran and laid hold of both her hands.

“ What a colour she has! and how handsome she is! What a pretty model she will make for you. Come, Madame de Lamballe, do your best . . . Sit down here, my dear.”

And the beautiful Marie Antoinette made her sit down in a chair. Pierrette was quite thunderstruck, and her chair was so high that her little legs did not reach the floor, but dangled to and fro.

“ Only see how well she behaves!” continued the Queen: “ she does not need telling twice to do what you wish; I would lay a wager that she is clever. Sit upright, my dear,



and mind what I am going to say. Two gentlemen will be here presently. Whether thou knowest them or not, that does not signify, and must not make any difference to thee. Thou wilt do all that they tell thee to do. I know that thou canst sing, so thou wilt sing. When they tell thee to come in, to go out, to walk this way or that, thou wilt come in, go out, walk to and fro, exactly as they bid thee; dost thou comprehend? All this will be for thy good. This lady and I will help to teach thee something that I thoroughly understand; and for our pains, we will only ask thee to sit an hour every day to her—that will not be too hard for thee, will it?"

Pierrette made no reply but by changing colour at every word; but she was so pleased that she would have liked to kiss the dear Queen, as though she had been her playfellow.

While she was thus sitting, with her eyes turned towards the door, she saw two men come in; one was fat, and the other tall. The moment she saw the tall one, she could not help crying out, "Why, that is . . ." but she bit her finger to stop her mouth.

"Well, what think you of her, gentlemen?" said the Queen. "Am I wrong?"

"Is it not Rose herself?" said Sedaine.

"A single note, Madam," said the lusty gentleman, "and I shall know whether it is Monsigny's Rose as well as Sedaine's."

"Come, my dear, repeat these notes," added Gretry, singing *ut, ré, mi, fa, sol*.

Pierrette repeated them.

"She has a divine voice, Madam," said he.

The Queen clapped her hands and leaped for joy.

"She will earn her dowry!" said she.

## CHAPTER IX.

## A CAPITAL HOUSE.

HERE the honest Adjutant sipped a little of his cider, inviting us to follow his example, and, having wiped his white moustaches with a red handkerchief, and turned it for a moment in his clumsy fingers, he thus proceeded.

If I knew, lieutenant, how to contrive surprizes, so as they are contrived in books, and to make my auditors wait for the end of a story, while holding the sweetmeat up high, then letting them touch it with the tip of their lips, then holding it up again, and at last popping the whole of it into their mouths, I would devise some new method of telling you the remainder of this : but, as I am only a plain man, and have gone straight-forward all my life, I shall say that, from the day my poor friend Michel came to see me here at Vincennes, and found me in the first rank position, I began to fall away in a ridiculous manner, because I never heard a word about our little family at Montreuil, and I was ready to think that Pierrette had entirely forgotten me. The regiment of Auvergne had been at Orleans for three months, and I began to feel home-sick. I was visibly turning yellow, and I could scarcely carry my musket. My comrades began to show a great contempt for me, as is always the case here, you know, when one is ill.

There were some who despised me because they believed me to be very ill, others because they maintained that I only shammed illness ; and in the latter case, I had no alternative but to die to prove that I told the truth—not being able to get well at once, nor being so ill as to be forced to keep my bed, a most unpleasant situation.

One day, an officer of my company came to me and said, “ Mathurin, thou canst read, come and read this.”

So he took me to the Place de Jeanne d’Arc, a place that

is dear to me, and I read a large posting-bill of the theatre which was to this effect :

“BY ORDER.

“Next Monday, extraordinary representation of *IRENE*, a new play by *M. DE VOLTAIRE*, and of *ROSE AND COLAS*, by *M. SEDAINE*, music by *M. de Monsigny*, for the benefit of *Mademoiselle Colombe*, a celebrated singer of the Italian Comedy, who will appear in the second piece. *HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN* has been graciously pleased to promise that she would honour the performance with her presence.”

“Well, captain,” said I, “how can that concern me?”

“Thou art a good fellow,” said he, “thou art a comely lad: I will have thee powdered and frizzed to make thee look genteel, and thou shalt be placed at the door of the Queen’s box.”

What he said was done. The hour for the play having arrived, there was I in the corridor, in the gala dress of the Auvergne regiment, on a blue carpet, among wreaths of flowers, hung everywhere in festoons, and lilies placed upon every step of the staircase of the theatre. The manager ran bustling about, first one way and then another, with a joyous look. He was a short, thick-set, ruddy-faced man, dressed in a sky-blue coat, with an enormous frill. He was flying about in all directions, and incessantly running to the window, saying: “That is the livery of Madame the Duchess de Montmorency; this is Monsieur the Duke de Lauzun’s running footman; Monsieur the Prince de Guéméné has just arrived; M. de Lambesc is coming next. Have you seen?—do you know?—how kind the Queen is! how very kind!”

And so he hurried backward and forward, looking for Gretry, and he met him full-butt in the corridor, exactly facing me.

“Tell me, Monsieur Gretry, my dear Monsieur Gretry, tell me, I beseech you, if it be not possible for me to speak to this celebrated singer whom you have brought. To be

sure, it is not right for an ignorant and illiterate man like me to raise the slightest doubt of her talents; but still I should like to learn from you if there is not reason to apprehend that the Queen may be dissatisfied."

"Hey-day," replied Gretry, with a sort of jeering look, "it is difficult for me to give you an answer on that subject, my dear sir; but one thing I can assure you, and that is that you will not see her. An actress like that, sir, is a spoiled child. But you shall see her when she comes upon the stage. Besides, should she even prove not to be Mademoiselle Colombe, what difference does that make to you?"

"What, sir," replied he, swelling his cheeks, "I, the manager of the Orleans theatre, not have a right . . . ."

"No right whatever, my worthy manager," said Gretry. "Why, how is it possible that you should be for a moment doubtful of talents, which Sedaine and I have answered for?" continued he with a more serious look.

I was much pleased to hear that name mentioned with authority, and I listened with more attention. The manager, like a man who knows his business, was anxious to profit by the circumstance.

"But am I then to be considered as nobody?" said he. "What do I look like? I have lent my theatre with infinite pleasure, too happy to see the illustrious princess, who . . . ."

"By the bye," said Gretry, "you know that I am commissioned to inform you that the Queen will send you to-night a sum equal to half the total receipts."

The manager, stepping back, made a very low bow, with a look which proved what pleasure the intimation gave him.

"Nay, nay, sir, I say nothing about that, notwithstanding the respect with which I shall receive this favour: but you have not held out a hope to me of some production of your genius and . . . ."

“ You know there has been some talk about you for manager of the Italian Comedy in Paris ?”

“ No sure, M. Gretry !”

“ At court, people talk of scarcely anything but your abilities ; everybody there has the highest regard for you, and it is on this account that the Queen wished to see your theatre. A manager is the soul, the vivifying principle of everything : from him emanates the genius of authors, composers, actors, scene-painters, lamp-lighters, and sweepers ; this the Queen is well aware of. You have trebled the price of places, I hope ?”

“ Better than that, Monsieur Gretry—none to be had under a louis. I could not be so deficient in respect to the court, as to let them go for less.”

At this moment, the whole house rang with the loud tramp of horses and vehement shouts of joy, and the Queen came in so quick that I had scarcely time to present arms, any more than the sentinel placed opposite to me. Fine perfumed gentlemen followed her, and a young lady, whom I knew to be the same that accompanied her to Montreuil.

The play began immediately. *Le Kain* and five other actors of the *Comédie Française* had come to perform the tragedy of *Irene*, and I perceived that this tragedy was still going on, because the Queen talked and laughed the whole time that it lasted. The spectators did not applaud, out of respect for her, as it is still customary, I believe, at court. But when the comic opera began, she said not a word, and not a creature breathed in her box.

All at once I heard a loud female voice, which rose from the stage and thrilled my very vitals. I trembled, and was obliged to support myself with my firelock. There was but one voice like that in the world, a voice coming from the heart, and vibrating in the heart like a harp—a voice of passion.

Clapping my ear to the door, I listened, and, through the



gauze curtain of the little window to the box, I got a glimpse of the actors and of the piece that they were playing. There was a young girl who sang :

A little ash-gray bird there was,  
No bigger than a mouse,  
And she to lodge her little ones,  
Made them a tiny house.

And she said to her lover :

Love me, love me, my pretty little king.

And as he sat on the window, she was afraid lest her father, who was asleep, should wake up and see Colas, and she changed the burden of her song, and said :

Ah ! hold up your legs that they may not be seen.

An extraordinary shiver seized every limb of me when I saw how exactly this Rose was like Pierrette : it was her height, her very dress, her red and blue frock, her white petticoat, her calm and natural look, her well turned leg, her red and blue stockings, and her little shoes with silver buckles.

“ Good God ! ” said I, “ how clever these actresses must be to take thus all at once the look of others ! There is that famous Mademoiselle Colombe, who lives in a grand house, who keeps several servants, who goes about in Paris dressed like a duchess, and who has travelled post to Orleans ; and for all that she is the very picture of Pierrette ; but it is not Pierrette, that one may see at a single glance. My poor Pierrette did not sing so well, though she had quite as good a voice.”

Still I could not forbear looking through the glass, and there I stood till the door was suddenly thrown back in my face. The Queen was too warm, and had desired it to be opened. I heard her voice ; she spoke fast and loud.

“ I am quite delighted ; the King will be highly amused

at our adventure. Let the first gentleman of the bed-chamber tell Mademoiselle Colombe that she shall not repent having allowed me to make use of her name . . . Oh ! how this amuses me !”

“My dear princess,” said she to Madame de Lamballe, “we have caught all the world here. And all of them are doing a good action without being aware of it. And see, the honest people of the good city of Orleans are enchanted with the great singer, and the whole court would fain applaud. Yes, yes, let us applaud.”

At the same time, she gave the signal for applause, and all the spectators, having their hands untied, did not suffer a word to be uttered by Rose without applauding with a vehemence that seemed ready to bring the house down about their ears. The charming Queen was transported.

“Here,” said she to M. de Biron, “are three thousand enamoured swains ; it is not with me that they are in love this time, but with Rose.”

The piece ended, and the ladies showered down their bouquets upon Rose.

“And the real lover, where is he then?” said the Queen to the Baron de Lauzun. He left the box and made a sign to my captain, who was sauntering about in the corridor.

The trembling seized me again. I felt that something was going to happen to me, without daring to foresee, or to comprehend, or merely to think of it.

My captain made a low obeisance, and talked in an undertone with M. de Lauzun. The Queen looked at me ; I propped myself against the wall, lest I should sink. I heard the sound of feet coming up-stairs, and I saw Sedaine, followed by Gretry and the self-important and stupid manager, leading to me Pierrette, the real Pierrette, my own Pierrette, my sister, my wife, my Pierrette of Montreuil !

The manager called out at a distance : “A capital house ! not less than eighteen thousand francs !”

The Queen turned round, and, talking from her box, with a look at once full of frank cheerfulness and kindness, she took the hand of Pierrette. "Come, my dear," said she, "there is no other profession by which a girl can earn a dowry in an hour in an innocent way. To-morrow, I will take back my pupil to Monsieur le Curé, who will absolve both of us, I hope. He will certainly forgive thee for having played a part once in thy life; 'tis the least that an honest woman can do."

She then made an obeisance to me, to me, who was half dead already. What cruelty!

"I hope," said she, "that M. Mathurin will now condescend to accept Pierrette's fortune. I shall add nothing to it; she has earned it all herself."

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## CHAPTER X.

### CONCLUSION OF THE ADJUTANT'S HISTORY.

HERE the good Adjutant rose and took up the portrait, which he made us once more hand from one to the other.

"There she is," said he, "in the very same dress, with that cap, and that handkerchief about her neck; there she is, just as Madame the Princess de Lamballe was pleased to paint her.—'Tis thy mother," said he, to the fair girl who stood near him, at the same time seating her on his knee; "she never acted the play again, though," added he; "for she never knew any other part but that in *Rose and Colas*, taught her by the Queen."

He was affected. His old white moustaches trembled a little, and a tear hung upon them.

"Here is a girl," he resumed, "who killed her poor mother in bringing her into the world: one must be very fond of her to forgive her for it. But, to be sure, everything

is not given to us at once. This would apparently have been too much for me, since Providence was not pleased to grant it. I have since rolled with the cannon of the Republic and of the Empire; and I can say, that, from Marengo to the Moscowa, I have seen capital affairs, but I never passed a happier day in my life than the one of which I have given you an account. That on which I entered into the Royal Guard was also one of the best. Ah! with what joy I mounted once more the white cockade which I had worn in the Royal Auvergne! . . . and then! lieutenant, I am very anxious to do my duty, as you have seen. I verily believe that I should die with shame, if, to-morrow, at the inspection, there should be found a deficiency of a single barrel; and I do think, that, at the last exercises, one was taken for the cartridges of the infantry. I should almost be tempted to go and see, were we not forbidden to enter the place with a light."

We begged him to make himself easy and to stay with his children, who dissuaded him from his intention; and, while finishing his glass, he related to us a few other indifferent circumstances of his life. He had never obtained promotion, because he had been too much attached to his regiment, and too fond of the *corps d'élite*. Gunner in the consular guard, sergeant in the imperial guard, had always appeared to him higher grades than officer in the line. I have seen many such fixtures. For the rest, all the distinctions that a soldier can have, he had: *fusil d'honneur*, with silver ferules to the ramrod, cross of honour with a pension, and especially noble certificate of service, in which the column specifying the occasions on which he had distinguished himself was quite full. About that, however, he said not a word.

It was two in the morning. We broke up the party by rising and cordially shaking hands with this excellent man; and we left him happy in the emotions of his life,

which his story had renewed in his honest and affectionate soul.

“How often,” said I, “does this old soldier, with his resignation, surpass us young officers, with our mad ambition!” This furnished us with matter for reflection.

“Yes, I really believe,” continued I, as we crossed the little bridge, which was raised after us—“I really believe that in these times there is nothing more pure than the soul of such a soldier, scrupulous in regard to his honour, and deeming it sullied by the slightest spot of indiscipline or negligence; without ambition, without vanity, without luxury, ever a slave, and ever proud and contented with his Servitude.”

“And believing that Providence keeps an eye upon him!” said Timoleon, with an air which showed how powerfully he was struck by this sentiment, and leaving me to retire to his own apartment.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### THE ALARM.

I HAD been asleep about an hour: it was four in the morning, and the 17th of August; I shall never forget that day! Suddenly, both my windows flew open at once, and all their broken panes fell into my chamber with a sharp silvery sound, very pretty to hear. I opened my eyes and saw a white smoke, which slowly entered and came up to my bed, forming a thousand wreaths. I began to look at it in some astonishment, and quickly recognized it from its colour and its smell.

I ran to the window. Day began to dawn, and tinged with a faint light the whole of the old castle, still motionless, silent, and seemingly stunned by the first blow which it had



just received. I saw nothing stirring. Only the old grenadier, placed on the rampart, and locked up there, according to custom, was walking very fast, his piece upon his arm, looking at something towards the courts. He stalked along like a caged lion.

Everything was still quiet; I began to think that the trying of cannon in the fossés had been the cause of this commotion, when a still more violent explosion took place. At the same moment I saw a sun, which was not that of the firmament, rising above the last tower towards the wood: its rays were red; at the extremity of each was a bomb, which burst, and before them a cloud of gunpowder. This time the keep, the barracks, the turrets, the ramparts, the village, and the wood shook, and seemed to slide from left to right and to slide back again, like a drawer that is quickly opened and shut. A smash, as if all the porcelain at Sèvres were thrown out of window, plainly intimated to me that, of all the glass in the chapel, in the castle, in the barracks, and in the village, not a bit was left adhering to the putty. The cloud of white smoke parted into small wreaths.

“It is excellent powder when it forms such crowns as these,” said Timoleon, entering my chamber dressed and armed.

“It seems to me that we are blowing up,” said I.

“I cannot contradict you,” replied he, coolly.

In three minutes I was, like him, dressed and armed, and we looked in silence at the silent old castle.

All at once, twenty drums beat to arms. The walls, roused from their stupefaction, called for assistance. The arms of the drawbridge began slowly to descend and let down their heavy chains on the other side of the fossé; this was to enable the officers to enter, and the inhabitants to go out. We ran to the portcullis; it opened to admit the strong, and to turn out the weak.

A singular sight struck us: all the women were crowding

to the gate, and, at the same time, all the horses of the garrison. From an unerring instinct of danger, they had broken their halters in the stables, or thrown off their riders, and waited, pawing the ground, till access to the fields should be opened to them. They ran through the courts, amidst the throng of women, neighing with fright, their manes bristling, their nostrils distended, their eyes red, rearing up on their hind legs against the walls, snuffing up the powder with horror, and burying their scorched noses in the sand.

A young and beautiful girl, rolled up in her bed-clothes, followed by her mother, half-dressed, and carried by a soldier, went out first, and the whole crowd poured after them. This appeared to me, at the moment, an absolutely useless precaution; not a spot within six leagues of the castle was safe.

We entered on the run, as did all the officers who lodged in the village. The first thing that struck me was the calm countenance of our old grenadiers of the guard on duty at the entrance. Leaning upon their grounded arms, they looked knowingly towards the powder-magazine, but without uttering a word or quitting the prescribed attitude, with the hand on the strap of the piece. My friend, Ernest d'Hanache, commanded them. He saluted us with the smile *à la Henri IV.*; which was natural to him. I gave him my hand. He was not destined to lose his life till the last disturbance in La Vendée, where he died nobly. All those whom I name in these yet recent recollections are already no more.

In running, I tripped against something that almost threw me down. It was a human foot. I could not forbear stopping to look at it.

"That is as your foot will be just now," said an officer to me as he passed, laughing heartily.

Nothing indicated that this foot had been covered with shoe or stocking. It looked as if it were embalmed and preserved in the same manner as mummies; it was broken off about two inches above the ankle, like the feet of statues

used for studies in artists' work-rooms, polished, veined like black marble, and having no flesh colour about it but at the nails. I had not time to make a drawing of it; I continued my run to the last court before the barracks.

There our men were waiting for us. In their first alarm, they had imagined that the castle was attacked; they had rushed from their beds to the arms' rack, and assembled in the court, most of them in their shirts only, with the musket on their arm. Nearly all had their feet covered with blood from being cut by the broken glass. They remained mute and motionless before a foe that was not human, and were heartily glad to see their officers coming to join them.

As for us, it was to the very crater of the volcano that we were hurrying. It was still smoking, and a third eruption was imminent. The small tower of the powder-magazine was gutted, and from its open flank a smoke was seen slowly issuing and eddying as it ascended.

Had all the powder in the turret exploded, or was there yet left enough to hurl us all to destruction? This was the question. But there was another that was not doubtful, namely, that all the artillery-waggons, laden and half-open in the next court, would be blown up, if but a single spark reached them; and that the keep, containing four hundred thousand pounds of powder for cannon, Vincennes, its wood, its town, its fields, and part of the faubourg St. Antoine, would form a jumble of stones, bricks, tiles, branches, mould, and human heads, though ever so firmly set upon their respective shoulders.

The best auxiliary that discipline can find is danger. When all run the same risk, every one is silent, and clings to the first man who gives a judicious order, or sets a salutary example.

The first who flew to the waggons was Timoleon. With the same serious and sedate look as usual, but with an agility that surprized me, he threw himself upon a wheel that was

taking fire. For want of water he extinguished it by smothering the fire with his coat and by pressing his body against it. At first, we gave him up for lost; but, on going to his assistance, we found the wheel charred, his coat burned, his left hand a little spotted with black; but in other respects his whole person uninjured. In a trice, all the waggons were dragged from the dangerous court, and hurried out of the fort into the plain of the polygon. Every gunner, every soldier, every officer, pulled, rolled, thrust, the formidable vehicles, with hands, feet, shoulders, or head.

The engines inundated the little powder-magazine through the black aperture in its bosom; it was cloven in all directions; twice it rocked to and fro; its flanks then burst like the bark of a huge tree, and, falling backward, it exhibited a sort of black and smoking furnace, in which the eye could not distinguish any known object; in which every engine of war, every projectile, was reduced to a reddish and gray powder, diluted with boiling water, a species of lava, in which blood, iron, and fire, were blended into a living mortar, and which ran out into the courts burning the grass in its way. This was the end of the danger: we had now to count our number and to ascertain our loss.

“They must have heard this in Paris,” said Timoleon, grasping my hand. “I will go and write to relieve her from any apprehensions. There is nothing more to do here.”

Without saying another word, away he went, to our little white house with green shutters, as though he was coming back from sporting.

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## CHAPTER XII.

## A DRAWING IN CRAYON.

WHEN dangers are over, we measure them, and find them to have been great. We are astonished at our good luck, and turn pale at the fear that we should have been justified in feeling; we congratulate ourselves on not having been surprised into any weakness, and a sort of calm, calculated horror creeps over us, to which, during the action, we were utter strangers.

Gunpowder, like lightning, performs incredible prodigies. The explosion had wrought miracles, not of force, but of address. It appeared to have measured its strokes, and to have taken its aim. It had said: I will carry away that, but not those things which are close to it. It had lifted from the ground an arcade of hewn stone, removed it entire and in its proper form, and set it down on the greensward in the fields, there to stand like a time-blackened ruin. It had buried three bombs six feet deep in the earth, ground pavements to dust under the cannon-balls, snapt a brass cannon in two, driven all the doors and windows into all the rooms, carried away the shutters from the attics of the great powder-magazine without a grain of its powder; it had rolled along ten thick stone posts, like overturned chess-men; it had broken the iron chains that fastened them together, as you would break a silken thread, and twisted their links as you would twist a bit of twine; it had ploughed up the court with broken gun-carriages, and enchased the pyramids of balls in the stones—and, under the nearest cannon to the destroyed magazine, it had left alive the white hen that we had noticed the preceding night. When this poor hen sallied forth unhurt from her lodging with her young brood, the cries of joy of our good soldiers greeted her as an old



friend, and they began to fondle her with the thoughtlessness of children.

She turned round clucking, collecting her little family, and still wearing her red top-knot and her silver collar. She seemed to be waiting for the master who had been accustomed to supply her with food, and ran wildly between our legs, surrounded by her chickens. In following her we came to a sight that made us shudder.

At the foot of the chapel lay the head and breast of the poor Adjutant, without body or arms. The foot against which I had stumbled on my first coming was his. No doubt, the unfortunate man had not been able to withstand the desire to inspect once more his barrels of powder and to count his bombs, and either the iron tips of his boots, or the rolling of a pebble, or some movement of something or other, had produced a spark and set fire to the whole.

His head and breast had been flung like a stone from a sling against the wall of the chapel, at the height of sixty feet, and the powder with which that frightful bust was impregnated had imprinted its form in a durable manner upon the wall at the foot of which it had fallen. Long did we contemplate it, and not a creature uttered a word of commiseration; perhaps because to pity him would have been to pity ourselves for having incurred the same danger. The surgeon in chief merely said:—"He suffered no pain."

For my part, he seemed to me to be still suffering; but, in spite of this, partly from an invincible curiosity, partly from bravado, I made a drawing of him.

Such is the state of things in a society from which sensibility is banished. That excess of force, by which we pretend to keep the character under constant control, is one of the bad sides of the military profession. We exercise ourselves in hardening our hearts, we steel our bosoms against pity, lest it should appear like weakness; we strive to conceal the divine feeling of compassion; without considering that,

in locking up a good sentiment too closely, we stifle the prisoner.

I felt myself at that moment most hateful. My young heart was wrung with grief at this disaster, and, with obstinate tranquillity, I nevertheless proceeded with the drawing, which I have preserved, and which sometimes fills me with remorse for having made it, and at others reminds me of the circumstances which I have just related, and of the modest life of this brave soldier.

That noble head was now but an object of horror, a sort of Medusa's head; its colour was that of black marble. The hair bristled up, the eyebrows were turned back against the forehead, the eyes shut, the mouth open, as if uttering a loud outcry. On that black bust was impressed terror at sight of the flames suddenly bursting forth. It was manifest that he had had time for this terror, rapid as gunpowder, and perhaps time for incalculable suffering.

“Had he time to think of Providence?” said the quiet voice of Timoleon d'Arc\*\*\*, who with an eye-glass was watching over my shoulder the progress of my drawing.

At the same moment, a jolly soldier, with ruddy face, light hair, and fair complexion, stooped down to take the black silk cravat from this smoky bust. “It is very good yet,” said he. He was an honest fellow of my company, named Muguet, who had two chevrons on his arm, was not troubled either with scruples or melancholy, but was, nevertheless, the best son in the world. This broke the thread of our ideas.

The loud tramp of horses at length roused us. It was the King. Louis XVIII. came, in an open carriage, to thank his guard for having preserved his old soldiers, and his old castle. He long surveyed the strange lithography on the wall. All the troops were drawn up. He raised his loud, clear voice to ask the *chef de bataillon* what officers or what soldiers had distinguished themselves.

“Every man has done his duty, sire !” was the simple reply of M. Fontanges, the most chivalrous and the most amiable officer I ever knew, a man of the world who has furnished me with the best idea of what might have been the manners of a Duke de Lauzun and a Chevalier Grammont.

Upon this the King took from his carriage, not crosses of honour, but rouleaux of gold, which he gave to be distributed among the soldiers, and, passing through Vincennes, he left it by the wooden gate.

The ranks were broken ; the explosion forgotten ; no one thought of being dissatisfied, or that he was more deserving than another. In fact, it was the crew saving the ship in order to save themselves—that was all. And yet I have since seen less bravery obtaining a superior reward.

I thought of the family of the poor Adjutant ; but nobody else thought of it. In general, when princes visit such a scene, they are gone again too quickly.

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## EDITOR'S REMARKS

ON

PARTS II. AND III.

I SHALL leave the second and third parts without particular notice, as to continue my remarks would make too large a volume. Suffice it to say, that the stories are amusing, but written apparently by a Bourbonist, who wishes to place the character of the Emperor Napoleon in a conciliating light, yet to do so without offending the veterans of his imperial army. If *their* feelings be like *mine*, the Author has failed ! With regard to the scene between the Emperor Napoleon and the Pope, two things are to be

admired: First, that Pope Pius VII. should venture to call the Emperor Napoleon a *Comedian* and a *Tragedian*, in contempt: Secondly, that Napoleon should agree to such a drivelling, and also avow himself to be devoured by *ennui*. Napoleon suffering from *ennui*! This scene can only be equalled by the assertion of M. de Ségur, that Napoleon was crazy at the battle of Borodino, and strutted up and down before his guards like an idiot: but, if this was true, who commanded the army for him in that great battle? I suppose it must have been M. de Ségur, but that his modesty prevented his mentioning the circumstance! What M. de Ségur's dislike to the Emperor arose from, I do not know, but it burns very fiercely through his History of the Russian Campaign. Captain Renaud (the hero of Count Alfred de Vigny's last story) is more explicit, and leaves nothing to conjecture. He shows that his dislike of the Emperor was natural: the Emperor (whom he calls a "poor ignoramus and a weak creature"—in which opinion, no doubt, the world must coincide) it seems, used to ask the Captain, when a boy, the simplest questions in geography, which he never could answer correctly. And then the "weak creature," the "ignoramus," laughed at him, and turned him into ridicule: and when the "weak creature" left the room, his page wept; thought he would kill himself; and rolled himself on the carpet, which was certainly a much more sensible act. This treatment, I confess, is likely to produce a hostile feeling in a sensitive youth, and excuses the after-prejudices of Captain Renaud against Napoleon; for my part, I should dislike any man who constantly made me weep, kept me dangling on the verge of suicide, and finally brought me to the anti-climax of rolling myself on a dirty carpet! However, the prejudices of these two persons do not equally darken the eyes of the rest of the world, and history will not admit the madness of Napoleon at Borodino,

nor that he was a "weak creature," nor that he ever felt "*ennui*"—no, not even at St. Helena, unless, perhaps, when in company with Sir Hudson Lowe.

The remarks upon Lord Collingwood are much better. There is no attack made upon the character of that great and glorious seaman: therefore the story needs no comment. Everybody admires the man who died on his quarter-deck, rather than abandon his post without the permission of his sovereign!



## PART III.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF MILITARY GREATNESS.

## CHAPTER I.

## REFLECTIONS ON MILITARY GREATNESS.

How often have we thus seen obscure accidents put an end to modest lives, which should have been supported and nourished by the collective glory of the Empire! Our army had assembled the invalids of the grand army, and they died in our arms; bequeathing to us the memory of their primitive and singular characters. To us they appeared to be the relics of a gigantic race, which, dropping off one by one, became extinct for ever. We admired all that was excellent and honourable in their characters; but our more studious generation could not help at times detecting in them something puerile and uncultivated, which the indolence of peace rendered the more conspicuous. The army seemed to us a body without motion. We were stifled, shut up in the belly of that wooden horse which never opened in any Troy. You, my companions, will recollect that we never ceased studying the Commentaries of Cæsar, Turenne, and Frederick II., and reading the lives of those generals of the Republic so purely smitten with glory, those candid and indigent heroes, such as Marceau, Desaix, and Kleber, young men of antique virtue; and, after we had examined their military manœuvres and their campaigns, we fell into a profound melancholy, on comparing our destiny with theirs, and on calculating that their elevation had become such,

they had set foot at once, and at the age of twenty, on the top of that ladder of grades, each step of which it costs us eight years to climb. O ye, whom I have seen suffering so severely under the languor and disgust of military Servitude, it is especially for you that I write this book. Accordingly, besides those reminiscences in which I have exhibited some traits of what is excellent and honourable in the army, but in which I have also detailed some of the galling littlenesses of military life, I will place the recollections that can make us proudly hold up our heads by the investigation and contemplation of its greatness.

Military Greatness, or the beauty of military life, seems to me to be of two kinds. There is that of command, and that of obedience. The one, all external, active, brilliant, proud, selfish, capricious, will be from day to day more rare and less desired, in proportion as civilization shall become more pacific; the other, all internal, passive, obscure, modest, devoted, persevering, will be daily more and more honoured; for, now that the spirit of conquest is dying away, whatever great an elevated character can bring into the profession of arms appears to me to consist less in the glory of fighting, than in the honour of suffering in silence, and fulfilling with fortitude duties that are frequently odious.

If the month of July, 1830, had its heroes, in you, O my gallant companions, it had its martyrs! Now ye are all separated and dispersed. Many of you retired in silence, after the storm, beneath the family roof; humble though it were, many have preferred it to the shade of a banner not their own. Others have gone to seek their lilies on the heaths of La Vendée, and have once more moistened them with their blood; others have gone to die for foreign sovereigns; while others, yet bleeding from the wounds of the three days, have not been able to withstand the temptations of the sword. They have resumed it for France, and con-

quered citadels for her. Everywhere we find the same habit of giving themselves up, body and soul, the same irresistible impulse to devote themselves, the same desire of practising somewhere or other the art of enduring patiently and of dying well. But universally we find those to be pitied who have not had to fight where they have been cast.

Fighting is the life of the army. When it begins, the dream becomes reality, science becomes glory, and Servitude service. War compensates by its lustre for the inexpressible mortifications inflicted by the lethargy of peace on the slaves of the army; but, I repeat, it is not in battles that its purest greatness consists. I shall often speak of you to others, but, before I conclude this book, I wish to speak to you of yourselves, and of a life and a death which had in my eyes a character of extraordinary force and candour.

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## CHAPTER II.

### A MEMORABLE NIGHT.

THE night of the 27th of July, 1830, was silent and solemn. The recollection of it is more deeply impressed upon my mind, than that of more terrible scenes which it had been my lot to witness. The calm pervading earth and sea before the hurricane has not more majesty than had that of Paris before the revolution. The boulevards were deserted. I walked their whole length alone, after midnight, looking and listening with greedy eyes and ears. The heavens shed upon the earth the pale light of their stars, but the houses were dark, closed, and as if dead. All the street-lamps were broken. Some groups of labouring men were still assembled near trees, listening to some mysterious orator, slipping off secret words among them in a low tone. They then separated, and, running away, entered the dark and narrow streets. They thrust against little doors of alleys, which opened

like traps, and closed after them again. Nothing was then stirring, and the city seemed to contain none but dead inhabitants and houses smitten with the plague.

You came at intervals upon a dark inert mass, which you did not recognize till you were close to it; this was a battalion of the Guards, standing motionless, voiceless. Farther on, you found a battery of artillery surmounted by lighted matches, like twin stars.

You passed unmolested before these dark and imposing corps, you walked round them, you went to and fro, without a question, or a word, good or bad. They were inoffensive, without anger, without hatred; they were resigned, and awaited whatever might happen.

As I approached one of the most numerous of the battalions, an officer stepped up to me, and with extreme politeness asked me if the flames that might be seen at a distance illuminating the Porte St. Denis did not proceed from some conflagration: he was just going to start with his company to ascertain that point. I told him that they proceeded from some large trees that had been felled and set on fire by the shop-keepers, who took advantage of the disturbances, to destroy these old elms, which concealed their shops. Then, seating himself on one of the stone benches of the Boulevard, he began to make lines and circles on the sand with his bamboo cane. It was by his cane that I recognized him, while he knew me again by my face. As I continued standing before him, he grasped my hand, and begged me to sit down by him.

Captain Renaud was a man of the strictest integrity and highly cultivated understanding, and at that time the Guards contained many such. His character and his habits were well known to us, and those who shall read these recollections need not to be told on what serious face they ought to place his *nom de guerre*, given by the soldiers, adopted by the officers, and received indifferently by the man himself. Like the old families, the old regiments, preserved intact by peace,

acquire familiar customs and invent characteristic names for their members. An old wound on the right leg produced Captain Renaud's habit of carrying wherever he went a bamboo cane, with a very curious head, which attracted the notice of all who beheld it for the first time. It was scarcely ever out of his hand. There was, however, no affectation in this habit; his manners were too simple and serious for anything of that sort. Still it was obvious that attachment to it originated in some heartfelt motive. He was highly esteemed and respected in the Guards. Without ambition, and never wishing to be anything but what he was, captain of grenadiers, he read a great deal, and talked as little as possible and in monosyllables. Very tall, very pale, and of a melancholy cast of countenance, he had on his forehead, between the eyebrows, a small deep scar, generally of a bluish colour, but which frequently turned black, and sometimes gave a fierce look to his habitually calm and tranquil visage.

He was a particular favourite with the soldiers; and it had been remarked, especially in the campaign in Spain, with what joy they started when the detachments were commanded by *Bamboo Cane*. And it was literally the bamboo cane that commanded them; for Captain Renaud never took a sword in his hand, even, when at the head of the sharpshooters, he approached so near the enemy as to run the risk of being engaged with him man to man.

The captain not only possessed great experience in war, he had likewise so thorough an acquaintance with the great political affairs of Europe during the Empire, that you were puzzled to account for it: sometimes you were disposed to attribute it to profound study, at others to high and very old connexions, concerning which his perpetual reserve kept you quite in the dark.

The predominating characteristic, it is true, of the men of the present day is this very reserve, and that general trait



was only carried to the extreme by the captain. At present, an appearance of cold politeness covers at once both character and actions. Hence I do not imagine that many can recognize themselves in the fierce-looking portraits which are drawn of us. Affectation is ridiculous in France to a greater degree than anywhere else: and hence it is, no doubt, that instead of displaying in his features and in his language the excess of energy imparted by the passions, each studies to confine within himself violent emotions, profound sorrows, or involuntary excitements. I do not think that civilization has enervated everything, but I see that it has masked everything. I admit that this is a benefit; and I admire the reserved character of our time. In this apparent coldness there is modesty, and the genuine sentiments have need of it. There is also mixed up with it somewhat of disdain—a good coin to pay for human things.

We have already lost many friends, whose memory lives among us: you recollect them, my dear comrades. Some have died in war, others in duels, others by their own hands; all men of honour and of firm character, of strong passions, and yet of simple, cold, and reserved exterior. Ambition, love, gaming, hatred, jealousy, were secretly at work within them, but they never talked of them, and evaded every question that was too direct and too closely touched the bleeding wound of their hearts. You never saw them striving to attract notice in the saloons by a tragic attitude; and, had any young lady, fresh from the perusal of a novel, seen them quite submissive, and, as it were, disciplined to the customary salutations and to simple chat in a low tone, she would have conceived a contempt for them; and yet in their lives and in their deaths, you know, they showed themselves men as energetic as Nature ever produced. The Catos and the Brutuses did not behave better, wearers though they were of togas. Our passions have as much energy as at any time, but it is only by the trace of their fatigues

that the eye of a friend can recognize them. The exterior, the language, the manners, have a certain measure of cold dignity which is common to all, and which is thrown off only by some few, who wish to appear great and to display all their strength. At present, the law of manners is decorum.

There is not a profession in which the coldness of the forms, language, and habits, contrasts more strikingly with the activity of life than the profession of arms. In it the hatred of exaggeration is carried to a great length, and the language of a man who seeks to exaggerate what he feels, and to affect you by what he suffers, excites disdain. This I knew, and I was just going to leave Captain Renaud abruptly, when he took me by the arm and detained me.

“Did you see the manœuvre of the Swiss this morning?” said he; “it was a very curious one. They fired the *feu de chaussée* while advancing, with perfect precision. Since I have been in the service, I never saw application made of it before; it is a parade and Opera manœuvre; but in the streets of a great city, it may be of use, provided the sections of the right and left form expeditiously in advance of the platoon that has just fired.”

At the same time, he kept drawing lines on the ground with the end of his cane. He then rose slowly, and, as he walked along the Boulevard, with the intention of getting to a little distance from the group of officers and soldiers, I accompanied him. He continued talking to me with a kind of nervous and seemingly involuntary excitement, which captivated me, and which I should never have expected from him, who was what is commonly called a cold man.

Laying hold of a button of my coat, he began with a very simple request. “Will you pardon me,” said he, “if I request you to send me your gorget of the Royal Guard, if you have kept it till now? I have left mine at home, and I cannot send or go for it myself, because they are killing

us in the streets like mad dogs; but, as it is three or four years since you left the army, perhaps you may not have it still. I too had resigned my commission a fortnight ago, for I am quite tired of the army; but, the day before yesterday, when I saw the ordinances, I said: There will be fighting. I bundled together my uniform, my epaulettes and my hairy cap, and away I went to the barracks to rejoin these brave fellows, who are going to be slaughtered in every corner, and who certainly would have thought in the bottom of their hearts that I behaved unhandsomely in leaving them at such a critical moment; it would have been contrary to honour, would it not, entirely contrary to honour?"

"Were you aware," I asked, "that such ordinances were likely to be issued at the time when you resigned?"

"Not I, faith! Indeed I have not yet read them."

"Well then, what could you have to reproach yourself with?"

"Nothing but the appearance, and I should not have liked the mere appearance to have been against me."

"That is really admirable," said I.

"Admirable! admirable!" exclaimed Captain Renaud, quickening his pace; "that is the present word, and what a puerile one! I detest admiration; it is the principle of too many bad actions. It is given at too cheap a rate at present and to everybody. We ought to beware of admiring lightly. Admiration is corrupt and corrupts. We ought to do right for our own sakes, not for the sake of fame. Besides, I have my own ideas on that subject," added he, finishing abruptly; and he was about to leave me.

"There is something as illustrious as a great man," said I, "that is a man of honour."

He grasped my hand affectionately. "That is my opinion as well as yours," said he, with warmth. "I have acted upon it all my life, but it has cost me dear. That is not so easy as people imagine."

Here the sub-lieutenant of his company came up and asked him for a cigar. He took several from his pocket and gave them to him without speaking. The officers began to smoke, walking to and fro, in a silence and with a composure which the recollection of existing circumstances did not interrupt; none of them deigning to advert either to the dangers of the moment or to his duty, though thoroughly acquainted with both.

Captain Renaud came back to me. "'Tis a fine night," said he, pointing to the firmament with his cane. "I know not when I shall cease to see the same stars every night. I did once imagine that I should have an opportunity of seeing those of the South; but it was my lot not to be removed to another hemisphere. No matter! the weather is delightful. The Parisians are asleep, or pretend to be so. None of us has eaten or drunk for twenty-four hours; one's ideas are all the clearer for fasting.

"I recollect that, one day, when we were going to Spain, you asked me the reason why I had not obtained higher promotion. I had not then time to tell you, but to-night I feel tempted to revert to the history of my life, which I have been reviewing in my memory. You are fond of such histories, I recollect, and in your retirement you will take pleasure in the remembrance of us. If you will sit down on the parapet of the Boulevard with me, we may there talk it over very quietly, for they seem to me to have ceased for the present to pop at us from the windows and through the loopholes of cellars—I shall give you an account of only some periods of my history, and I shall just follow my caprice. I have seen a great deal and read a great deal, but I don't think that I should be able to write. It is not my profession, thank God! and I have never tried. But, at least, I know how to live, and I have lived as I resolved to do, as soon as I had the courage to take a resolution; and in truth that is not so easy a matter. Let us sit down."

I followed him slowly, and we passed through the batta-

lion to get to the left of his fine grenadiers. They were gravely standing with their chins resting on the muzzles of their pieces. Some young fellows were sitting on their knapsacks, being more fatigued with the day than the others. All were silent, and they were coolly engaged in putting to rights and repairing their accoutrements. There was not the slightest indication of uneasiness or discontent. They were in their ranks, as on a review day, waiting for the word of command.

When we were seated, my old comrade began, and related to me in his own way the history of three great epochs which laid open to me the spirit of his life, and furnished me with a key to the eccentricity of his habits, and the melancholy that tintured his character. My memory has carefully preserved everything that he has told me, and I shall repeat it nearly word for word.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### MALTA.

I AM nobody—he set out with saying—and happy is it for me at present to think so: if I were somebody, I might exclaim with Louis XIV:—“I have been too fond of war!” Would you believe it? Bonaparte had intoxicated me when a boy, like everybody else, and his glory filled my head so completely that I had no room in my brain for any other idea. My father, an old superior officer, always with the army, was almost a stranger to me, when one day he took it into his head to carry me to Egypt along with him.

I was then twelve years old, and I still recollect the sentiments of the whole army at that time, and those which already took possession of my soul, as though it were the present moment. Two spirits swelled the sails of our ships—the spirit of glory and the spirit of piracy. My father



listened no more to the latter than the north-east wind that wafted us ; but the former buzzed so loud in my ears that it deafened me for a long time to all the sounds in the world, except Charles the Twelfth's music, that of the cannon. The voice of the cannon seemed to me the voice of Bonaparte ; and, boy though I was, when they roared, I turned red with delight, I leaped for joy, I clapped my hands, I answered with loud shouts. These first emotions led on to that exaggerated enthusiasm which became the aim and the mania of my life. A memorable meeting for me decided that sort of fatal admiration, that senseless adoration, to which I was ready to sacrifice too much.

The fleet had sailed on the 30th of Floreal, year VI. I passed day and night on deck feasting myself with the sight of the boundless blue sea and of our ships. I counted one hundred sail, and I could not count them all. Our military line was a league in length, and the semicircle formed by the convoy was at least six. I said nothing. I looked at Corsica passing close to us, drawing Sardinia after, and presently Sicily appeared on our left. The Juno, which my father and I were on board of, was destined to act the part of a scout, and to form the advanced guard with three other frigates. My father held me by the hand, and pointed out to me Mount Etna, pouring forth volumes of smoke, and rocks, which I have not forgotten ; there was Tavonia, and there Mount Erix. Marsala, the ancient Lilybœum, passed through its smoke, and its white houses looked like dove-cotes peering out of a cloud ; and one morning . . . . yes, it was the 24th of Prairial, at dawn of day, I beheld a picture spread out before me that dazzled my eyes for the next twenty years.

Malta was there, with its forts, its guns level with the water, its long walls glistening in the sun, like newly-polished marble, and its swarm of slender galleys running upon their long red oars. One hundred and ninety-four French ships enveloped it with their broad sails, and their blue, red,

and white flags, which were hoisted at that moment, at every mast, while the standard of religion was slowly lowered upon Gozo and Fort St. Elmo; it was the last cross militant that fell. The fleet then fired five hundred guns.

The ship *L'Orient* was facing us, apart from the rest, huge and motionless. Before her slowly passed the ships of war one after another, and I saw at a distance *Desaix* salute *Bonaparte*. We went to him on board *L'Orient*. At length I beheld him for the first time.

He was standing near the side of the ship, talking with *Casa Bianca*, the captain—poor *Orient*!—and playing with the hair of the captain's son, a boy about ten years old. I was instantly jealous of this boy, and my heart bounded within me when I saw him touch the general's sword. My father went up to *Bonaparte*, and talked with him a long time. I had not yet seen his face. All at once, he turned about and looked at me. I trembled all over at the sight of that sallow visage, surrounded by long pendent hair, looking as if it had been just dipped in the sea, of those large gray eyes, of those spare cheeks, and of that receding lip, over a peaked chin.

He must have been talking about me, for he said: "Hark ye, my brave *Renaud*; since you are bent on it, you shall go to *Egypt*, and *General Vaubois* shall stay here without you, with his four thousand men; but I don't like boys to be taken along; I have allowed nobody but *Casa Bianca* to take his son; and that was wrong. You must send this lad back to *France*: I wish him to be a good hand at mathematics, and if anything happens to you yonder, I promise you to take charge of him, and I'll make him a good soldier." At the same time he stooped, and, laying hold of me under the arms, he lifted me up to his lips, and kissed my forehead. My head turned round. I felt that he was my master, and that he was stealing my soul from my father, whom, indeed, I scarcely knew, because he was for ever with the army. I

was awe-struck, like Moses the shepherd, when he saw God in the burning bush. Bonaparte had lifted me up free, and when his arms gently set me down again upon the deck, they left me there, another of his slaves.

Only the day before, I should have thrown myself overboard rather than be separated from the army; but now I suffered them to carry me just where they pleased. My father I left with indifference and for ever. But bad are the best of us, even from childhood; and what trifles lay hold of us, whether men or boys, and stifle in our bosoms the feelings of nature! My father was no longer my master, because I had seen his, and because all authority in the world seemed to me to emanate from the latter alone. O dreams of authority and slavery! O corrupting thoughts of power, fit to seduce children! False enthusiasms--subtle poisons--what antidotes shall we ever be able to find against you!

I was stupified. Intoxicated—I determined to study hard, and I did study enough to turn my brain. I calculated night and day; and, while I took the dress and gained the learning, my face assumed the sallow hue, of the schools. From time to time, the guns interrupted me; and that voice of the demi-god proclaimed to me the conquest of Egypt, the 18th of Brumaire, Marengo, the Empire—and the Emperor kept his word. As for my father, I knew not what had become of him; when one day this letter was put into my hands.

I always keep it in this old pocket-book, which was once red, and I frequently read it over to convince myself completely of the uselessness of the advice given by one generation to that which comes after it, and to reflect on the absurd infatuation of my illusions.

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Here the captain, unbuttoning his uniform, drew from his breast-pocket first his handkerchief, and next a small pocket-book, which he carefully opened; and we went into a coffee-

house, where there was still a light, and where he read to me these fragments of letters, which—the reader shall presently learn why—are still in my possession.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### A SIMPLE LETTER.

On board the English Ship, the Culloden,  
off Rochfort, 1804.

SENT TO FRANCE WITH ADMIRAL COLLINGWOOD'S PERMISSION.

It is of no use, my son, to tell you how this letter will reach you, and by what means I have been made acquainted with your conduct and your present situation. Suffice it for you to know that I am satisfied with you; but that, in all probability, I shall never see you again. This, I dare say, will not distress you much. You have known your father only at that age when the memory is not yet born, when the heart is not yet hatched. It opens within us later than is generally imagined, and that is a thing at which I have often been astonished; but, how is it to be helped? You are no worse than others, I presume. I must, therefore, not complain.

All that I have to tell you is, that I have been a prisoner to the English ever since the 14th of Thermidor, year VI., or the 2nd of August, 1798, old style, which, they say, is coming into fashion again. I had gone on board L'Orient to endeavour to persuade the brave Brueys to sail for Corfu. Bonaparte had previously sent his poor aide-de-camp, Julien, who was silly enough to let the Arabs run away with him. I, however, contrived to get on board; but it was to no purpose. Brueys was obstinate as a mule. He said that he was sure to find a passage by which the ships could enter the harbour of Alexandria, but he added a few expressions

so proud as to show me plainly that, at bottom, he was somewhat jealous of the land army. "Do they take us for smugglers?" said he. "Do they suppose that we are afraid of the English?" Better would it have proved for France, if he had been afraid.

But, if he had his faults, gloriously he atoned for them. And, I may say, that painfully am I expiating the fault which I committed in staying on board his ship when he was attacked. Brueys was early wounded in the head and the hand. He continued the fight till a ball tore out his bowels. He was put, by his own desire, into a sack of bran, and died on his quarter-deck. About ten o'clock, we saw clearly that nothing could save us from blowing up. The remains of the crew, excepting Casa Bianca, got into the boats and escaped. He staid till the last, as a matter of course; but his son, a fine boy, whom you once saw, I believe, came to me and said: "Citizen, what does honour command me to do?"

Poor little fellow! He was but ten years old, I believe, and he could talk of honour at such a moment! I took him on my knee in the boat, and I prevented him from seeing his father blown up with L'Orient, which was scattered aloft in the air like a shower of fire.

We were not blown up, it is true; but we were taken—a lot far more deplorable—and I came to Dover, in the custody of a brave English captain, named Collingwood, who now commands the Culloden. He is a gallant fellow, if ever there was one, who has been in the navy ever since 1761, and was only once ashore for two years at the time when he was married. His children, of whom he is incessantly talking, do not know him: and his wife is scarcely acquainted with his noble character, but from his letters.

I feel clearly that grief for this defeat at Aboukir has shortened my days; which, indeed, have been but too long, since I have witnessed such a disaster and the death of my glorious friends. My great age has touched everybody



here; and, as the climate of England has brought upon me a violent cough, and renewed my wounds, so as to deprive me entirely of the use of one arm, the kind Captain Collingwood has solicited and obtained for me—what he could not have obtained for himself, to whom the land is forbidden ground—the favour of being transferred to Sicily, where there is a warmer sun and a purer atmosphere. There I am sure to end my days: for seventy-eight years, seven wounds, deep chagrin and captivity, are incurable complaints. I have nothing to leave you, poor boy, but my sword; nay, at present, I have not even that, for a prisoner has no sword.

But I have at least a piece of advice to give you, which is, to keep a rein on your enthusiasm for men who rise rapidly, and especially for Bonaparte. If I know anything of you, you will be a Seide, and he must guard against Seidism who is a Frenchman, that is to say, highly susceptible of infection from that contagious disease. It is wonderful what a number of great and petty tyrants it has produced. We are excessively fond of swaggerers, and we give ourselves up to them with such hearty good-will, that we are sure to repent it afterwards. The source of this failing is an urgent impulse to action and a great want of reflection. The consequence is that we like infinitely better to resign ourselves, body and soul, to him who undertakes to think for us and to be responsible; reserving a right to laugh afterwards at ourselves and at him.

Bonaparte is a clever fellow, but he is really too much of a charlatan. I am afraid that he will become the founder of a new species of jugglery among us; we have plenty of it in France already. Quackery is insolent and corrupting, and it has set such examples in our age, and made such a noise, with drum and wand, in the public places, that it has glided into every profession, and there is not a man, though ever so little, but is swollen with it. The number of frogs

that burst themselves is incalculable. I most earnestly wish that my son may not be one of them.

I am very glad that he has kept his word, in taking charge of you according to his promise, but do not place too much confidence in it: I will tell you what passed at a certain dinner while we were in Egypt, and I tell it you that you may often think of it.

On the first of Vendemiaire, year VII., being at Cairo, Bonaparte, member of the Institute, gave directions for a civic festival to be held on the anniversary of the establishment of the Republic. The garrison of Alexandria celebrated this festival around Pompey's Pillar, on which the tricoloured flag was hoisted; Cleopatra's Needle was wretchedly illuminated; and the troops in Upper Egypt held it as well as they could among the obelisks, the pillars, and the cariatides of Thebes, on the knees of the colossal Memnon, at the feet of the figures of Tama and Chama. The first *corps d'armée*, at Cairo, performed its manoeuvres, and had its races and its fireworks. The commander-in-chief assembled to dinner the whole of the staff, the commissaries, the men of science, the Pacha's kiaya, the emir, the members of the Divan, and the agas, around a table of five hundred covers, laid in the basement hall in the house which he occupied in the square of El Bequier: the cap of liberty and the crescent lovingly entwined one another; the Turkish and French colours formed a bower and a very pleasing tapestry, upon which the Koran and the Table of the Rights of Man were joined in wedlock. After the guests had with their fingers crammed themselves with fowl and rice seasoned with saffron, water-melons, and other fruit, Bonaparte, who had yet said nothing, cast a rapid glance at them all. The brave Kleber, who lay at full length by the side of him, because he could not double up his long legs in the Turkish fashion, gave a violent nudge to the elbow of his neighbour, Abdallah Menou, and said, with his half German accent,

“Hark ! Ali Bonaparte is going to say one of his good things.”

He called him so because, at the festival of Mahomet, the General had amused himself with assuming the Turkish dress, and, at the moment when he had declared himself the protector of all religions, the title of son-in-law of the Prophet and the name of Ali Bonaparte had been decreed him.

Kleber had scarcely done speaking, and was combing up his long fair hair with his fingers, when little Bonaparte was already on his legs ; and, raising his glass to his meagre chin and his huge cravat, he said in a shrill, clear, and snappish voice : “ Let us drink to the year three hundred of the French Republic ! ”

Kleber, with his face against Menou’s shoulder, laughed so heartily that he made him spill his wine upon an old aga, and Bonaparte looked at them both askance, knitting his brows.

And assuredly, my boy, he had reason to do so, because, in the presence of the commander-in-chief, a general of division ought not to behave indecorously, even though he were a dare-devil like Kleber ; but, as for them, they were not quite in the wrong either, since Bonaparte at this present moment is called *Emperor*, and you are his page.

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In fact, said Captain Renaud, taking back the letter from my hand, I had just been appointed page to the Emperor in 1804.—Ah ! what a terrible year was that ! what events it brought along with it when it did come ; and with what attention I should have considered it, had I then been capable of considering anything ! But I had neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, aught but the actions of the Emperor, the voice of the Emperor, the gestures of the Emperor, the steps of the Emperor. His approach intoxi-

cated, his presence magnetized me. The glory of holding an appointment about the person of that man seemed to me the highest thing in the world; and never did lover feel his mistress's ascendancy with more vehement, more overwhelming emotions, than those which the sight of him produced every day in me. Admiration of a military chief becomes a passion, a fanaticism, a frenzy, which makes slaves, maniacs, blind wretches, of us all.

That poor letter which I have just shown you, I regarded as nothing more than what schoolboys call a *sermon*; and I felt only that impious relief of children who find themselves delivered from the natural authority, and fancy themselves free, because they have chosen the chain which the general infatuation has riveted about their necks. But I had sufficient native good feeling left to make me keep this sacred epistle, and its authority over me has increased in proportion as my dreams of heroic subjection were dispelled. It has ever remained enshrined in my heart, and at length it struck invisible root there, as soon as sound reason cleared away from my sight the mists which had enveloped it. I could not forbear reading it over again once more with you, and I cannot but pity myself when I consider how slow has been the curve which my ideas have followed to return to the more solid and more simple base of the conduct of a man. You shall see into how little it resolves itself; but, in truth, sir, I think that is sufficient for the life of an honest man, and it took me a long time to discover the source of the true greatness that there may be in the almost barbarous profession of arms.

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Here Captain Renaud was interrupted by an old sergeant of grenadiers, who placed himself at the door of the coffee-house, holding his piece in the manner of a subaltern, and drawing from the strap a letter written on coarse paper.

The captain calmly rose, and opened the paper; it contained an order.

“Tell Bejaud,” said he to the sergeant, “to copy this into the order-book.”

“The sergeant-major is not returned from the Arsenal,” said the subaltern in a voice as meek as that of a young girl, and casting down his eyes, without even deigning to say how his comrade had been killed.

“Let the quarter-master take his place,” said the captain, without asking any questions, and he signed his order on the back of the sergeant, which served him for a desk.

He hemmed twice or thrice, and then quietly resumed his narrative.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE OVERHEARD DIALOGUE.

My poor father's letter and his death, the tidings of which reached me soon afterwards, made so deep an impression upon me, intoxicated though I was, and absolutely fascinated by the sound of my spurs, as to give a great shock to my blind zeal, and I began to examine more closely and more calmly what there was supernatural in the glory that dazzled me. I asked myself, for the first time, wherein consisted that ascendancy which we allow enterprising men invested with absolute power to assume over us; and I ventured to make some inward efforts to set bounds in my mind to the voluntary donation of so many to one man. This first shock made me open my eyes, and I had the courage to look in the face of the eagle which had carried me off, a mere child, and which clasped my sides with his talons.

It was not long before I found occasions to examine more closely and to spy out the character of the great man in the



obscure actions of his private life. We served thus far as equerries, secretaries, and aides-de-camp, according to the pleasure of the master, who took just what he found at hand. He liked already to people his ante-chambers, and, as the fondness for rule followed him everywhere, he could not forbear showing it in the most trifling matters, and tormenting those around him by the indefatigable exercise of an ever-present will. He amused himself with my bashfulness; he played with my terrors and my respect.

Sometimes he would call me abruptly, and, when he saw me enter pale and stammering, he would divert himself in making me speak a long time, to see how the surprise would confuse my ideas. Sometimes, while I was writing from his dictation, he would all at once pull my ear, in his way, and ask me some unexpected question concerning some simple point in geography or algebra, involving a problem which any child could solve; it then seemed as if a thunderbolt were falling upon my head. I knew a thousand times more than he asked, I knew more than he supposed; nay, I knew more than himself, but his eye paralysed me. When he was out of the room, I could breathe again; the blood began to circulate in my veins; my memory returned, and with it an inexpressible shame; rage seized me; I wrote down the answer that I ought to have given him, then rolled on the carpet, wept, and had a good mind to put an end to my life.

“What!” said I, “are there then heads so strong as to be sure of everything, and not to hesitate before any one?—men who are confident of their influence over all around them, and whose assurance crushes others by making them believe that the key of all knowledge and of all power, a key so eagerly sought after, is in their pocket, and that they have but to open it, and to take out of it infallible information and authority?—I felt, nevertheless, that this was a false and usurped force. I rebelled; I exclaimed: “He lies! His attitude, his voice, his gestures, are but the pantomime

of an actor, a wretched parade of sovereignty, of the vanity of which he must be sensible. It is not possible that he can believe so sincerely in himself! He forbids us all to lift the veil, but he sees himself naked beneath it. And what does he see? a poor ignoramus like any of us, and withal a weak creature!"

But I knew not how to penetrate to the bottom of that disguised soul. Power and glory defended him at all points; I went round him without succeeding in detecting anything, and this porcupine, ever armed, rolled before me, panoplied from head to foot in sharp spikes.

One day, however, Chance, the master of us all, made an opening among them, and allowed a momentary gleam to penetrate amidst these spikes and darts. One day, perhaps it was the only one in his life, he met with his match, and recoiled for an instant before an ascendancy mightier than his own. This I witnessed, and I felt myself avenged.

We were at Fontainebleau. The Pope had just arrived. The Emperor had waited impatiently for his coming to anoint him at his coronation, and had received him in his carriage, each mounting at the same moment at opposite sides, with an apparently neglected but deeply calculated etiquette, so as neither to yield nor to take precedence—an Italian stratagem. He was coming back to the palace, where all was in a bustle.

I had left several officers in the room preceding that of the Emperor, and I was alone in his. I looked at a long table, the top of which was not of marble, but of Roman mosaics, and covered with a great heap of petitions. I had often seen Bonaparte come in and subject them to a strange ordeal. He did not take them up either in order or at random, but, when their number irritated him, swept his hand over the table, from left to right and from right to left, like a mower, and dispersed them till he had reduced the heap to five or six, which he opened. This kind of disdainful sport

had deeply affected me. All these papers of distress and sorrow, rejected and flung upon the floor, carried away as by a blast of anger; these useless prayers of widows and orphans, having no chance of relief but in the manner in which the loose papers were swept off by the consular hand; all these touching appeals, moistened with the tears of families, kicked about by his boots, and over which he walked as over his slain on the field of battle, represented to me the destiny of France at that time as a sinister lottery; and, mighty as was the rude indifferent hand that drew the lots, I that thought it was not just to sacrifice thus to the caprice of his sweeping fists so many obscure fortunes, which might some day have been as splendid as his own, had a point of support been granted to them—I felt my heart throb and revolt against Bonaparte, but shamefully, but like a slave's heart as it was. I surveyed those contemned letters; unheard moans issued from their profaned folds, and, picking them up myself to read and then throwing them down again, I set myself up for judge between the unfortunate writers and the master whom they had given themselves, and who was that day going to place his foot more firmly than ever upon their necks.

I held in my hand one of these despised petitions, when the sound of the drums, beating the march, apprized me of the sudden arrival of the Emperor. Now, you must know that, as you see the flash of a gun before you hear the report, so you were sure to see him almost as soon as you heard the sound of his approach, so rapid were his motions, so anxious did he seem to make the most of life, and to crowd his actions as closely as possible together. When he entered the court of the palace on horseback, his guides had great difficulty to keep up with him; and the post had not time to take arms, before he had alighted from his horse and was ascending the staircase. On this occasion, I heard the sound of his heels at the same moment as that of the drums. I

had barely time to slip into the alcove of a great state bed which was not used, fortified by a princely balustrade, and the curtains of which, sprinkled with bees, were luckily more than half drawn.

The Emperor was violently agitated: he walked alone in the room, like one who is waiting impatiently for somebody, clearing in a second thrice his own length; he then went to the window, and began to drum a march upon it with his nails. A carriage presently rolled into the court; he ceased drumming, stamped twice or thrice, as if vexed at the sight of something that was done too slowly for him, then went hastily to the door, and opened it to the Pope.

Pius VII. entered alone. Bonaparte shut the door behind him with the despatch of a gaoler. I felt thoroughly frightened, I must confess, on finding myself the third in such company. However, I remained voiceless and motionless, looking and listening with all the powers of my mind.

The Pope was of lofty stature; his face was long, sallow, care-worn, but full of a holy dignity and unbounded benevolence. His dark eyes were large and brilliant; his mouth was half open with a friendly smile, to which his projecting chin gave a strong expression of shrewdness and intelligence—a smile which had nothing of political insensibility, but everything of Christian kindness. A white cap covered his long hair, which was black, but marked with broad silvery streaks. He wore a short mantle of red velvet, carelessly thrown over his curved shoulders, and his robe trailed over his feet. He entered slowly with the discreet step of an aged matron. He went and seated himself, with downcast eyes, in one of the large Roman arm-chairs, gilt and decorated with eagles, and waited to hear what the other Italian had to say.

Ah, sir, what a scene! what a scene! methinks I behold it still. It was not the genius of the man, but his character, that it laid open to me; and if his vast mind did not then unfold itself, his heart at least burst forth. Bonaparte

was not then what you have since seen him; he had not that corpulence, that bloated and sickly face, those gouty legs, all that infirm obesity which art has seized to produce a *type* of him according to the present mode of expression, and which has left the public a certain popular and grotesque figure of him, which serves as a plaything for children, and which, some day, perhaps, will make him appear as fabulous a creature of the imagination as misshapen Punch himself. He was not so then, sir, but muscular and supple, active, brisk, elastic, convulsive in his gestures, graceful in some motions, polished in his manners; his chest flat and sunk between the shoulders, and such still as I had seen him at Malta, with melancholy and bilious face.

He did not desist from pacing the floor after the Pope had entered; he began to prowl around the chair like a prudent sportsman; and, stopping all at once facing it, in the stiff and motionless attitude of a corporal, he resumed the thread of a conversation commenced in the carriage, interrupted by their arrival, and which he was impatient to renew.

“I repeat to your Holiness, I am no free-thinker, not I, and I am not fond of reasoners and metaphysicians. I assure you that, in spite of my old republicans, I will go to mass.”

He flung these last words sharply at the Pope, like a censer swung under your nose, and paused to await their effect; thinking that the circumstances, how nearly soever approaching to impiety, which had preceded this interview, must give extraordinary weight to this sudden and positive declaration. The Pope cast down his eyes, and placed his hands on the two eagles' heads which formed the arms of his chair. By this attitude of a Roman statue, he seemed plainly to intimate: I must listen with resignation to all the profane things that he shall think fit to say to me.

Bonaparte walked round the room and the arm-chair that was in the midst of it, and I saw, by the sidelong glance



which he cast at the aged pontiff, that he was not pleased either with himself or with his adversary, and that he blamed himself for having been too abrupt in this renewal of the conversation. He began, therefore, directly to speak again, still pacing round and round, casting furtive and piercing glances at the mirrors in which the grave figure of his Holiness was reflected, and looking at him in profile when he passed near him, but never full in the face, lest he should seem too anxious about the impression of his words.

“There is one thing, Holy Father,” said he, “which lies upon my heart : it is this—that you consent to the anointing in the same manner as you formerly did to the Concordant, as if you were forced to it. You put on the air of a martyr before me : there you are, looking as if resigned, as if offering your griefs to Heaven. But, indeed, that is not your situation ; you are not a prisoner, by God !—you are free as the air !”

Pius VII. gave a sad smile, and looked him in the face. He felt how prodigious were the exactions of that despotic character, who, like all spirits of the same nature, was not content to be obeyed unless you obeyed with a semblance of having ardently desired what he ordered.

“Yes,” resumed Bonaparte, with increased emphasis, “you are perfectly free ; you can return to Rome ; the route is open ; nobody detains you.”

The Pope sighed, and raised his right hand and his eyes to heaven, without replying. Then, slowly lowering his wrinkled brow, he fixed his eyes on the gold cross suspended from his neck.

Bonaparte continued speaking, while taking his rounds more leisurely. His voice became mild and his smile peculiarly gracious.

“If, Holy Father, the gravity of your character did not prevent me, I should say, indeed, that you are rather ungrateful. You do not seem to be sufficiently mindful of the

good services that France has rendered you. The conclave at Venice, which elected you Pope, did appear to me to have been somewhat influenced by my campaign in Italy, and by a word that I dropped concerning you. At that time, Austria did not treat you well, and I was very sorry for it. Your Holiness was, I believe, obliged to return to Rome by sea, because you were not allowed to pass through the Austrian territories."

He paused to await the answer of his silent and involuntary visitor; but Pius made only an inclination of the head that was scarcely perceptible, and remained as though overwhelmed with a dejection which prevented him from listening.

Bonaparte, with his foot, then pushed a chair close to the great arm-chair on which the Pope was seated. I trembled, because, when he came to fetch this chair, his epaulettes had brushed the curtain of the alcove in which I was concealed.

"In fact," he continued, "it was as a Catholic that I was grieved at this. I never had time to study divinity much, not I: but I put great faith in the power of the Church; it has a prodigious vitality, Holy Father. Voltaire has done you some mischief, but I like him not, and I am going to slip an old unfrocked Oratorian at him. You shall have no reason to complain, depend upon it. We could, if you will, do many things by-and-by."

Here he assumed a look of innocence and youth extremely coaxing.

"For my part, I do not know—I cannot discover—I do not see, indeed, why you should have any objection to fix your residence in Paris for good. I would give up the Tuileries to you, faith! if you liked. You will there find your Montecavallo chamber quite ready for you. As for me, I am scarcely ever there. Do you not see, *Padre*, that here is the real metropolis of the world? I would do everything you wished; for, after all, I am a better boy than

people take me for. Provided that war and the toil of politics were left to me, you should manage the Church just as you pleased. I should be your soldier entirely. Would not that be capital, think you? We would have our councils, like Constantine and Charlemagne; I would open them and close them; I would then put into your hand the real keys of the world: and since, as our Saviour said, 'I came with the sword,' I would keep the sword to my share; only I would bring it to you for your benediction after every success of our arms."

He made a slight inclination while uttering the concluding words.

The Pope, who had thus far continued motionless, like an Egyptian statue, slowly raised his half-bowed head, gave a melancholy smile, uplifted his eyes, and said, after a gentle sigh, as though confiding his thoughts to his invisible guardian angel: *Commediante!*

Bonaparte sprang from his chair, and bounded like a wounded leopard. He was in a real passion, one of his yellow passions. He paced the floor, at first without speaking, biting his lips till they bled again. He no longer turned in a circle round his prey, with gentle look and cautious step, but stalked straight forward, to and fro, stamping and making his spurred heels clatter. The room fairly shook; the curtains trembled like the trees at the approach of a thunder-storm; methought some great and awful event was going to happen: my hair pained me, and I involuntarily clapped my hand on it. I looked at the Pope; he stirred not, but merely grasped with both hands the eagles' heads on the arms of the chair. The bomb suddenly burst.

"Comedian!—I a comedian!—Ah! I will give you comedies such as shall make you all cry like women and children!—Comedian!—Ah! you are mistaken, if you think to get the better of me by insolent coolness! My theatre is the

world; the part I play is that of manager and author; for comedians, I have all of you—Pope, Kings, People! and the thread by which I move you is—fear!—Comedian! Ah! it would take a better man than you to dare to applaud or to hiss me. *Signor Chiaramonti*, are you aware that you would be but a poor parish priest if it so pleased me? Why, France would laugh outright in your face at you and your tiara, if I were not to put on a grave look when saluting you.—It is only four years since nobody durst talk aloud of Christ. Who then would have talked of the Pope, if you please?—Comedian! Ah, gentlemen, you are getting on too fast with us! You are out of humour because I have not been silly enough to sign, like Louis XIV., the renunciation of the liberties of the Gallican church? But I am not to be piped to in that manner. It is I who hold you in my fingers; it is I who carry you from south to north like puppets; it is I who make believe to account you something, because you represent an old idea that I want to revive; and you have not sense enough to see this, and to do as though you did not perceive it!—But no; one must tell you everything; one must put everything under your noses before you can comprehend it. And you seriously believe that one cannot do without you, and you lift up your heads and muffle yourselves in women's drapery! But know that this has no effect whatever upon me, and that if you persevere—yes, you!—I will serve it as Charles XII. served the grand vizir's—I will tear it in pieces with my spur."

He ceased speaking. I durst not breathe. No longer hearing his thundering voice, I stretched forth my head, to see if the poor old man was dead with fright. There he sat, with the same composure in his attitude and the same composure on his countenance. A second time he raised his eyes to heaven, and, after heaving a deep sigh, he smiled bitterly, and said: *Tragediante*.

At this moment, Bonaparte was at the other end of the

room, leaning against the marble chimney-piece as high as himself. He darted like an arrow towards the old man ; I thought he was going to kill him. But he stopped short, took up from the table a vase of Sèvres porcelain, on which were painted the Castle of St. Angelo and the Capitol, and, throwing it on the marble hearth, crushed it to atoms with his feet. All at once he sat down, and remained for some time motionless, and maintained a profound and threatening silence.

I was relieved. I concluded that he had yielded to cool reflection, and that reason had resumed its empire over the ebullition of passion. He became sad ; his voice was low and melancholy, and from the very first accent I knew that he was undisguised, and that this Proteus, quelled by two words, now appeared what he really was.

“ Miserable life !” he ejaculated. He then mused, tore the border of his hat, without speaking for a minute or two, and, on rousing, began talking to himself,

“ ’Tis very true !—Tragedian or Comedian !—All is acting, all has been costume with me for a long time, and will be so for ever ! What fatigue ! what littleness ! Sitting ! always sitting ! in full face for this party, in profile for that, according to their notions. To appear what they like one to be, and to guess aright their idiot dreams !—to place them all between hope and fear !—to dazzle them with dates and bulletins !—to bind them by spells of distance and spells of names !—to be master of them all, and not know what to do with them !—that is all, faith !—And after this all, to be annoyed as I am—it is indeed too bad !—For, in truth,” he proceeded, crossing his legs and throwing himself back in the arm-chair, “ I am horribly annoyed—As soon as I sit down, I am ready to burst with *ennui*.—I could not hunt three days at Fontainebleau, without dying of sheer languor. For my part, I must be moving and make others move. If I know where to, though, I’ll be hanged !



“You see I am open-hearted with you. I have plans for the lives of forty emperors; I form one every morning, and another every night; I have an indefatigable imagination; but, before I have time to execute two of them, I should be worn out, body and soul; for our poor lamp does not burn long. And frankly, if all my plans were carried into effect, I would not swear that the world would be much happier for them; but it would be more brilliant, and a majestic unity would reign over it.—I am no philosopher, not I, and I know not a creature that has common sense but our secretary at Florence. I understand nothing of certain theories. Life is too short to stand still. As soon as I have thought, I execute. People will find explanations enough for my actions, after I am gone, to exalt me if I succeed, and to abase me if I fall. Plenty of paradoxes are quite ready; they abound in France. I will silence them while I live, but afterwards——never mind! my business is to succeed, and that I understand. I make my Iliad in action, for my part, and that every day.”

Here he rose, with cheerful promptness, and something lively and brisk in his manner. At that moment he was natural and true; he thought not of giving a picture of himself, as he did afterwards in his dialogues at St. Helena; he thought not of idealising himself, or of composing his person so as to realize the finest philosophical conceptions; he was himself, turned inside out.—He went up to his Holiness, and walked before him. There, warming, and laughing half ironically, he spoke nearly as follows, mixing up together the trivial and the grand, according to his custom, and talking with inconceivable volubility—the rapid expression of that prompt and ready genius, which guessed everything at once, without study.

“Birth is everything,” said he; “those who come into the world poor and destitute are always desperate. This turns either to action or suicide, according to the character

of the individual. When they have courage, like me, to put their hands to anything, then, faith, they play the devil. And can you blame them? One must live. One must find one's place and make one's hole. For my part, I have made mine, like a cannon-ball. So much the worse for those who stood in my way.—Some are satisfied with little, others never have enough. What is to be done? Each eats according to his appetite, and mine was excessively keen.—Look you, Holy Father, at Toulon I had not wherewithal to buy a pair of epaulettes, and, instead of them, I had a mother and I know not how many brothers and sisters on my shoulders. These are all provided for at present, and decently enough, I hope. Josephine married me almost out of pity, and now we are going to crown her, in spite of the beard of Raguideau, her solicitor, who said that I had but little or nothing but my sword. And, faith, he was not far wrong, either.—Imperial mantle, crown, what are these? what are they to me? Costume, actor's costume! I shall put them on for an hour, and I shall have had enough of them. I shall then resume my plain officer's dress and mount my horse. Always on horseback! all my life on horseback! I should not sit here for a day without running the risk of being thrown under the chair. Is that anything enviable?

“I tell you, Holy Father, there are in the world but two classes of people, those who have, and those who are striving to get. The former go to bed, the latter keep stirring. As I learned this lesson early and seasonably, I shall get pretty forward—that's all. There have been only two who began at forty that made any progress—Cromwell and Jean Jacques: if you had given one of them a farm, and the other twelve hundred francs and his maid servant, they would neither have preached, nor commanded, nor written.—There are makers of houses, of colours, of figures, of phrases; as for me, I am a maker of battles. That is my profession. At thirty-five I have made eighteen, which are called—Victories! It

is right that I should be paid for my work ; and a throne is not too high a price for it.—Besides, I shall go on working. You will see a good many more. You will see all the dynasties date from mine, upstart and elected though I be. Elected, like you, Holy Father, and taken from among the crowd. On that point we may shake hands.”

And, stepping close to him, he held out his white, bold hand towards the attenuated and timid hand of the good Pope, who, perhaps, softened by the kindly tone of this last movement of the Emperor's, perhaps by an inward recurrence to his own destiny and a sad foreboding of the future lot of christian societies, gently gave him the ends of his fingers, with the air of a grandmother making it up with a boy, whom she is sorry for having scolded so severely. He nevertheless shook his head with a look of sadness, and I saw a tear start from his fine eyes, and trickle rapidly down his wan and emaciated cheek. To me it seemed like the last farewell of expiring Christianity, leaving the earth to selfishness and chance.

Bonaparte cast a furtive glance at this tear wrung from an afflicted heart, and I even detected at one corner of his mouth a rapid movement resembling a smile of triumph. At this moment, that omnipotent nature appeared to me less elevated and less noble than that of his holy adversary. This made me blush behind my curtains for all my past enthusiasm. A sadness such as I had never felt came over me on discovering how little the highest political greatness may become in its cold artifices of vanity, its miserable snares, and its libertine abominations. I saw that he had not been really angry with his prisoner, that it afforded him a secret gratification not to have shown any weakness in this tête-à-tête, and that he had given way to the gust of passion in order to bend the captive under the effect of fatigue, of fear, and of all those infirmities which moisten the eyes of an old man with inexplicable emotion. He had been deter-

mined to have the last word, and, without adding another, he left the room as abruptly as he had entered. I did not see whether he saluted the Pope, but I believe he did not.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### A SEAMAN.

As soon as the Emperor had quitted the apartment, two ecclesiastics came to his Holiness, and, supporting him under each arm, led him away, faint, agitated, and trembling.

I staid till night in the alcove where I had overheard this conversation. My ideas were confounded, but it was not the terror of this scene that deranged them. I was overwhelmed by what I had seen, and now, knowing to what paltry calculations of purely personal ambition Genius was capable of descending, I hated that passion, which had just degraded before my face the most brilliant of rulers—him who will perhaps give his name to the age, for having thrown it back ten years in its march. I felt that it was folly to devote one's self to any man, since despotic authority cannot fail to render our weak hearts wicked; but I knew not to what idea I was thenceforward to attach myself. I have told you that I was then eighteen, and I had still within me but a vague instinct of the true, the good, the beautiful, though sufficiently strong to engage me incessantly in the search after them. That is the only thing in me that I esteem.

I deemed it my duty to keep what I had seen to myself; but I had reason to imagine, from what soon afterwards happened, that my sudden disappearance from the Emperor's suite had been noticed. I remarked no change in the manner of the sovereign towards me; but I passed very few more days about his person, and the attentive study that I purposed making of his character was suddenly cut short. I

received orders one morning to set out immediately for the camp at Boulogne, and, on my arrival, was directed to go on board one of the flat-bottomed boats which were upon trial there.

I set out with much less pain than I dare say I should have done, had I been obliged to take this journey before the scene at Fontainebleau. I breathed more freely as I left behind me that old palace and its forest, and, from this involuntary relief, I felt that my Seidism had received a death-blow. I was grieved at first at this discovery, and I trembled for the dazzling illusion which imposed this blind attachment upon me as a duty. The great egotist had exhibited himself naked before me; but, when I had got to a distance from him, I began to contemplate him in his works, and by means of this view he regained over me part of that magic ascendancy by which he had fascinated the world. However, it was rather the gigantic idea of war which henceforward haunted me than that of him who represented it in such an awful manner; and, at this grand sight, I felt an insensate enthusiasm for the glory of battles increasing within me, silencing all scruples respecting the master who ordered them, and making me regard with pride the perpetual toil of those who all appeared but as his humble workmen.

The picture was in reality Homeric, and fit to captivate scholars by the incessant bustle of action. Something false was nevertheless blended with it, and presented itself to me, though as yet but vaguely and indistinctly; and I felt the necessity of a better life than mine, which should enable me to discover the ground of all this. I had just learned to measure the captain; it was now requisite that I should sound war. I will tell you what new event gave me this second lesson. For I have had three severe lessons in my life, and, after meditating on them every day, I relate to you the circumstances by which they were furnished. Their



shocks were violent, and the last completely overthrew the idol of my soul.

The apparent demonstration of conquest and of an invasion of England, the revival of the memory of William the Conqueror, the discovery of Cæsar's camp at Boulogne, the sudden assembling of nine hundred vessels in that port under the protection of a fleet of five hundred sail, continually announced; the formation of camps at Dunkirk and Ostend, at Calais, at Montreuil, and at St. Omer, under the command of four marshals; the military throne, from which fell the first stars of the Legion of Honour; the reviews, the festivities, the partial attacks—all this parade reduced, according to geometrical language, to its simplest expression, had three objects: to annoy England, to lull Europe, to concentrate and to excite the enthusiasm of the army.

These three points gained, Bonaparte suffered the artificial machine, which he had been setting to work at Boulogne, to drop piecemeal. When I arrived, it was playing empty, like the water-works at Marly. The generals there were still making the false movements of an ardour which they did not feel. They continued to send to sea a few miserable vessels, disdained by the English, and sunk by them from time to time. A command was given to me in one of these vessels, the very day after my arrival.

On that day there was but a single English frigate at sea. She tacked with slow and majestic motion; she sailed to and fro, she inclined first to one side and then to the other, she looked at herself in the watery mirror, she glided along, she stopped short, she sported in the sun, like a swan that is bathing herself. The miserable flat-bottomed boat—a new and wretched contrivance—had ventured out pretty far, with four others of the same kind; and, having held on our course ever since morning, we began to be proud of our hardihood, when we discovered all at once the peaceful gambols of the frigate. They would no doubt have appeared

to us extremely graceful and poetical, beheld from the shore, or if she had merely amused herself by playing her pranks between England and us, but it was, on the contrary, between us and France. We were above a league from the shore. This made us thoughtful.

We set all our wretched sails, and plied our still more wretched oars; and while, we were exerting our utmost efforts, the peaceful frigate continued to take her sea-bath and to describe a thousand pleasing figures around us, changing her pace and her direction like a well-trained horse, and making esses and zeds upon the water in the most delightful manner. We remarked that she had the good-nature to let us pass several times in front of her without firing one of her guns; nay, all at once, she drew them back and closed her ports.

I really imagined at first that this was a purely pacific manœuvre, and was puzzled to account for such politeness. But a sturdy old seaman roused me by nudging my elbow. "That looks bad," said he. In fact, after she had suffered us to run a good way ahead of her, like mice before a cat, the amiable and beautiful frigate bore down upon us in full sail, and, without deigning to fire, dashed against us with her prow, as a horse with his chest, smashing, crushing, sinking, and passing merrily over us, leaving a few boats to pick up the prisoners, of whom I was one, and the tenth out of two hundred who had left Boulogne in the morning. The name of this beautiful frigate was the *Naiad*, and to keep up the good old French habit of punning, we afterwards never called her anything but the *Noyade*.

I had received such a severe ducking that they were on the point of throwing me over for dead, when an officer, examining my pocket-book, found in it the letter from my father, which you have just read, with Lord Collingwood's signature. He caused more particular attention to be paid to me; some signs of life were perceived; and when I re-

covered the use of my senses, I found myself, not on board the graceful Naiad, but in the Culloden. I inquired who commanded her. Admiral Collingwood, was the laconic reply. I concluded that this must be a relative of the Lord Collingwood who had known my father, but when I was taken to him I discovered my mistake. It was the same man.

I could not repress my surprise when he told me, with truly parental kindness, that, after having had the father in his custody, he was far from expecting he should ever have to take charge of the son, but he hoped that he should have no more reason to complain of the one than of the other ; that he was present at the last moments of that old officer, and that, on learning my name, he had directed me to be brought on board his ship. He spoke the best French, with a melancholy mildness, the expression of which has never been effaced from my memory. He offered me permission to remain on board the Culloden, on giving my word of honour not to make any attempt to escape.

I gave my word, without hesitation, after the manner of youths of eighteen ; and, faring much better in the Culloden than I should have done in a prison ship, surprised at meeting with nothing to justify the prejudices instilled into us against the English, I soon got acquainted with the officers of the ship, who were highly amused at my ignorance of their language and of nautical matters, and took the more pains to instruct me in both, because the admiral treated me as his son. Still a profound sadness came over me when I beheld at a distance the white coasts of Normandy, and I retired that I might not weep. I repressed my tears, difficult as I found it to do so, for I was young and courageous ; but afterwards, as soon as my will ceased to control my heart, as soon as I was a-bed and asleep, the tears trickled from my eyes in spite of me, and made my pillow so wet as to awaken me.

One night in particular—there had been a new prize made of a French brig; I had seen her founder at a distance, without the possibility of saving a single man of the crew; and, notwithstanding the gravity and the self-restraint of the officers, I could not help hearing the shouts and the huzzas of the seamen who saw with joy the expedition melting away, and the sea swallowing, drop by drop, that avalanche which had threatened to crush their country. I had retired and shut myself up all day in the little room which had been fitted up for me by Admiral Collingwood's order, near his own cabin, as if the more expressly to proclaim his protection; and, when night came on, I went by myself upon deck. I had felt the enemy about me more than ever, and I began to reflect on my career, so soon stopped short, with extreme bitterness.

I had already been for a month a prisoner of war; and the Admiral, who in public treated me with such kindness, had spoken to me but for a moment in private, on the first day of my coming on board. He was mild but cold, and in his manners, as well as in those of the English officers, there was a point at which familiar intercourse ceased, and where studied politeness interposed as a barrier to every path. It is this which makes you feel that you are living in a foreign country. I was seized with a sort of terror, on considering that this state of exclusion might last till the end of the war, and I regarded as inevitable the sacrifice of my youth, wasted in the inglorious uselessness of the prisoner.

The ship, with all sails bent, was going at a great rate, though I could not feel her move. My hands rested upon a rope, and my head upon both my hands, and, thus bending down, I fixed my eyes on the water. Its green and sombre depths gave me a sort of dizziness, and the silence of night was interrupted by none but English cries. I hoped for a moment that the ship was carrying me far away from



France, and that next morning I should not behold those steep white cliffs cut out of the beloved soil of my poor country. I thought that I should be thus delivered from the perpetual hankering produced within me by that sight, and at least be spared the torment of not being able to think of escaping without dishonour—a torment equal to that of Tantalus, under which a burning thirst of country must consume me for I knew not how long.

I was oppressed by my solitude, and wished for a speedy occasion to put myself in the way of being killed. I pondered upon composing my death cleverly, and in the grand and grave manner of the ancients. I devised an heroic end, worthy of those which had been the subject of so many conversations among pages and juvenile warriors, the object of such envy among my companions. I was in one of those reveries which, at eighteen, resemble a continuation of action and combat rather than a serious meditation, when I felt a gentle pull at my arm, and, on turning my head, saw standing behind me the good Admiral Collingwood.

He had in his hand his night telescope, and he was dressed in full uniform, with rigid English precision. He put one hand upon my shoulder in a fatherly manner, and I remarked a look of deep melancholy in his large dark eyes and on his brow. His white, half-powdered hair fell carelessly over his ears, and there was, together with the unalterable calmness of his voice and manner, a deep sadness which particularly struck me on that night, and at once excited in me increased respect and attention.

“Fretting already, my boy?” said he—“I have some little things to say to you. Will you come and chat with me a-while?”

I stammered forth a few incoherent words of politeness and thanks, in which there was probably not even common sense, for he took no notice of them, and seated himself on



a bench, holding me by the hand. I was standing before him.

“You have been a prisoner but a month,” he resumed, “and I have been so for thirty-three years. Yes, my friend, I am a prisoner to the sea; it confines me on every side; waves, nothing but waves: I see nothing else, I hear nothing else. My hair has grown grey amidst their foam, and my back become somewhat bent already under their spray. I have spent so little time in England that I know it only by the map. My country is an ideal being, which I have merely had a glimpse of, but which I serve like a slave, and which treats me with the more severity the more need it has of me. It is the common lot: nay, what we ought most to wish is to have such chains, but sometimes they are very heavy.”

He paused for a moment, and we were both silent, for I durst not utter a word, perceiving that he meant to continue.

“I have maturely considered,” said he, “and I have questioned myself as to my duty while I have you on board with me. I might have sent you to England, but then you might have been plunged into a distress from which I will always protect you, and into a despair from which too I hope to save you. I had a real friendship for your father, and I will here give him a proof of it: if he sees us, he will be satisfied with me? don’t you think so?”

The Admiral again paused, and pressed my hand. He even drew nearer, and looked closely at me, to discover the effect produced upon me by what he was saying. But I was too much confounded to make any reply. He proceeded more rapidly.

“I have already written to the Admiralty, recommending that, on the first exchange of prisoners, you should be sent back to France. But,” he added, “I frankly own to you that it may be a long time before this takes place; for, not only does Bonaparte throw obstacles in the way, but very

few prisoners are taken from us. Meanwhile, I must tell you, that I should be pleased to see you learn the language of your enemies; you see that we understand yours. If you like, we will study together, and I will lend you Shakspeare and Cook's Voyages. Keep up your spirits; you will be free before me; for if the Emperor does not make peace, I must end my days at sea."

This tone of kindness, by which he associated himself with me, and made us comrades in his floating prison, caused me to feel for him. I comprehended that, in this sacrificed and secluded life, he was impelled to do good as a secret consolation for the harshness of his wholly warring mission.

"Sir," said I, "before you teach me the words of a new language, acquaint me with the thoughts by which you have attained this perfect serenity, this equality of mind, which resembles happiness, and which disguises an everlasting *ennui* . . . . Forgive what I am going to say, but I fear that this virtue is but a perpetual dissimulation."

"You are very much mistaken," said he; "the sentiment of duty acquires at last such a sway over the mind, that it enters into the character and becomes one of its principal features, just as wholesome food, perpetually taken, can change the mass of the blood, and become one of the principles of our constitution. I have learned from experience, better perhaps than any man, how extremely easy it is to arrive at complete forgetfulness of self. But we cannot put off the man entirely, and there are things that keep firmer hold of the heart than we could wish."

Here he once more paused, and raised his long telescope. He placed it on my shoulder, to look at a distant light that was gliding along the horizon; and, perceiving in a moment, from the motion, what it was, "Fishing-boats," said he, and he seated himself by me on the ship's side. I saw that he had, for a long time, something to say, which he hesitated to begin upon.

“You never talk to me about your father,” said he, all at once. “I am surprised that you have no questions to ask me concerning him, that you have not wanted to know something about his illness, about what he said, about his last wishes.”

And, as the night was very light, I perceived that I was still closely watched by his large dark eyes.

“I was afraid of being indiscreet,” said I, with embarrassment.

He squeezed my arm, as if to prevent me from proceeding.

“It is not that, my child ; it is not that :” and he shook his head doubtingly, but with a look of kindness.

“I have had few opportunities of speaking to you.”

“Still less is that it,” said he, interrupting me. “You might have talked to me on that subject any day, if you had pleased.”

I remarked agitation and somewhat of reproach in his accent. This was what he had upon his heart. I bethought me of another silly answer to justify myself ; for nothing makes one look so foolish as bad excuses.

“Sir,” said I, “the humiliating sense of captivity engrosses more than you can imagine.” And I remember that, in uttering these words, I strove to assume an air of dignity and a Regulus look, calculated to produce an effect upon him.

“Ah, poor fellow ! poor boy !” he exclaimed, “you don’t stick to the truth. Search your heart, and you will there find an indifference for which you are not accountable, but probably the military profession of your poor father.”

He had opened the way to Truth, and I let her take it.

“It is certain,” said I, “that I knew very little of my father ; I had scarcely seen him more than once, at Malta.”

“That is the truth !” cried he. “There lies the cruelty ! my friend. My two daughters will one day say the same. They will say : ‘*we knew very little of our father !*’ Sarah and

Mary will say this ! And yet I love them with a heart warm and tender. I educate them, though at this distance ; I watch over them from my ship ; I write to them every day ; I direct their reading, their studies ; I send them ideas, and sentiments ; I receive their childish communications in return ; I scold them ; I make it up with them ; I know all that they do ; I know what day they have been at church in too smart dresses. I give their mother continual instructions for them ; I foresee who will be their lovers, who will solicit their hands, who will marry them ; their husbands will be my sons ; I am bringing them up to be simple and pious women—is it possible to be more the father than I am ? . . . Well, this is all nothing, because they do not see me.”

He uttered the concluding words with tremulous voice, evidently akin to tears . . . . . After a moment’s silence, he continued,

“ Yes, Sarah never sat on my knee since she was two years old, and I never had Mary in my arms but before her eyes were yet opened. Yes, it cannot be otherwise than that you should have been indifferent towards your father, and that they should some day grow so towards me. One does not love an invisible parent. What is their father to them ? a daily letter—a piece of advice, more or less cold. One does not love a piece of advice, one loves a being—and a being that one never sees might as well not exist—one does not love it—and, when it dies, it is not more absent than it was before—and one does not weep for it !”

His voice was choked, and he stopped. Unwilling to enter farther into that painful feeling before a stranger, he retired and paced the deck for some time. I was, at first, deeply moved at this sight ; he awakened in me a remorse for not having known the value of a father, and to this conversation I owed the first tender, natural, sacred emotion, that my heart ever experienced. From that deep regret, from that insurmountable sadness, amidst the brightest military re-

noun, I became sensible how much I had lost in never having known the love of home, which could give such cutting pangs to a great heart ; I comprehended how much there was factitious in our brutal and barbarous education, in our insatiable eagerness for stunning action ; I saw, as by a sudden revelation of the heart, that there was an adorable life, a life to be regretted, from which I had been violently torn, a genuine life of fraternal love, in exchange for which there was made up for us a false life, entirely composed of hatred and all sorts of puerile vanities ; I comprehended that there was but one more sacred thing than family, and to which a man may holily sacrifice himself, namely, that other family—his country. And while the brave old Admiral, retiring from me, wept because he was good, I buried my face in both my hands, and wept, because I had hitherto been so bad.

In a few minutes the Admiral came back to me. “ I have to tell you,” he began again, in a firmer tone, “ that we shall very soon be off the French coast. I am an everlasting sentinel placed before your ports. I have but one word to add, and I wished it to be said between our two selves : Bear in mind that you are here upon parole, and that I shall not watch you ; but, my child, the longer you are with us the harder will be the trial. You are yet very young ; if the temptation becomes too strong for your fortitude to withstand, come to me when you are afraid that it will get the better of you ; don't shun me, and I will save you from a dishonourable action, which, unfortunately for their names, some officers have committed. Remember that a man is justified in breaking a galley-slave's chain, but not his word of honour.” And with the concluding words he shook me by the hand and left me.

I know not, sir, if you have remarked, in the course of your life, that the revolutions which are effected in our souls depend frequently on a day, an hour, a memorable and unexpected conversation, which shakes us, and sows, as it were,



fresh seed in our hearts, which grows up slowly, and of which the rest of our actions are merely the consequence and the natural development. Such were to me the morning at Fontainebleau and the night on board the English ship. Admiral Collingwood left me to sustain a fresh combat.

What in me had been but extreme weariness of captivity and an unbounded and juvenile impatience to act, became an irrepressible longing after my country. On seeing what grief was slowly undermining a man perpetually separated from his native land, I felt a strong impulse to know and to adore mine; I fancied myself bound by ties of affection, which, in fact, had no existence; I imagined myself a member of a family, and began to dream of relatives whom I had scarcely known, and whom I reproached myself for not having sufficiently loved, while they, accustomed to consider me as nobody, lived in their coldness and their egotism perfectly indifferent to my forlorn and misdirected existence.

Thus good itself turned to evil in me; thus the prudent counsel which the brave Admiral had deemed it his duty to give me, he had delivered entirely encompassed with an emotion which was his own and which spoke louder than he; his tremulous voice touched me more than the wisdom of his words; and, while he meant to tighten my chain, he had more strongly excited within me the irresistible desire to break it.

Such is almost always the case with advice, whether written or oral. Experience and the reasoning which results from our own reflections can alone instruct us. Only observe, you who dabble in them, the inutility of the belles lettres! What good do you effect? whom do you convert? and by whom are you ever understood, I should like to know? You almost always represent the contrary cause to that which you are pleading as triumphant. For example, there is one of you who extols *Clarissa* as the finest possible epic poem on the virtue of woman—what is the consequence? Readers take the opposite side, and bestow all their interest on *Lovelace*,

whom she nevertheless blasts with her virgin splendour, which rape itself has not tarnished; on Lovelace, who in vain flings himself upon his knees to implore forgiveness of his holy victim, and cannot bend that soul which the fall of her body has left unsullied. In such lessons everything turns out wrong. All that you do is to rouse the vices which, proud that you paint them, come to look at their figures in your pictures, and find themselves beautiful.

It is true that you care little about this, but my good and simple Collingwood had conceived a real friendship for me, and my conduct was not indifferent to him. Hence it gave him great pleasure to see me engaged in serious and persevering study. In my habitual silence and reserve he also found something that sympathized with English gravity; and he acquired a habit of opening his mind to me on many an occasion, and of communicating to me matters that were not unimportant. After some time I was considered as his secretary and kinsman, and I spoke English well enough not to appear too much the foreigner.

It was, nevertheless, a cruel life that I led, and the melancholy days at sea seemed very tedious to me. For whole years, we never ceased hovering about the coast of France, and I continually saw at the horizon the outline of the coast of that country which Grotius called the fairest kingdom next to that of heaven. We then went off to sea again, and, for months together, I saw nothing around me but fogs and mountains of water. Whenever a ship passed us, whether near or at a distance, she was sure to be English; no other had permission to spread her sails to the breeze, and Ocean heard not a word that was not English. The English themselves felt sad on this account, and complained that the Ocean had now become a desert where they met with none but their own countrymen, and Europe a fortress that was closed against them.

Sometimes my wooden prison approached so near to the

land, that I could distinguish men and boys walking upon the shore. My heart at such times would throb vehemently, and inward rage seized me with such violence that I would go down below lest I should yield to the temptation to throw myself overboard in order to swim to land; but when I returned to the indefatigable Collingwood, I was ashamed of my boyish weakness; and I could not help admiring how he combined so active a courage with such profound sadness.

That man who, for forty years, had known nothing but war and the sea, never ceased studying both as an inexhaustible science. When one ship was weary he went on board another; like an unmerciful rider, he wore them all out and killed them under him. He wearied seven while I was with him. He passed his nights, completely dressed, seated upon his guns, incessantly engaged in calculating the art of keeping his ship motionless, like a sentinel, on the same spot, without being at anchor, and in spite of wind and storm. He was continually exercising his crews and watching over them and for them. Then, going down to his cabin, he again became the father, and wrote to desire that his daughters might not be made fine ladies, or allowed to read novels, "but history, travels, essays, and Shakespeare's plays, as often as they pleased." After the battle of Trafalgar, which I had the mortification to see him gain, and the plan of which he had formed with his friend Nelson, whom he succeeded, he wrote to his wife: "I hardly know how we shall be able to support the dignity to which his Majesty has been pleased to raise me. Let others plead for pensions; I can be rich without money, by endeavouring to be superior to everything poor. I would have my services to my country unstained by any interested motive."

Sometimes, when he felt his health declining, he solicited indulgence from England; but the inexorable one replied, "Stay at sea," and sent him a distinction, a dignity, a gold medal, for every glorious achievement: his bosom was covered

with them. Again he wrote: "I have only been ten days in port since I left England . . . . I shall never have any good prospects till I can get my darlings about me, and then, perhaps, I shall be almost blind, and not able to see them . . . . I am very sorry that, with such a list as we have, there should be thought to be any difficulty in finding a successor of superior ability to me." England replied: "You must remain at sea, always at sea." And there he did remain till his death.

This Roman life touched me, and commanded my reverence, when I had contemplated it for but a single day. I felt a great contempt for myself—I, who was nobody as citizen, nobody as father, as son, as brother, as family man, or as public man, to complain when he never complained! He had only once afforded, in spite of himself, a glimpse of his real feelings, and I, a useless boy, an emmet among the emmets whom the sultan of France trampled under foot, I reproached myself for my secret desire to return and to give myself up to the hazard of his caprices, and to become again one of the atoms of that dust which he kneaded up with blood!

The sight of this genuine citizen, devoted, not as I had been, to a man, but to his country and to duty, was a fortunate circumstance for me; for I learned in this severe school what is that true greatness which we ought henceforward to seek in arms, how much, when thus understood, it exalts our profession above all others, and how it can leave the memory of some of us worthy of admiration, whatever may be the destiny of war and armies.

Never did man possess in a higher degree that inward peace which springs from the sentiment of sacred duty, and the modest carelessness of the warrior to whom it is of little consequence whether his name be celebrated, provided that the common weal prospers. I saw him write one day:—  
"What my heart is most bent on is the glory of my country.



To stand a barrier between the ambition of France, and the independence of England, is the first wish of my life; and in my death I would rather that my body should be added to the rampart, than trailed in useless pomp through an idle throng . . . . My best service is due to my country as long as I live . . . . Pray do not talk about the wound in my leg, or people may think that I am vapouring about my dangers."

His sadness was profound, but full of grandeur; it was no impediment to his incessant activity, and he furnished me with the standard of what the intelligent warrior ought to be, practising the *art of war*, not as an ambitious man, but as an artist, looking at it from above, and often despising it, like that Montecuculli, who, when Turenne was killed, retired, not deigning to continue the game with an ordinary player. But I was still too young to comprehend all the merits of this character, and what took the strongest hold of me was the ambition to gain in my own country a rank equal to his. When I saw the kings of the south soliciting his protection, and Napoleon himself exulting in the hope that Collingwood was in the Indian Seas, I even went so far as to wish most ardently for an opportunity to escape, and in such haste was I to comply with the suggestions of the ambition which I still cherished, that I was on the point of violating my promise. Yes, so low as that had I fallen!

One day, the Ocean, on board which we were, put into Gibraltar. I went on shore with the Admiral, and, walking by myself through the town, I met a French officer belonging to the 7th Hussars, who had been taken prisoner in Spain and carried to Gibraltar, with four of his comrades. They had the town for their prison, but they were closely watched. I had been acquainted with this officer in France. We were both pleased at our meeting, being nearly in the same situation. It was so long since I had heard a Frenchman speak French, that I thought him eloquent, though he



was a thoroughly stupid fellow, and we had been together scarcely a quarter of an hour before we had opened our minds to one another concerning our position. He frankly told me at once that he intended to escape with his comrades; that they had found an excellent opportunity, and he should not let them ask him twice to accompany them. He strongly urged me to do the like. I told him that he was very lucky in being watched, but that I, who was not, could not attempt to escape without dishonour; and that he, his companions, and myself, were not in the same predicament. This reasoning appeared to him too subtle.

“I am no casuist, faith!” said he, “and, if you choose, I’ll send you a bishop to give you his opinion of the matter. Were I in your place, I should start. I see but two things—being free and not being so. Recollect that you have lost your promotion for the five years that you have been confined in those English stocks. The lieutenants of your standing are already colonels.”

His companions thereupon joined us, and made me go with them to a house of very equivocal appearance, where they called for sherry, and there they mentioned so many captains who had become generals, and sub-lieutenants promoted to viceroys, that my brain turned, and I promised to meet them at the same place at twelve o’clock on the third night from that time. A little boat belonging to some honest smugglers was to be in readiness there, and to carry us on board a French ship that had come to take the wounded of our army to Toulon. The scheme appeared to me an admirable one, and my jovial companions, having made me drink a good many bumpers to drown the qualms of conscience, concluded their persuasions with a victorious argument, swearing by their heads that though it was but right to entertain some regard for an honest man who had treated one well, yet everything confirmed them in the certainty that the English were not men.

I returned very thoughtful on board the Ocean, and when I had slept and saw my position clearly on awaking, I asked myself if my countrymen had not been making game of me. Still the desire of liberty, and an ambition keen and excited ever since my boyhood, urged me to escape, in spite of the shame which I felt to violate my oath. I passed the whole day with the Admiral, without daring to look him in the face, and I strove to think him little.

At dinner, I spoke loudly and arrogantly of the greatness of Napoleon; I warmed as I proceeded; I extolled his universal genius, which instinctively divined laws in making codes, and the future in making events. I insisted with insolence on the superiority of this genius, compared with the slender talent of men of tactics and manœuvres.

I hoped to be contradicted; but, contrary to my expectation, I found in the English officers even greater admiration for the Emperor than I could myself show for their implacable enemy. Lord Collingwood, in particular, flinging off his melancholy silence and his habitual pensiveness, praised him in terms so just, so energetic, so precise, expatiating to his officers on the extraordinary foresight of the Emperor, the magic celerity of his execution, the firmness of his orders, the certainty of his judgment, his penetration in negotiations, the shrewdness of his ideas in council, his greatness in battle, his calmness in danger, his perseverance in the preparation of his enterprizes, his pride in the attitude that he had given to France, and, in short, on all the qualities which compose the great man, that I asked myself what History could ever add to this panegyric; and I was mortified, because I had sought to incense myself against him, hoping to hear him launch out into unjust accusations.

I had secretly and maliciously wished that he might contradict me, and that some inconsiderate or derogatory expression on his part might serve as a justification of the dishonourable act which I meditated. But it appeared as if he made a

point, on the contrary, of redoubling his kindness; and his marked attention causing the rest of the company to suppose that I had experienced some new affliction, under which it was right to soothe me, they were all more friendly and more indulgent to me than ever. I was vexed at this, and left the table.

Next day, unfortunately for me, the Admiral took me again to Gibraltar. We were to spend a week there. The night fixed for escape arrived. My brain boiled, and I was still undecided. I assigned specious motives to myself, and wilfully shut my eyes to their falsehood. A violent conflict took place within me; but, while my soul was twisting and writhing in agony, my body, as though it had been arbiter between ambition and honour, struck by itself alone into the tract of flight. I had, without being myself aware of it, made a bundle of my things, and I was just going from the house where we were staying in Gibraltar to that of our rendezvous, when I suddenly stopped short. I felt that it was impossible for me to proceed.

In dishonourable actions there is something poisonous that is perceived by a man of good heart, the moment his lips touch the edge of the cup of perdition: nay, he cannot so much as taste it without being ready to die. When I saw what I was about, and that I was going to forfeit my word, I was seized with such a horror, that I thought I must be mad. I ran along the shore, and fled from the fatal house as from a plague-hospital, without daring to turn round or look back. I threw myself into the water, and swam off, dark as it was, to our ship, the Ocean, my floating prison. Seizing her cable, I clambered into her; and, when I was upon deck, I clasped the main-mast and clung to it as to an asylum that saved me from dishonour; and, at the same moment, the feeling of the magnitude of my sacrifice rending my heart, I sank upon my knees, and leaning my head against the iron hoops that encircled the mast, I burst into tears and wept like a child.

The Captain of the Ocean, seeing me in this state, and believing, or feigning to believe that I was ill, ordered me to be carried to my cabin. I earnestly besought him to place a sentinel at my door to prevent me from leaving it. They locked me up, and I breathed more freely, delivered at length from the torture of being my own gaoler. Next morning, when it was light, I perceived that we were out at sea, and I became somewhat more composed on losing sight of land, the object of every unhappy temptation in my condition. I began to think of it with more resignation, when my little door opened, and the good Admiral entered alone.

“I am come to bid you adieu,” he began, with a less serious look than usual. “You start for France to-morrow morning.”

“Gracious Heaven! is it to try me that you tell me this, my lord?”

“That would be a very cruel experiment, my boy,” replied he. “I have already done you a very grievous wrong. I ought to have left you in prison in the Northumberland, and released you from your parole. You might then have conspired without remorse against your keepers, and exerted without scruple all your skill to effect your escape. Enjoying more liberty, you have suffered more; but, thank God! you yesterday withstood the temptation to commit an act that would have dishonoured you. It would have been absolutely foundering in port, for I had been a fortnight negotiating your exchange, which Admiral Rosilly has just settled. I have trembled for you; for I was acquainted with the scheme of your countrymen. I suffered them to escape for your sake, for fear that in stopping them you might be stopped. And how could we have contrived to keep such a thing secret? You would have been ruined, my child, and believe me, ill-received by Napoleon’s old brave officers. They have a right to be difficult in regard to honour.”

I was so agitated that I was unable to thank him. He

perceived my embarrassment, and, cutting short the wretched phrases in which I was endeavouring to stammer out a declaration that I was sorry to leave him, "Come, come," said he, "no French compliments, as we call them: we are satisfied with one another—that is all; and you have, I think, a proverb which says, 'There is no such thing as an agreeable prison.' Leave me to die in mine, my friend; I have got used to it, for my part; indeed, I could do no other. But this will not last much longer; I find myself falling away, and my legs tottering under me. For the fourth time, I have begged a little rest of Lord Mulgrave, and he has again refused it me: he writes that he knows not how to supply my place. When I am gone, however, he must find me a successor, and it would not be amiss if he were to look out. I shall remain on duty in the Mediterranean; but you, my child, lose no time. Yonder is a sloop that is to take you. I have but one thing to recommend to you; that is to devote yourself to a principle rather than to a man. The love of your country is one great enough to fill a whole heart, and to occupy all the faculties of the mind."

"Alas! my lord," said I, "there are times when one cannot easily ascertain what the country wishes. At any rate, I will go and ask mine."

Once more we bade each other adieu, and with a heavy heart, I parted from that worthy man, of whose death I was apprized shortly afterwards. He died at sea, as he had lived for forty-nine years, without complaining, without boasting of his services, without having seen his two daughters again—solitary and sad, as one of those old dogs of Ossian, which are everlastingly guarding the coasts of England amid waves and fogs.

I had learned in his school all that the exiles of war can suffer, and all that the feelings of Duty can quell in a great soul. Deeply impressed by his example, and rendered more



grave by my own sufferings and by the sight of his, I came to Paris to present myself, with the experience gained in my prison, to the almighty master whom I had quitted.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE RECEPTION.

HERE, Captain Renaud having paused, I looked at my watch. It was two o'clock. He rose, and we walked into the midst of the grenadiers. A deep silence everywhere prevailed. Many of them were sitting on their knapsacks and had fallen asleep. We seated ourselves a few paces off on the parapet, and, after relighting his cigar at the pipe of a soldier, he continued his narrative. There was not a house that exhibited any sign of life.

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As soon as I had reached Paris, I endeavoured to see the Emperor. I soon had an opportunity at the theatre of the court to which I was taken by one of my old comrades, who was now a colonel. It was in the Tuileries, yonder. We placed ourselves in a little box opposite to the imperial box and waited. There was as yet nobody in the theatre but the Kings. Each of them, seated in a separate box in the first tier, had his court around him, and opposite to him, in the galleries, were his aides-de-camp and his familiar generals. The Kings of Westphalia, Saxony, and Wirtemberg, and all the princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, were in the same tier. Near them, standing, talking loud and fast, was Murat, King of Naples, shaking his long black hair, like a mane, and casting lion looks around him. In the tier above were the King of Spain, and, apart and alone, the Russian ambassador, Prince Kourakin, covered with epau-

lettes and diamonds. The pit was crowded with generals, dukes, princes, colonels, and senators. Every place above was filled with the ladies of the court, with bare arms and shoulders.

The box surmounted by the eagle was still empty; we turned our eyes to it incessantly. In a short time, the Kings rose and remained standing. The Emperor entered his box alone, walking fast; he threw himself into an arm-chair, and looked at something straight before him with his eye-glass; then, recollecting that the whole house was standing and awaiting a look, he shook his head twice sharply and ungracefully, turned about quickly, and allowed the Kings and Queens to seat themselves. His chamberlains, dressed in red, were standing behind him. He spoke to them without looking at them, and from time to time held out his hand for a gold snuff-box, which one of them gave him and took back again. Crescentini sang the *Horatii* with the voice of a seraph, issuing from a lean and shrivelled face. The orchestra was soft and subdued, by command of the Emperor, wishing, perhaps, like the Lacedemonians, to be rather soothed than excited by the music. He kept looking in front of him with his eye-glass, and very often towards where I sat. I recognized his large eyes, of a greenish-grey, but did not like the yellow fat which had smothered his austere features. He placed his left hand upon his left eye to see better, according to his custom; I perceived that he had recognized me. He turned about sharply, took no notice of anything but the stage, and presently retired. I was already in waiting for him. He walked fast along the corridor, and, from his thick legs, squeezed into white silk stockings, and his bloated figure in his green dress, I should scarcely have known him again. He stopped short before me, and, speaking to the colonel, who presented me, instead of addressing himself direct to me, "Why," said he, "have I never seen anything of him! Still a lieutenant!"

“He has been a prisoner ever since 1804.”

“Why did he not make his escape?”

“I was on parole,” said I, in an under-tone.

“I don’t like prisoners!—the fellows ought to get killed!” said he, turning his back upon me.

We remained motionless in file, and when the whole of his suite had passed: “My dear fellow,” said the colonel, “don’t you see plainly that you are a fool? You have lost your promotion, and nobody thinks the better of you for it.”

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE RUSSIAN CORPS-DE-GARDE.

“Is it possible?” said I, stamping on the ground. “When I hear such stories, I rejoice that the officer has been dead within me for several years. Nothing is left but the solitary and independent writer, who watches to see what is becoming of his liberty, and will not defend it against his old friends.”

And I fancied that I could perceive in Captain Renaud traces of indignation at the recollection of the circumstances that he was relating to me. Be this as it may, he smiled with a placid and contented look, and thus proceeded.

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It was perfectly natural. This colonel was the best fellow in the world; but there are people who, according to the celebrated expression, are braggarts of crime and unfeelingness. He thought he would insult me, because the Emperor had set the example—gross flattery of the corps-de-garde.

But how fortunate was this for me! From that day I began to have an inward esteem for myself, to have confidence in myself, to feel my character purified, formed, com-

pleted, strengthened. From that day, I saw clearly that events are nothing, that the inward man is everything; I placed myself far above my judges. In short, I felt that I had a conscience; I resolved to be guided entirely by that, to consider public opinions, signal rewards, rapid fortunes, bulletin reputations, as ridiculous quackeries, as a game of chance, not worth bestowing attention upon.

I lost no time in joining the army, in plunging into unknown ranks, the infantry of the line, the infantry of battle, where the peasants of the army were mowed down by a thousand at a time, as regular and as equal as the swathes in one of the rich meadows of Beauce. There I buried myself like a Carthusian in his cloister; and, amidst this armed multitude, marching on foot like the common soldiers, carrying a knapsack, and eating their bread, I was in all the great wars of the Empire, so long as the Empire lasted. Ah! if you did but know how easy I felt under those unparalleled fatigues! How fond I was of that obscurity, and what wild joys great battles imparted to me! The beauty of war is amidst the soldiers, in the camp life, in the mud of marches and of the bivouac. I revenged myself on Bonaparte by serving my country, without receiving anything from Napoleon, and, when he passed before my regiment, I hid myself for fear of a favour. Experience had taught me to appreciate dignities and power at their proper value.

I now aspired at nothing more than to take in each conquest of our arms that portion of pride which belonged to me, according to my own feeling. I resolved to be a citizen wherever it was permitted to be so, and in my own way. Sometimes my services passed unnoticed, at others they were extolled beyond their deserts, while I never ceased to keep them in the dark as much as lay in my power, dreading nothing more than that my name should be too conspicuous. The multitude of those who follow a contrary course is so

great, that obscurity was easy to me, and that I was still but lieutenant in the Imperial Guard in 1814, when I received this wound which you see on my forehead, and which to-night is more painful than usual.

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Here Captain Renaud passed his hand several times over his brow, and, as he seemed disposed to be silent, I entreated him to proceed with such urgency that he complied. He rested his head on that of his bamboo cane.

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That is singular enough, said he, I never related the whole of that story, and to-night I have a good mind to do so.—Pshaw! never mind! I like to unbosom myself to an old comrade. It will furnish you with a subject for serious reflections, when you have nothing better to do. To me it appears not unworthy of them. You will think me either very weak or very mad; but I don't care. Till the event, very common-place for some, which I am going to relate to you, and the account of which I am putting off in spite of myself, because it pains me, my love of military glory had become discreet, grave, devoted, and perfectly pure as is the simple and unique sentiment of Duty; but from that day other ideas came to throw additional gloom over my life.

It was in 1814; it was the beginning of the year and the end of that dismal war, in which our poor army defended the Empire and the Emperor, while France looked on with dismay. Soissons had just surrendered to Bulow, the Prussian. The armies of Silesia and the North had there formed their junction. Macdonald had left Troyes, and abandoned the basin of the Yonne to establish his line of defence from Nogent to Montereau with thirty thousand men.

We were to attack Rheims, which the Emperor wished to recover. The weather was gloomy and the rain incessant.



We had just lost a superior officer, who was escorting prisoners. The Russians had surprised and killed him in the preceding night, and delivered their comrades. Our colonel, who was what is called *a tough one to cook*, resolved to have his revenge. We were near Epernay, and were turning the heights that surround it. Evening came, and, after taking the whole day to refit, we were passing a very pretty white mansion with turrets, called Boursault, when the colonel called me. He took me aside, while arms were piled, and said to me with his old croaking voice :

“You see that barn up yonder on that peaked hill ? there where yon great booby of a Russian sentinel, with his bishop’s cap, is walking to and fro ?”

“Yes,” said I, “I see distinctly both the barn and the grenadier.”

“Well, you who are an old hand, must know that that is the point which the Russians took the day before yesterday, and which the Emperor is particularly anxious about just now. He says that it is the key to Rheims, and so it may be for aught I know. At any rate we shall play Woronzow a trick. At eleven to-night, you will take two hundred of your boys and surprise the corps-de-garde which they have established in that barn. But you must carry it with the bayonet, for fear of giving an alarm.”

He took, and offered to me, a pinch of snuff ; and, throwing away the rest by little and little, as I may do now, he said to me, uttering a few words as he sprinkled each dust in the breeze :

“You may be sure that I shall be behind you with my column. . . . You will not have lost more than sixty men. . . . You will have the six pieces that they have placed there . . . You will turn them on the side next Rheims. . . . By eleven o’clock. . . . half-past eleven. . . . the position will be ours. And then we will lie down till three, to rest

ourselves awhile. . . . from the little affair at Craonne, which was no ball-play, as the saying is."

"That's enough," said I to him, and away I went with my second lieutenant, to make some preparations for our expedition. The essential point, as you see, was not to make a noise. I ordered the arms to be examined, and the cartridges to be drawn from all those that were charged. I then walked about for some time with my sergeants, waiting for the hour of starting. At half-past ten, I ordered them to put on their great coats over their uniform, and to cover their muskets with their great coats; for, whatever you may be about, as you see to-night, the bayonet always shows itself; and, though the night was a great deal darker than this, I would not trust entirely to that. I had taken especial notice of the paths, bordered by hedges, leading to the Russian corps-de-garde, and I picked out for the job the most resolute fellows I ever commanded. Yonder, in the ranks, are two of them who were there, and recollect the affair well. They had got used to the Russians, and knew how to deal with them. The scouts whom we fell in with as we ascended were put out of the way without noise, like reeds that you lay down upon the ground with your hand. The sentry posted before the guns required more precaution. He was standing still, with grounded arms, his chin propped upon his piece; the poor devil rocked like a man dropping to sleep from fatigue and ready to fall. One of my grenadiers clasped him in his arms, and squeezed him till he was almost stifled; while two others, having gagged him, threw him into the bushes.

I came up slowly, and I could not, I must confess, get the better of a certain emotion which I had never felt at the moment of other encounters. It was shame for attacking men who were asleep. I saw them wrapped in their cloaks, lighted by a close lantern, and my heart throbbed violently.

But all at once, at the moment of acting, I feared that it was a weakness very like that of cowards. I was afraid that I had for once felt fear, and, taking my sword which had been concealed under my arm, I briskly entered first, setting the example to my grenadiers. I made a motion to them, which they comprehended; they fell first upon the guns, then upon the men, like wolves upon a flock of sheep. Oh! it was a dismal, a horrible butchery! The bayonet pierced, the butt-end smashed, the knee stifled, the hand strangled. All cries were extinguished, almost before they were uttered, beneath the feet of our soldiers; and not a head was raised without receiving the mortal blow.

On entering, I had struck at random a terrible stroke at something black, which I had run through and through. An old officer, a tall, stout man, whose head was covered with white hair, sprung upon his feet like a phantom, made a violent lunge at my face with a sword, and instantly dropped dead, pierced by the bayonets! On my part, I fell beside him, stunned by the blow, which had struck me between the eyes, and I heard beneath me the tender and dying voice of a boy, saying, "Papa!"

I then comprehended what I had done, and I looked at my work with frantic eagerness. I saw one of those officers of fourteen, so numerous in the Russian armies which invaded us at that period, and who were dragged away to this awful school. His long curling hair fell upon his bosom as fair, as silken, as that of a woman; and his head was bowed, as though he had but fallen asleep a second time. His rosy lips, expanded like those of a new-born infant, seemed to be yet moist with the nurse's milk; and his large blue eyes, half open, had a beauty of form that was fond and feminine. I lifted him upon one arm, and his cheek fell against mine, dripping with blood, as though he were burying his face in his mother's bosom to warm it again. He seemed to shrink from me, and to crouch close

to the ground, in order to get away from his murderers. Filial affection, and the confidence and repose of a delicious sleep, pervaded his lifeless face, and he seemed to say to me : " Let us sleep in peace ! "

" Was this an enemy ? " I exclaimed. And that paternal feeling which God has put into the bowels of every man leaped and thrilled within me. I clasped him to my bosom, when I felt that I was pressing against it the hilt of my sword, which had pierced his heart, and killed this sleeping cherub. I would have stooped my head to his, but my blood covered him with large stains ; I felt the wound on my forehead, and recollected that it had been given by his father. I looked around, with an emotion of shame, and saw nothing but a heap of dead bodies, which my grenadiers were dragging off by the heels, and throwing outside, taking nothing from them but their cartridges.

At this moment the Colonel entered, followed by his column, whose step and arms I heard.

" Bravo, my dear fellow ! " said he ; " you've done that job cleverly. But you are wounded ! "

" Look there ! " said I— " what difference is there between me and a murderer ? "

" Eh ! *Sacre-dieu !* comrade, what would you have ? 'Tis our trade. "

" Precisely so, " I replied ; and I rose to resume my command. The boy fell back into the folds of his cloak, in which I wrapped him, and his hand dropped a bamboo cane, which fell upon my hand, as if he had given it to me. I took it, resolving whatever dangers I might have to encounter in future, to have no other weapon, and I had not courage to draw my slaughtering sword out of his bosom.

I hastily quitted that den, which stank of blood, and, when I was in the open air, I felt strong enough to wipe the gore from my bleeding brow. My grenadiers were in their ranks ; each was coolly wiping his bayonet on the greensward,

and fastening the flint on the lock of his piece. My sergeant-major, followed by the quarter-master, walked before the ranks, holding his list in his hand; and, reading it by the light of a candle's end stuck in the barrel of his musket, he calmly called over the names. I sat down, meanwhile, at the foot of a tree, and the surgeon came and bound up my wound. A heavy March shower fell upon my head, and somewhat refreshed me. I could not help heaving a deep sigh. "I am tired of war," I said to the surgeon.

"So am I," said a grave voice, which I knew.

I pushed the bandage from over my eyes, and saw, not Napoleon the Emperor, but Bonaparte the soldier. He was alone, dejected, on foot, standing before me, his boots sunk in the mud, his coat torn, the rain dripping from the brim of his hat: he felt that his last days were come, and around him he beheld his last soldiers.

He looked at me steadfastly. "I have seen thee somewhere grumbler," said he.

From the concluding word, I perceived that it was merely a familiar phrase which he had employed. I knew that I had grown older in look than in years and in fatigues; moustaches and wounds disguised me sufficiently.

"I have seen you everywhere, without being seen," I replied.

"Dost thou wish for promotion?"

"It is full late," said I.

He crossed his arms for a moment, without answering. "Thou art right," he then said; "in three days we shall both of us quit the service."

He turned his back on me, and remounted his horse, held for him at the distance of a few paces. At this moment, our *tête de colonne* had attacked, and the enemy was firing bombs at us. One of them fell before my company, and some of the men started back in the first moment of alarm.



of which they were afterwards ashamed. Bonaparte advanced alone towards the bomb, which burned and smoked at his horse's feet, and made him snuff up the smoke. All continued silent and motionless; the bomb burst, and hurt nobody. The grenadiers felt the terrible lesson that he gave them, while I felt that in this conduct there was something besides, which bordered on despair. France was forsaking him, and for a moment he had doubted the attachment of his brave veterans. I deemed myself too signally avenged, and him too severely punished by so complete a desertion. I rose with effort, and, approaching him, grasped and pressed the hand that he offered to several of us. He did not recognize me, but it was for me a tacit reconciliation between the most obscure and the most illustrious man of our age. The drums beat a charge, and, at daybreak, Rheims was re-taken by us. But a few days afterwards Paris was in possession of the allies.

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Having concluded his narrative, Captain Renaud kept silence for a considerable time, and remained with his head bowed, while I abstained from interrupting his reverie. I considered this brave man with veneration, and, while he spoke, I had attentively followed the slow transformations of that excellent and simple spirit, always repulsed in its expansive donations of itself, always crushed by an invincible ascendancy, but which had at last found repose in the humblest, and the most austere Duty.

His unknown life appeared to furnish an inward spectacle not less beautiful than the brilliant life of any man of action whatever. Each wave of the sea adds a white veil to the beauty of a pearl; each billow slowly labours to render it more perfect; each flake of foam that is rocked over it, leaves it a mysterious tint, half golden, semi-transparent; which merely indicates an inward ray, issuing from its

heart : precisely so it was that this character had been formed amidst vast convulsions, and the most gloomy and perpetual trials.

I knew that, till the death of the Emperor, he had considered it as his duty not to serve, in spite of all the remonstrances of his friends, out of regard to what he called decorum ; and afterwards, released from the tie of his old promise to a master who no longer knew him, he had returned to command, in the Royal Guard, the relics of his old guard ; and, as he never talked of himself, nobody had thought of him, and he had not been promoted. He cared little for this, and was accustomed to say that, unless a man could get to be general at twenty-five, an age at which the imagination may be set to work, it was better to remain merely captain, to live with the soldiers as the father of the family, as the prior of the convent.

“There,” said he, after this interval of silence, “look at our grenadier, Poirier, with his gloomy and squinting eyes, his bald head, and his scarred cheek—him whom the marshals of France stop to admire, when he presents arms to them at the King’s door, look at Beccaria, with his ancient Roman profile ; look at Frechou, with his white moustaches : look at that whole decorated first rank, whose sleeves have three chevrons ; what would they have said, those old monks of the old army, who never would be anything but grenadiers, if I had not been with them this morning—I who commanded them only a fortnight ago ? Had I, in the course of several years, acquired domestic habits, or adopted some other profession, the case would be different ; but here I have, in fact, no merit beyond theirs.

“Besides,” said he, “see how calm all Paris is to-night ; calm as the air,” added he, rising, “Day will presently dawn. I dare say they will not begin breaking the lamps again, and to-morrow we shall return to our quarters. For my part, I shall probably have retired to a little spot of

ground which I have in the country, and on which there is a little cottage, where I will finish my study of Polybius, Turenne, Folard, and Vauban, for my amusement. Almost all my comrades were killed while in the grand army, or have died since; I have long had no one to chat with, and you know in what way I came to hate war, even while carrying it on with energy."

He then shook me cordially by the hand and left me, again asking for the gorget, if I still had mine and it was not too rusty. A moment afterwards, he called me back, and said: "Stay, as it is not absolutely impossible that they may fire at us again from some window, I will beg you to keep for me this old pocket-book, full of old letters, which are interesting to me, and to me alone, and which you will burn, if we should not meet again.

"Several of our old comrades came to us, and we begged them to retire to their own homes. We do not wage civil war, not we. We are calm as those firemen, whose duty it is to extinguish the conflagration. The parties will settle their differences afterwards—that is no concern of ours."

So saying, he left me with a smile.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### A MARBLE.

A FORTNIGHT after this conversation, which the revolution itself had not put out of my head, I was reflecting all alone on that modest heroism and disinterestedness, both of which are so rare. I strove to forget the pure blood which had just been spilt, and was reading once more in the history of America, how in 1793 the completely victorious American army, having delivered the country and sheathed the sword, was ready to mutiny against the Congress,

which, too poor to discharge its arrears of pay, was preparing to disband it. Washington, generalissimo and conqueror, had but to speak a word or to give a sign, in order to make himself Dictator : he did what he alone had the power to accomplish, he disbanded the army, and resigned his command.

I had laid down the book, and was comparing this serene greatness with our restless ambition. I was sad, and was calling to mind all those pure martial spirits, without false lustre and without quackery, who have been fond of power and command for the public weal alone, who have held them without pride, and been incapable of either turning them against the country, or converting them into gold. I thought of all those who have waged war with a knowledge of its real worth : I thought of the excellent Collingwood, that model of resignation ; and lastly, of the obscure Captain Renaud ; when a man of lofty stature, in a long blue great coat, in very bad condition, entered my room. From his white moustaches, and from the scars on his copper-coloured face, I recognized in him one of the grenadiers of his company : I asked if he was still living, and the brave fellow's emotion plainly showed that some misfortune had befallen him. He sat down, and wiped his brow, and when, after a while, and after some attentions, he had recovered himself, he told me what had happened.

On the 28th and 29th of July, Captain Renaud had done nothing but march through the streets, at the head of his grenadiers, in column. He placed himself before the first section of his column, and proceeded quietly, amidst a shower of stones and musket-shot, from coffee-houses, balconies, and windows. When he halted, it was to close his ranks, opened by those who had fallen, and to see that his guides on the left kept at proper distances. He had not drawn his sword, and marched cane in hand. His orders had at first reached him punctually ; but, either, from the

aides-de-camp being killed by the way, or because the staff had not despatched any, he was left in the night, between the 28th and 29th, on the Place de la Bastille, without other instructions than to retire upon St. Cloud, and to destroy the barricades on the way. This he did without firing a shot.

On reaching the bridge of Jena, he halted, and ordered his company to be called over. He had not lost so many as any of the other companies of the Guards which had been detached, and his men were likewise less fatigued. He had contrived during those scorching days to allow them to rest at seasonable times and in the shade, and to find for them in the forsaken barracks those refreshments which were refused by the houses hostile to the troops. Such was the countenance of his column that he had found every barricade deserted, and he had no further trouble than to cause it to be demolished.

He was therefore standing at the head of the bridge of Jena, covered with dust, and shaking his feet, looking towards the barrier to see that there was nothing to obstruct the passage of his detachment, and selecting the scouts that were to be sent forward. There was nobody in the Champ de Mars but two masons, who were lying on their faces, apparently asleep, and a boy of about fourteen, running about barefoot, and snapping two bits of broken crockery like castagnets. He rattled them from time to time on the parapet of the bridge, and came, playing in this manner, to the post by which Renaud was standing.

The captain was pointing at the moment with his cane to the heights of Passy. The boy approached him, staring at him with astonished eyes, and drawing a horse-pistol from under his waistcoat, laid hold of it with both hands, and pointed it at the captain's breast. He turned it aside with his cane, but the boy, having pulled the trigger, the ball entered the upper part of his thigh. The captain fell upon



his seat without saying a word, and looked with pity at this singular enemy. He saw the boy still holding his weapon in both hands, and quite frightened at what he had done.

The grenadiers were at that moment sadly resting upon their arms: they did not deign to make a single gesture against the young rogue. Some of them lifted up their captain, others merely laid hold of the boy by the arm, and led him to the officer whom he had wounded. He burst into tears, and when he saw the blood streaming from the officer's wound down his white trowsers, he was so terrified that he fainted. The captain and the boy were both carried together to a small house near Passy, where they still were.

The column, commanded by the lieutenant, had pursued its route for St. Cloud; and four grenadiers, putting off their regimentals, had remained in that hospitable house to attend to their old commanding officer. One of them—he who had called upon me—had got work in Paris as a journeyman gunsmith, others as fencing masters, and, bringing their earnings to the captain, they had provided for all his wants up to that day. Amputation had been performed, but the fever was violent and malignant, and, as he was afraid that it would become still worse, he sent to beg me to call upon him.

There was no time to be lost. I set out immediately with the worthy soldier, who had related these particulars to me, with moist eyes and tremulous voice, but without murmur, without abuse, without accusation, merely repeating: "'Tis a great misfortune for us!"

The wounded officer had been carried to the house of a widow, who lived alone, and kept a small shop in a retired street of the village, with her children who were quite young. She had not been apprehensive for a moment of compromising herself, and nobody had thought of molesting her on this account. The neighbours, on the contrary, had been eager to assist her in nursing the patient. The sur-

geons who had been called in, conceiving, after the operation, that he could not be removed with safety, she had kept him, and had frequently sat up with him all night.

When I entered, she came to meet me, with a look of gratitude and timidity that gave me pain; I felt how many embarrassments she must have concealed from good-nature and kindness of heart. She was very pale, and her eyes were red, and wore the expression of fatigue. She went to and fro towards a very small back-shop, which I perceived from the door, and I saw, from her bustle, that she was arranging the little apartment of her patient, and that she took pride in having it in such a state that a stranger should think it tidy. Of course I took care to allow her all the time that she needed. "Come in, sir," said she, opening the door for me, "he has suffered a great deal."

Captain Renaud was sitting up in a little bed, with curtains of serge, placed in a corner of the room, and several bolsters supported his body. He had fallen away to a skeleton. His face at the cheek-bones was red as fire: the scar on his forehead was black. I saw that he would not last long, and his smile told me so too. He held out his hand to me, and made me a sign to be seated. He had at his right a young boy, who held a glass of gum-water, and was stirring it with a spoon. He rose and brought me his chair. Renaud, from his bed, took hold of his ear, and said mildly, and in a faint voice: "Allow me, my dear fellow, to introduce to you my conqueror."

I shrugged my shoulders, and the poor boy cast down his eyes and blushed. I saw a big tear trickle down his cheek.

"Come! come!" said the captain, passing his hand through his hair, "'tis not his fault; poor boy! He had met with two men, who made him drink brandy, gave him money, and sent him to fire the pistol at me. He did it, just as he would have thrown a marble at a post—was it not so, Jean?"

Jean trembled, and his face assumed an expression of such anguish that I was touched by it. I looked closer at him; he was a very handsome boy.

“And it was really a marble,” said the landlady. “Look, sir”—and she showed me a small marble, of the size of the largest leaden bullets, with which the horse-pistol that lay there had been charged.

“And that was quite enough to lop off the limb of a captain,” said Renaud.

“You must not make him talk much,” timidly said the shopkeeper to me.

Renaud did not hear her. “Yes, my dear fellow,” he continued, “there is not stump enough to fasten a wooden leg to.”

I pressed his hand without replying, humbled to see that to kill a man who had seen so much and suffered so much, whose breast was bronzed by twenty campaigns and ten wounds, tried by frost and fire, pierced by bayonet and lance, nothing more was needed than a wriggle of one of the tadpoles of the kennels of Paris, known by the name of *Gamins*.

Renaud replied to my thought. He leaned his cheek upon the bolster and squeezed my hand. “We were at war,” said he to me. “He is no more a murderer than I was myself at Rheims. When I killed the Russian boy, perhaps I was a murderer too. In the great war in Spain, the men who stabbed our sentinels did not consider themselves as murderers, and, being at war, perhaps they were not. Were the Catholics and Huguenots murderers or not?—Of how many murders is a great battle composed?—There is one of the points on which reason is puzzled and knows not what to say—It is war that is in fault and not we. I assure you that this little fellow is very gentle and well-disposed. He reads and writes tolerably already. He is a foundling—he was apprenticed to a cabinet-maker—he has not left my room this fortnight, and he is very fond of me,

poor thing! He has a turn for mathematics, something may be made of him."

As he spoke with increasing difficulty, and drew nearer to my ear, I stooped my head, and he gave me a small folded paper, which he begged me to run my eye over. I saw that it was a short will, by which he left a bit of a farm which he possessed to the poor woman who had taken him in, and, after her, to Jean, whom she was to bring up, on condition that he should never be a soldier. He stipulated the sum to be paid to his master for his release, and gave a piece of ground for an asylum to his four grenadiers. He appointed a country attorney in the neighbourhood his executor.

When the paper was in my hands, he seemed easier and ready to doze. He then shuddered, and, again opening his eyes, he begged me to accept and to keep his bamboo cane. Presently he dozed off again. His old soldier shook his head and took hold of one hand. I took the other, which felt cold. He complained that his feet were cold, and Jean lay down with his little bosom against the bed in order to warm him. Captain Renaud then began to grope at the sheet with his hands, saying that he could not feel it—this is well known to be a fatal sign. His voice was hollow. He raised with difficulty one hand to his forehead, looked steadfastly at Jean, and said: "It is singular though! This urchin is very like the Russian boy."

Presently he closed his eyes, and, pressing my hand, with returning presence of mind:—"Look you," said he to me, "the brain is seized. 'Tis just over."

His look was different, and more calm. We comprehended this struggle of a firm mind, judging of its situation with the pain that confused it; and to me, this sight, on a miserable truckle-bed, was full of solemn majesty.

Again he reddened, and said very loud: "They were fourteen . . . both of them. Who knows if . . . ?"

He then shivered, turned pale, and then looked at me

quietly, and with emotion:—"Tell me!" said he, "could you not shut my mouth for me? I am afraid to speak . . . . it weakens one . . . . I should not like to speak again . . . . I am thirsty."

A few spoonfuls of liquid were given to him, and he said:—"I have done my duty. That idea makes me happy." And he added: "If the country should be the better for what has been done, we have nothing to say; but you will see . . . ."

He then fell into a doze for about half an hour. After that time, a woman came softly to the door, and made a sign that the surgeon was come. I stepped out on tiptoe to speak to him, went with him into the little garden, and, having stopped by the side of the well to question him, we heard a loud cry. We hastened in, and saw a sheet thrown over the face of this worthy man—he was no more!

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## CHAPTER X.

### CONCLUSION.

THE epoch that has left me these scattered recollections is now closed. Its circle began in 1814 with the battle of Paris, and ended with the three Paris days in 1830. It was the time when, as I have observed, the army of the empire was absorbed by a then nascent army, which was now arrived at maturity. After having, under various forms, explained the nature, and pitied the condition of the Poet in our society, I meant here to show those of the Soldier, another modern Paria.

I wished this book to be for him, what an altar to Fortuna Minor was for the Roman soldier.

I was pleased with these narratives, because I place above all others that devotedness which does not court observation.



The most illustrious sacrifices have something in them that lays claim to glory, and that one cannot help finding in them in spite of one's self. You would strive in vain to strip them of this character, which lives in them, and which constitutes their force and their stay; it is the bone of their flesh, and the marrow of their bone. There was, perhaps, something in the combat and the spectacle that strengthened the martyrs; the part was so great in that scene, that it might double the energy of the holy victim. Two ideas supported him on both sides—the canonization of the earth and the beatification of heaven. Let these antique immolations to a holy conviction be for ever venerated: but is not that unknown devotedness, which does not even seek the notice of those who are its object—are not those modest, silent, obscure, unheeded sacrifices, hopeless of any crown, human or divine—are not these worthy of our love, when we can discover them? These mute resignations, instances of which are more frequent than one would suppose, have in them so mighty a merit that I know not any virtue which can be compared with them.

It is not unintentionally that I have endeavoured to turn the attention of the army to that PASSIVE GREATNESS, which consists entirely in *self-denial* and *resignation*. It never can compare for splendour with that active greatness in which energetic faculties largely develop themselves; but it will long be the only one to which the armed man can pretend, for he is almost uselessly armed at the present day. The dazzling greatness of conquerors is extinct perhaps for ever. Its past splendour becomes dim, I repeat it, in proportion as disdain of war gains footing in the mind, and disgust of cold cruelties in the heart.

Standing armies embarrass their masters. Every sovereign looks with uneasiness at his army; this Colossus, seated at his feet, mute and motionless, annoys and affrights him; he knows not what to do with it, and he fears lest it should

turn against him. He sees it burning with ardour, and unable to move. The need of an impossible circulation is incessantly irritating the blood of this great body; that blood which is ever boiling and never spilt. From time to time, rumours of great wars arise and growl like distant thunder; but these impotent clouds disperse, these whirlwinds subside into grains of sand, treaties, protocols, and what not. Philosophy has happily circumscribed war, negotiations supersede it, and mechanics will completely abolish it by its inventions.

But while the world, yet an infant, is delivering itself from this ferocious plaything, until this consummation, slow, indeed, but which seems to me infallible, the Soldier, the man of war, needs something to soothe the severity of his condition. He feels that the Country, which loved him for the sake of the glories with which he crowned her, begins to despise him for his idleness, or to hate him on account of those civil wars in which he is employed to strike his mother. This gladiator, who no longer has so much as the applause of the Circus, has need to recover confidence in himself, and we have need to pity him, in order to do him justice; because, as I have said, he is blind and mute, obliged to go whithersoever others please; and, while fighting to-day against this or that cockade, asking himself if he may not to-morrow have to mount it on his hat.

What idea is to support him, unless that of Duty and of the oath that he has taken! And, in the uncertainties of his route, in his weighty scruples, and his keen repentances, what sentiment ought to warm and is capable of exalting him in our days of coldness and discouragement? What have we yet left us that is sacred?

In the universal wreck of religious creeds, what fragments are there to which generous hands can yet cling? Save love of ease and of the luxury of a day, nought is to be seen on the surface of the abyss. One would suppose that selfishness

has sunk everything ; even those who seek to save souls, and who plunge in boldly, find themselves on the point of being swallowed up. The heads of the political parties now take religion as a watchword and a banner, but what faith have they in its wonders, and how do they follow its law in their lives ? Artists place it in the light, like a precious medal, and plunge into its dogmas as into a source of epic poetry, but how many of them are there that kneel in the church which they decorate ? Many philosophers embrace its cause, and plead it as generous advocates plead that of a poor and forlorn client ; their writings and their words love to tinge themselves with its colours, to impress themselves with its forms ; their books love to adorn themselves with its Gothic gilding ; in all they do, they delight to make the mazy labyrinth of their arguments wind around the cross ; but how rarely is that cross beside them in solitude ! The military man fights and dies almost without ever thinking of God. Our age knows that it is so, and would fain be otherwise, but cannot. It surveys itself with gloomy eye, and no other ever felt so deeply how unhappy is an age that sees itself.

From these melancholy signs, some foreigners have deemed us sunk into a state similar to that of the Lower Empire ; and grave men have asked themselves if the national character was not about to be lost for ever. But those who have looked more closely at us, have remarked that character of manly determination which survives in us all that has been so deplorably worn by the friction of sophisms. Manly actions have lost none of their antique vigour in France. A prompt resolution governs sacrifices as great, as complete, as ever. More coolly calculated, battles are conducted with more scientific violence. The least thought produces acts as great as the most fervent faith formerly did. Among us creeds are weak, but man is strong. The youth of the present generation cease not to defy death, either from duty or

caprice, with a Spartan smile ; a smile, the more intrepid, inasmuch as all of them do not believe in the feast of the gods.

Yes, I have thought that I perceived in this dreary sea a point that to me appeared solid. I beheld it at first with uncertainty, nay, I could not believe my eyes ; I was afraid to examine it, and, for a long time, I turned them away. By and by, tormented by the recollection of this first sight, I reverted, in spite of myself, to this visible but uncertain point. I approached it, I went round it, I have seen beneath it and above it, I have laid my hand on it, I have found it solid enough to afford support in emergency ; and I have been soothed by this conviction.

It is not a new faith, a worship of new invention, a confused thought, but a sentiment born with us and in us, independent of time, place, and even religion ; a proud, an inflexible, sentiment ; an instinct, which has not found till modern times a name worthy of itself, but which produced sublime greatness even in antiquity, and fertilised it like those beautiful rivers, which, at their source and in their windings, have not yet any appellation. This faith, which seems to me to be still left to all, and to bear sovereign sway in armies, is that of HONOUR.

I do not see that it has grown weaker or that anything has worn it. 'Tis not an idol ; it is for most men a god, and a god around which many superior gods have fallen. The fall of all their temples has not shaken its statue.

An indefinable vitality animates this singular, this proud virtue, which stands firm amidst all our vices, even harmonizing with them to such a degree as to gain strength from their energy. While all the other virtues seem to descend from heaven to lend us a hand and to raise us up, this appears to come from ourselves and to tend to mount to heaven. It is a wholly human virtue, which we may believe

to be born upon earth, without any celestial palm after death: it is the virtue of life.

Such as it is, its worship, interpreted in various ways, is always uncontested. It is a masculine religion, without symbol and without image, without dogmas and without ceremonies, whose laws are written nowhere; and yet how is it that all men have the sentiment of its serious power? The present men, the men of the hour in which I am writing, are sceptical and ironical for everything excepting this. Every one looks grave when its name is uttered. This is not theory, but observation. At the name of honour, the man feels something stir within him, which is, as it were, part of himself; and this thrill awakens all the powers of his pride and of his primitive energy. An invincible firmness supports him against all and against himself, at the thought of watching over that pure tabernacle which is in his bosom as a second heart wherein a god is enshrined. Hence he derives inward consolations, the more exquisite since he is ignorant of their real source and reason; hence, too, those sudden revelations of the just, the beautiful, the true; hence a light that everywhere goes before him.

Honour is Conscience, but exalted Conscience. It is respect for one's self, and for the beauty of life carried to the purest elevation and to the most ardent passion. Nowhere, it is true, do I see unity in its principle, and, whenever people have undertaken to define it, they have lost themselves among terms; but, as far as I can see, they have not been more precise in the definition of God. Is this any proof against an existence that is universally felt? Herein lies, perhaps, its highest merit, in being so potent and invariably beautiful, whatever its source.

Sometimes it prompts a man not to survive an affront sometimes to bear it with a fortitude and a magnanimity that repair it and efface its stain. At others, it suggests



great enterprizes, magnificent and persevering struggles unheard of sacrifices, slowly accomplished, and more admirable for their patience and their obscurity than the flights of a sudden enthusiasm or of a violent indignation ; it produces acts of beneficence, which evangelical charity never surpassed ; it has wonderful tolerations, delicate kindnesses, divine indulgences, sublime pardons. At all times and in all places, it maintains the personal dignity of man in all its beauty.

Honour is Virile Modesty. With us the disgrace of violating it is greater than any other disgrace. This indefinable thing, then, is a sacred thing.

Consider the value among us of this popular, universal, decisive, and yet simple, expression : to give one's word of Honour. Here the human word ceases to be merely the expression of ideas, it becomes the word *par excellence*, the sacred word among all words, as if it were born with the first articulate sound uttered by the tongue of man ; and, as if, after it, there were not another word worthy of being pronounced : it becomes the promise of man to man, blest by all nations ; it becomes even an oath, because you add to it the words OF HONOUR.

Thenceforward, each has his word, and is as tenacious of it as of his life. The gamester has his, holds it sacred, and keeps it : in the whirl of passions, it is given, taken, and wholly profane as it is, it is sacredly observed. And this principle, which we may consider as innate, which nothing renders obligatory but the internal assent of all—is it not more especially of sovereign beauty when it is practised by the military man ?

The word of Honour, which is too often a mere word with the politician, becomes a terrible fact with the soldier : what the one says lightly or perfidiously, the other writes in the dust with his blood ; and hence it is honoured by all above

everything, and many are obliged to cast down their eyes before it.

May the purest of religions, in its new phases, not attempt to deny or stifle this sentiment of Honour, which lives within us, like a last lamp in a ruined temple! May it rather appropriate it to itself, and unite it with its own splendours, by placing it as an additional light upon its altar, which it is striving to restore! Here is a divine work to accomplish.

For my part, struck with this happy sign, I only aimed at, and indeed I was only capable of producing an humble and entirely human work, and at simply stating what I fancied that I had discovered yet living among us. Let us beware of saying of this antique God of Honour, that he is a false god, for the corner-stone of his altar is, perhaps, that of the altar of the unknown God. The magic loadstone of that altar attracts and attaches the hearts of steel, the hearts of the strong. Say, is this not so, ye, my brave comrades, ye, for whom I have penned these narratives!—O new Theban Legion! ye who submitted to have your heads crushed upon this stone of the oath!—say, all ye saints and martyrs of the religion of HONOUR!

## PART IV.

MILITARY LIFE IN BIVOUAC, CAMP, GARRISON, BARRACKS, &amp;c.

## CHAPTER I.

THE VELITES, AND MILITARY SCHOOL OF FONTAINEBLEAU.

IN the time of the Empire, there were three ways of entering the military service: by entering as a private soldier, the simplest and the least costly; by enrolling one's self in the Velites; or by obtaining admission as a pupil into the military school of Fontainebleau.

Had Napoleon, when he instituted the Velites of the Imperial Guard, required only physical conditions in order to be admitted into this new corps, he would have found few applicants; but the decree of institution insisted that the young candidates should have had a certain education, and that each should pay a premium of two hundred francs in the infantry, and three hundred in the cavalry, merely to have the honour of being a soldier in the guard, with the promise of being made an officer at the expiration of four years. Applications poured in *en masse* to the ministry of war, and all the places were soon taken.

Philip Augustus was the first king of France who constituted a body of picked men to guard his person. Being one day informed that the sheik, commonly called the Old Man of the Mountain, had formed a plan for assassinating him, he immediately assembled his brave nobility, and selected one hundred gentlemen, whom he armed with maces of brass, bows and arrows, and ordered to attend him wherever

he went: they were called sergeants-at-arms. Such was the origin of the first guard of our kings; hence arose the body guard, the imperial guard, and the royal guard.

At the commencement of the present century, martial ideas were fermenting in all young heads, and the glorious exploits of our armies filled and made every heart throb with noble enthusiasm. Themistocles of old could not sleep for thinking of the triumphs of Miltiades. Ambition, that mighty motive of human actions, which is frequently confounded with love of country, propelled all the young men of twenty towards our distant frontiers: perhaps, too, the prospects of the inevitable conscription induced them to enrol themselves beforehand; just as a swimmer, seeing a storm approaching, puts his clothes under cover, and throws himself into the river.

The ranks of the army were always ready to receive a new comer; the ranks being thinned from time to time by the cannon, vacant places were constantly to be found; but the knapsack, the musket, and life in barracks, were much more dreaded by the young men, tenderly brought up, than balls and bullets. This noviciate might last very long, nay, it might last for ever; for was any one certain of surmounting the hardships, of being able to do as well or better than others?—these conditions being rigorously enforced, in order to qualify for officer.

The military school of Fontainebleau threw open its doors for twelve hundred francs per annum; but, being beset by a crowd of young men, all could not pass them. Those who had not time to wait their turn for admission entered into the Velites: it was a more toilsome life; the epaulet was attained with greater difficulty, but the uniform was sooner donned, and at eighteen that is something. None but a soldier of that period can conceive what a spell there was in the uniform. What lofty expectations inflamed all the young heads on which a plume of feathers waved for the first time!

Every French soldier carries in his cartouch-box his truncheon of marshal of France ; the only question is how to get it out. In this we found no difficulty whatever ; nay, I think now that we had not then confined our dreams of ambition even to that limit.

One thing disturbed us :—If, said we, Napoleon should stop short in so glorious a career, if he should unfortunately take it into his head to make peace, farewell to all our hopes. Luckily, our fears were not realized, for he cut out more work for us than we were able to perform.

The Velites were soldiers in the imperial guard ; the premium which they paid procured them the honour of serving their apprenticeship with the *élite* of the *élite* of the army. They arrived full of zeal ; at first they thought that the exercise was not long enough, but they soon began to complain that it lasted too long : their novice's fervour abated. I recollect it well ; I passed through all these different phases.

A fortnight after my arrival, I had been so assiduous that I was deemed worthy of mounting guard for the first time. When once installed at the post, the old chasseurs who were with me began to enumerate all the young Velites, who, in a similar situation to mine, had paid their footing by ordering a treat for their comrades from the neighbouring restaurateur. Such a one had done the thing handsomely, such another had been stingy, and barely given them as much as they could drink ; while a third had behaved magnificently—pork-chops, bottled wines, coffee, spirits. I told them that I would do like this last. I was unanimously proclaimed a good fellow by the whole troop.

During the repast I was overwhelmed with praises. The aptitude which I showed in my first essays, and my extraordinary cleverness in the manual exercise, were highly extolled. Never, said the old grumblers, had any one mounted guard so soon : none of the Velites had attained that excess of



honour till two months after their admission; all declared that I should get forward, that high destinies awaited me.

Though a novice, I was not silly enough to take literally all these encomiums that were lavished on the founder of the feast: I saw clearly that they were addressed to my entertainment. Still all this was gratifying to me. I had my flatterers—I, a private soldier; these flatterers were the conquerors of Egypt and of Italy; those old moustached foxes bepraised a lad whose virgin chin had never yet passed under the hand of the barber. After this, be surprised, if you please, that in the highest classes there are courtiers, and people who believe them on their word. Every one has in this world a little circle that flatters him: those who compose it move round him as the planets around the sun. Such persons, retiring to their own homes, become centre and sun in their turn. Thus the courtier, on leaving the sovereign, finds courtiers waiting for him; even these latter have others; and so on down to the very lowest of all.

On that day I scratched my name with my bayonet on the wall behind the sentry-box. Accident having lately carried me to the gate of the Champ de Mars, I thought I would see whether it was still legible; after a long search, I found it, covered with moss. The dinner at the corps de garde came into my memory with all its joyous circumstances. Is there one of the party left, besides myself? said I, thinking of all the events that had succeeded one another during an interval of thirty years. If any old chasseur had at that moment shown his face, tanned by the sun of the pyramids, how heartily I should have hugged him! Oh, the capital dinner that we made together!

In garrison, the soldiers of the imperial guard were little Sardanapaluses in comparison with those of the line. To each mess there was a female cook, a Sybarite luxury, for which the former were jeered, but at the same time envied, by the others.

Many of the Velites grew tired of the soldier's life, and, in order to become officers the sooner, transferred themselves to the military school of Fontainebleau. Others, after applying for admission into the school, and finding no vacancy, urged by impatience to put on the uniform as speedily as possible, entered the Velites, the elastic ranks of which always opened for a new-comer. I belonged to the latter class. When my turn came to go to Fontainebleau, I left the army: I had then to begin my education over again. In the Velites we were trained to the horse exercise; there we manœuvred on foot: I had to relinquish the carbine for the musket. In the imperial guard, the hair was worn cut into a brush before, and a queue behind: at the military school, the toupet was retained without the queue: so that, for six months cropped before, cropped behind, I was cropped everywhere, and my shorn head looked almost exactly like that of a singing boy.

General Bellavenne was governor of the military school of Fontainebleau. All who ever knew him will agree that the appointment seemed to have been created expressly for him. We thought him severe, but we thought wrong: when a man has six hundred heads of eighteen to govern, it is difficult to keep them in order without great severity. His *alter ergo*, the brave Kuhman, seconded him most admirably. That epithet *brave* was given to him by a man who was a consummate judge—by Napoleon himself. He was an excellent Alsatian, mangling the French language, whose hobby was discipline, and who thought of nothing but the exercise. I see him still at his door, at the moment when the battalion was getting under arms, stretching himself three inches taller, and crying:—"Heads up! heads up!—immovable!—immobility is the finest movement of the exercise!"

The antiquary exploring the Parthenon or the ruins of

Baalbeck, the painter contemplating the masterpieces of Raphael or Michael Angelo, the dilettante seated in the pit of the Italian Opera, the sportsman who sees his pointer make a dead set, feel less intense delight than did the brave Kuhman in seeing a platoon manœuvre according to principles. When a movement was well executed, when an evolution was effected in an accurate and precise manner, tears trickled from his eyes down his cheeks, blackened by gunpowder; he could not find words to express his gratification; he contemplated his work, and admired himself. "There is nothing finer," he would sometimes say, "than a soldier carrying arms. Immovable, head upright, chest forward—'tis superb! 'tis magnificent! 'tis touching!"

The drum awoke us at five in the morning. The courses of history, geography, mathematics, drawing, and fortification, occupied us from hour to hour; we recreated ourselves by change of study, and, to vary our pleasures, four hours of exercise skilfully distributed, diversified our day in a very agreeable manner; so that we lay down at night with our heads full of the heroes of Greece and Rome, rivers and mountains, angles and tangents, ditches and bastions. All these things were mixed up rather confusedly in our minds; the exercise alone was a positive matter: our shoulders, our knees, and our hands, prevented us from confounding that with the rest.

Novels were prohibited in the military school: one of our officers had a great horror of them. As he took his rounds through the halls of study, he confiscated without mercy everything that appeared to him to belong to the *Bibliothèque bleue*. He knew the titles of the books that we ought to have; all others were reputed to be novels, and deemed liable to seizure and condemnation as lawful prizes.

It was required that the pupils should have learned Latin; it was not taught at the school, and, of course, Virgil was not

in our officer's catalogue. One evening, in the hall of study, I was reading the *Eneid*; he came behind me, and pounced upon my book like a vulture upon a nightingale.

"Another novel!" he exclaimed with an air of triumph.

"You are mistaken; it is Virgil."

"What does he treat of, this Virgil?"

"Of the siege of Troy, of wars, of battles . . . ."

"Troy! Troy! 'tis fabulous: I was right enough—another novel! Read the *Ecole de Peloton*—that is the best book for forming youth. If you must have amusement, imitate your neighbour. He instructs himself at the same time; he is a young man who spends his time to good purpose; if he lays aside that most interesting of all books, the Regulations of 1791, it is philosophical works that he takes up: he does not waste his time like you upon mawkish fictions." My neighbour, be it known, was reading *Thérèse Philosophe*.

"Only see how perverse these pupils are! In order to baffle me, they get novels printed in ciphers!" Such was the exclamation of our worthy officer when confiscating the Tables of Logarithms.

Our fare at the school resembled that of the soldiers in barracks; ammunition-bread, soup, and French beans in turn with other pulse: it was the strictly necessary without superfluity, as you may perceive. The introduction of every sort of dainty was prohibited. Now, young people are fond of dainties, and our invention was continually on the rack to devise new methods of smuggling. The porter, a stern custom-house officer, seized everything that looked at all like contraband; not for the purpose of re-exportation, but for his own benefit, and God knows whether he kept strict watch or not.

We went once a week into the forest of Fontainebleau, either to take plans or to work the guns. The officers of artillery and the professors of mathematics, who were with

us on that day, much more indulgent than the officers who superintended the police of the school, permitted us to visit a crowd of itinerant cooks, piemen, and confectioners, who surrounded us with baskets full of very good things, the privation of which gave us a higher relish for them. There was a sort of tacit understanding that the officers were not to notice what was passing for a quarter of an hour. And what was the consequence? The youths ate much and hastily; several of them returned to the school with overloaded stomachs and indigestions, which next day rendered it necessary to send them to the infirmary. Every week the same thing produced the same effects, which made the doctor remark that the canons of the school were not less dangerous to us than the cannon of the enemy.

Like the Parisians, who go to enjoy themselves beyond the barriers, we could not introduce anything fraudulently but in our stomachs. On our return we were always examined by piercing eyes, sometimes searched by expert hands, and smugglers were sure to be punished. Still it was disagreeable, after having had as much fowl, ham, pastry, as you liked for one day, to return on the next to a dish of lentils without sauce. The difference was too enormous; to soften it down by insensible demi-tints, and to prolong our gastronomic enjoyments, I invented cartouch-box pasties. This sublime invention gained me the most flattering encomiums from my comrades, and enrolled my name among those of the benefactors of the school.

You know, courteous reader, or perhaps you don't, how a cartouch-box is constructed: it is a leather box, containing a piece of wood perforated with holes to receive the cartridges. When we went out on the weekly expeditions to which I have been adverting, we had our muskets and our cartouch-boxes, but they were empty. One day, when, in the forest of Fontainebleau, I was conversing with due gravity on a matter of business with a vender of pastry, a luminous



idea darted across my brain : the most ordinary person sometimes has his flashes of genius. I took out the piece of wood, of which I have been speaking ; I gave it to the marseau, and told him to make for us a number of pasties, of precisely that form. I acquainted all my comrades with the circumstance. A week afterwards, each of us, before we set off, left the perforated piece of wood under his bed, and we returned by beat of drum, with a smuggled pasty, which we had the pleasure to secrete from the vigilance of all the custom-house officers of the school. We pursued the same course every week. While I remained at Fontainebleau the secret was strictly kept ; but, as everything, not excepting even the most useful, has an end in this best of all possible worlds, the cartouch-box pasties must have had their unlucky day.

General Bellavenne gave one day a grand dinner to the officers of the school and to the principal people of Fontainebleau. Thirty persons, invited to it, were in his drawing-room. The pupils, walking before the kitchen-windows, smelt a mass of combined odours, which produced the highest degree of irritation in the salivary glands of the mouth and the mucous membrane of the stomach. Reasoning by analogy, and comparing their recollections, they deduced from them the inference that the general's dinner must be an excellent one. Some intrepid fellows, scorning to eat their dry bread to this scent, resolved immediately to try the talents of the cook by a more positive test than that of smell.

Like grenadiers taking a redoubt by assault, they stormed the kitchen : cook and scullions were seized and thrust into sacks, head foremost. Into another sack they put woodcocks and partridges, salmon and turbot, hot and cold pasties, turkey stuffed with truffles. All these things formed a singular medley : no matter ; the invaders did not stand upon trifles ; they carried off, distributed, and devoured the

whole. The general and his officers arrived, glowing with anger, like men who have lost their dinner. They sought, searched, turned over and over again, questioned, but found nothing, learned nothing. They ordered us all to our rooms, but this did not prevent them from making a sorry dinner, and they never knew who were the authors of their disappointment.

The supreme *bon ton* of the School was to smoke ; in the first place, because it was forbidden, and in the next, because it was thought to give one a military air. Tobacco was smuggled in, night and day, in small quantities ; but ever so small a stream that is constantly running will at length fill the basin. From morning till night the drummers were engaged in no other business, and yet they could scarce supply the demands of the consumers.

It would seem that with many people smoking is a thing of the first necessity, like bread, like air. One day, when several officers were conversing before me of the privations of all sorts which they had suffered, before, during, and after the battle of Eylau—one complained that he had not tasted bread for three days, another that he had been obliged to eat horseflesh, a third that he had nothing whatever to eat, while an old officer of hussars exclaimed, with the utmost gravity : “ But only think of me—for five days together I had nothing to smoke but hay ! ”

Duels were frequent at the military school. Before my arrival, it was customary to fight with the bayonet ; but, one of the pupils having been killed, the use of that weapon was forbidden. This prohibition did not suppress the practice : they would procure pieces of foils, and, in case of need, tie a pair of compasses to the end of a stick ; and all to gain the reputation of hair-brained fellows. When any one had, by a duel, acquired this character, and could add to it that of a smoker, he had attained the pinnacle of glory.

One fine day, at a review, General Bellavenne proclaimed the names of those who were to set out on the morrow for

the army. Oh! what emotions while he was reading the list! our hearts throbbed as if they would have burst our sides. What joy among the elect! what anxiety among those whose names had not yet been called over! To don an officer's frock, to wear the epaulet, to gird on a sword—Oh, what gratification at eighteen! We were soldiers; a moment afterwards we became officers: a word had produced this happy metamorphosis. Man is a child in all his life; at all ages he has his toys; he frequently esteems himself according to the dress that he wears: he is perhaps in the right, because the multitude judges by that standard. Be this as it may, with our sub-lieutenant's epaulets, we thought something of ourselves.

A captain of the school was commissioned to take us to the Emperor's head-quarters. We travelled post, so it was said; the truth is, that we were crowded by dozens into carts, and that it took us a whole day, from morning till night, to proceed two stages. Before our departure we had written to the principal restaurateur at Montereau, to prepare, against our arrival there a dinner for one hundred and twenty-seven, at twenty francs per head; but as soon as the column of carts had left the school, it was surrounded by all the venders of eatables. It was for us that for three days all the spits had been turning, all the ovens baking, all the cooks cooking. The town of Fontainebleau must have felt the removal of the school to St. Cyr: we were terrible consumers.

If it is disagreeable to be endowed with a ravenous appetite without being able to satisfy it with good things, it is also extremely unpleasant when you come to a table sumptuously spread and find it physically impossible to swallow a morsel. Such was precisely the state of us all, on our arrival at Montereau. What was to be done? Incapable of acting, we were obliged to confine ourselves to the sad part of spectators. After sincerely deploring our improvidence, and paying our reckoning, we sent for all the poor and all

the blackguards of the town, and gave ourselves the treat of seeing them officiate in our stead.

The ambition of all of us was to assume a certain air of profligacy : we smoked, we drank drams, conceiving that these commendable habits would give us a military appearance. Our uniform, our swords, our epaulets were all new, all fresh from the shops. We exposed them to the rain and sun, that they might impart to them somewhat of the look of the bivouac. The school buttons and our beardless chins nevertheless betrayed us ; and Captain Dornier, who marched at our head, plainly showed that, with our epaulets of a week old, we were yet but schoolboys.

We travelled gaily on, for we were young, without care, and full of hope. In traversing Prussia, then Poland, and then Prussia again, faring sometimes well, at others ill, we were constantly laughing. It was at Thorn, the birth-place of Copernicus, that we began to perceive the proximity of the grand army. That town, encumbered with depôts of almost all the regiments, had half of its houses transformed into hospitals. We were obliged to put up with lodgings in garrets and stables ; there was nothing to be had between the two. We began to be sensible that, after all, war might not be the most agreeable thing in the world.

The army then occupied the cantonments which it took after the battle of Eylau, gained by the French, and by the Russians, as they assert. Napoleon was at Finkenstein, reviewing troops, repairing the losses of the month of February, communicating to all his extraordinary activity. There, I beheld, for the first time, that surprising man, of whom some would fain make a god, while certain idiots insist that he was but a fool. He has proved that he was neither the one nor the other. The opinions expressed concerning him have hitherto been too near the events to be exempt from partiality. No good history of Napoleon can be written for a long time to come : it is requisite for this

purpose that contemporaries and their children should have passed away, that enthusiasm should have cooled, that animosities should be extinguished. Then, and not till then, a man free from passions, consulting the thousands of volumes written, and that are yet to be written, will be able to find truth in the well. With these materials will be raised a superb, an imperishable, monument. I bring my mite in aid of this grand work.

We manœuvred before the Emperor, who appeared well satisfied, and next day we were dispersed among all the regiments of the army.

At the head-quarters of Finkenstein I rejoined my comrades of the Velites, and had the satisfaction to see that my epaulets were an object of envy to them all. I began to get used to them, and the congratulations which I received, restored to them all the charms of novelty. Many things are of value in the estimation of men, solely from the envy which they excite in those who cannot possess them. Many a child takes up again a plaything, of which he had long grown weary, because a little friend comes in, and finds it extremely amusing.

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## EDITOR'S REMARKS

ON

### CHAPTER I.

THE concluding observations of the first chapter are trite. If thousands of volumes have been written upon the achievements of one man by his contemporaries, we may surely find truth without much trouble, for the well in which she lies ensconced cannot be very deep. Napoleon was the greatest man of modern times. His rivals among the ancients were Alexander the Great, Cæsar, and Hannibal. Like



all other men, Napoleon was ambitious. He was not sanguinary. He was greatly beloved by the army and by the people of France. Being mortal, he committed errors; the attempt to seize Spain was, perhaps, his greatest misdeed; it was as criminal, though not so successful, or so cruel in its execution, as the conquest of India by England. But God is just. The French were deservedly beaten in Spain. The English rule totters in the East. Napoleon could not commit a small crime; his situation was so elevated, that the least deviation from rectitude had immense results; the slightest error in judgment was attended by great mischief; for the oak cannot fall like the acorn: he was, like all other sovereigns, exposed to temptation, and like them was tempted: the Saviour alone could stand upon the high mountain, and say:—"Get thee behind me, Satan!"

But, whether the crimes of Napoleon were few or many, it is admitted, even by his enemies, that his virtues were grand and numerous, and men proclaim him to have been the most powerful and the most extraordinary man that history records; Alexander was born a prince, and inherited a kingdom; Hannibal and Cæsar were also born princes in their respective oligarchies; Napoleon was self-exalted. All these things are admitted. What, then, do we wait for? What are we to expect from posterity? That Napoleon was great, we know. That he had faults and virtues, we know. The only answer that I can discover to the above questions is, that posterity will have to recount the *details* of Napoleon's great actions. But can it do this better than we can, who are his contemporaries? Posterity has also another task; having made up its mind as to details, it is then to supply the emperor with motives! It appears to some that contemporaries have the advantage over posterity. Others maintain the contrary, and that we, who are alive, are prejudiced; and that our descendants, who are neither dead nor alive, are to be a superior race. The author of this

volume, who is a clever and an agreeable writer, is among the latter, and, indeed, the opinion seems universal. It may, however, be worth while to examine into its value.

The author says that our posterity must write the life of Napoleon, and decide, I will not say whether he was a god or a fool, because, as M. Blaze justly remarks, the people who call him a fool are "idiots," but on the degree of merit in execution and motive to which Napoleon is entitled for each of his actions. His greatness having been a point settled by the present generation, our unborn historian is, therefore, to recount the details and the motives of the execution of the Duke D'Enghien, the invasion of Spain, the advance into Russia, and other matters. On all these points, we, who have the means, are said to be too prejudiced to decide. Let us judge from the experience which facts teach us. The best and most celebrated and most unprejudiced histories have been written by contemporary authors, such as Xenophon, Thucydides, Cæsar, Polybius, Tacitus, Davila: are these prejudiced authors? Then, with regard to those who write of by-gone days, is the philosophical Hume unprejudiced? Are there not many histories of times which are long past, that are full of prejudices? Do they not generally copy one from another? How few examine original works, and when they do so, what is this but to give a preference to contemporaneous historians? Does not all depend upon the mind of the author, and upon his industry in collecting good materials, not upon the time in which he writes? I am strongly tempted to refer to Colonel Napier's History of the Peninsular War, which I believe to be unprejudiced, not judging by my own partiality, but because I have seen it attacked with all the virulence of personal and party animosity, and yet pass through the ordeal unconfuted, and therefore unharmed in public opinion.

We know that posterity must be the judge of all contemporaneous history, but what hopes of correctness as to facts

can be expected from future historians, who are to write the history of our own times? Must not all their facts be drawn from the men of the present day, whose opinions, and the documents upon which they have been formed, must abide the decision of unborn men. The business, then, of existing authors is to pride themselves on being accurate, and to attack prejudice and inaccuracy with a dauntless pen. Thousands will in future search their pages, and sift their every word, in order to quote them as authorities for their own books; these future writers may be prejudiced, but they will not have any personal animosity against the authors of past days, and they will judge them by the accuracy or inaccuracy of their statements. If, like some of the ancients, they can bear a rigid examination, no man will attempt, three hundred years hence, again to write the history of times and events that have been well told by an actor in the scenes which that actor describes.

Whether a future history of Napoleon will display less prejudice than one which some military man may write in these days, I much doubt. The character of Napoleon produces enthusiastic admirers now. It will do the same to the end of time. The biographer of Napoleon *now*, while facts are all fresh and vivid, must feel that his fame as an author depends on his impartiality; and this impression will be more powerful in proportion as his abilities are commanding. We confound the duties of the present generation, who are witnesses, with those of the future generation, who form the jury; and we expect that the latter will depose to the facts, while they are called upon only to pass a verdict. The world will, in all ages, recur to the depositions of the witnesses to the facts, and it is the business of existing authors to furnish them. No man will prefer Livy to Polybius for an accurate statement of facts connected with the Carthaginian wars; indeed, Livy himself, by committing plagiary upon the work of the Grecian author, seems

to have tacitly confessed the superiority of the latter, in his account of the second Punic war. The battle of Zama was fought two hundred years B.C., and Polybius was born two hundred and six years B.C., so that he was five years of age when Zama was fought, and about thirty-eight when brought prisoner to Rome, where he became the friend of Scipio, the grandchild by adoption of Scipio Africanus; and with this Scipio (*Æmilianus*), surnamed Africanus the younger, he fought when Carthage was destroyed, fifty-one years after the battle of Zama. Now, as Polybius came to Rome about sixteen years after the last-named battle, the whole story must have been fresh—indeed, scarcely told; for we have seen twenty-four years pass since the battle of Waterloo was fought, and the “model of Waterloo” has but just appeared, while fresh incidents of this great engagement daily come to light: all is yet vivid in men’s eyes! Just so was the freshness of Zama in the days of Polybius, and the story of Hannibal is told by the friend of Scipio. Yet no posterior historian has accused the contemporary of partiality, or attempted to give a better history.

Prejudices very rarely enter into the works of a great historian; though he must bear from his own generation the accusation of being prejudiced. Each nation, each faction, each family, nay, each vain-glorious individual, takes up arms against him, if particular partialities be not fed by unqualified praise. These partialities form the rule of *impartiality* with men of an ordinary stamp. But the historian, whose firm and capacious mind is above such weakness, pursues his course unshaken by their puny assaults, and writes for future applause. Such a contemporary can write the life of Napoleon. If such a man does not arise, posterity may justly reproach the literature of the present age, as being so feeble that it could not grapple with this glorious subject.

As to the pretended life of Napoleon by Sir Walter Scott, it may be easily set aside. Every one must admire Sir Walter

Scott as a romance-writer : he has delighted society ; but when he pretends to write history, the case is quite changed. I will not enter upon a criticism of his life of Napoleon, but merely ask whether the life of a warrior can be written by a man totally ignorant of war ? If a shoemaker were to attempt to write the life of a great surgeon, he might, perhaps, give a tolerable account of the gossip held in the patients' rooms by the servants ; but he assuredly would give but a lame account of surgical operations. He would tell us that the doctor killed this man and saved that, but he could not tell why ; all would be mere assertion, or a hearsay theory of ignorant old women, or of enemies ; he could not form any judgment of his own, nor tell what was the result of certain medicines, or certain operations, nor could he form any correct judgment of the symptoms which rendered such practice proper or improper. In short, he would state that his hero was born, lived and died, where he went to school, where and with what success he practised ; but his professional merits, the character of the diseases which he treated and the causes of success would be far beyond the shoemaker's power, and the old proverb would be realized, that the "shoemaker should not go beyond his last." Just so with the life of Napoleon by Sir Walter Scott, and all the lives of military men which are written by non-military authors.

I speak of them quite independently of their political partialities or their impartialities ; I refer merely to their professional callings ; and common sense tells us that, to do justice to the histories of wars and of warriors, they must be written by military men.

But, because Walter Scott and others have failed in their lives of Napoleon, there is no reason to suppose that some young historian may not yet arise who will succeed ; some young and eloquent soldier, with a genius able to comprehend the great character of the emperor, and to do him justice.



This I hope and believe will be the case, and I cannot allow that being contemporaneous with transactions is an insuperable objection to their being justly and eloquently recorded.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE BIVOUAC AND MARAUDERS.

HERE we are, then, in a charming plain, cut up by the artillery, trampled by the cavalry. It has rained the whole day. It is here that we are to sleep. The order is given: twenty men of each company are sent to the neighbouring villages to fetch wood, straw, and provisions. A curious sight soon presents itself to our view. "The fair will be a good one," say the soldiers, "the dealers are coming." On all sides we see, in fact, our intrepid freebooters arriving laden with sacks of poultry, baskets of eggs, and files of loaves stuck upon the ramrods of their pieces. Some are driving before them sheep and cows, oxen and pigs: others are making peasants, whom they have put in requisition, carry straw and wood for them. From the sour looks of the latter, and from the interjections that escape them, you plainly perceive that they are far from pleased; but their words are drowned by the cries of the animals and by the loud laughter of the soldiers.

Meanwhile, fires are kindled, the pots begin to boil, night comes on, each has made his little arrangements for sheltering himself: but an aide-de-camp, a real mar-feast, comes at full gallop; and presently an order, transmitted from left to right, puts an end to our plans, and suspends our preparations. We must decamp without drum or trumpet: we are to sleep a few thousand paces farther. The fires are to be left alight on the spot that we are quitting, we are to kindle others elsewhere, to make the enemy believe that we have

twenty thousand men there, while in reality there are but ten thousand. This manœuvre is, no doubt, very scientific, but it is not the most agreeable to the ten thousand men.

All at once the pots are lifted off; the meat, just beginning to boil, is taken out of them smoking, wrapped in a wisp of straw, and tied to the knapsacks: and we start to begin again precisely what we have just been doing. Fresh fires are lighted, and presently there is nothing of them to be seen.

When the army is in bivouac, in presence of the enemy, every man lies down in his clothes, sleeping, as it were, with eyes open: it is necessary to be ready for whatever may happen. Sometimes we have been a month without pulling off our boots; a trial which, in the end, becomes extremely painful. Sometimes, too, when we had lain down, we took a fancy to unbutton the coat, and then the trousers; we slackened one buckle, and then another; and afterwards it took more time to set matters to rights than if we had completely undressed ourselves. When the weather is cold, everybody lies down near the fire; but you roast on one side, while you freeze on the other; you certainly have the resource of turning, like St. Lawrence, but it is not at all convenient.

When you are in second line, you may then undress, as less precaution need then be observed. The officers have linen bags, into which they creep, and which serve them for sheets. As the mattress and feather-bed are always replaced by two trusses of straw, the cloth sack is much more agreeable than sheets, because it does not suffer anything to penetrate into the inside.

The moment for rousing at the bivouac is never amusing. You have slept because you were fatigued; but when you rise, your limbs feel stiff; your moustaches like tufts of clover, are impearled, every hair of them, with dew-drops; the teeth are clenched, and you must rub the gums for a considerable time to restore the circulation. These little in-

conveniences are continually happening, even when the weather is fine, but, when it is rainy or cold, the situation is a great deal worse, and hence it is that heroes have the gout and the rheumatism.

Those who have never been engaged in war cannot form any idea of the calamities that it brings in its train. I shall not give a complete description of them; that would exceed the bounds which I have prescribed for myself. I shall merely say a few words concerning our life at the bivouac, and the waste made by the army. We lived upon what the soldiers *found*—a soldier never steals anything, he only finds it—and it was not possible to do otherwise: our rapid marches prevented our magazines from following us, when we had magazines. In rich countries, twenty times the quantity of provisions that it was possible to consume was brought to the camp; the rest was wasted. The soldier lives from hand to mouth: yesterday he was destitute of everything; to-day he is in abundance; he forgets the privations of yesterday, and gives himself no concern about the morrow: neither does it occur to him that in the following days other regiments will arrive at the position which he is about quitting, and that, while taking for himself what is necessary, it would be well to leave something for those who are to come after him. Such an idea never enters his head. A company of one hundred men has already killed two oxen—these are sufficient: they have besides *found* four cows, six calves, twelve sheep; they are all slaughtered without mercy, that they may regale themselves with the tongues, the kidneys, the brains. They enter a cellar where twenty pipes present an imposing and majestic battle-array; they have no tools for boring holes, but soldiers are never at a loss: they fire with ball at the staves, and presently twenty fountains of wines are playing on all sides, amid bursts of laughter from the actors. If one hundred pipes were in the cellar, they would all be broached at once, for they have a

right to try which is the best. All runs away, all is wasted, and it very often happens that the tipplers drink to such excess that they fall down and are drowned in the flood of wine which inundates the cellar.

Austria is a country fertile in all things: at each bivouac we left enough to subsist a regiment for a fortnight. The soldiers, after marching all day, spent great part of the night in seeking provisions, cooking and eating them. They indulged as little as possible in sleep; the whole time for rest they spent in making fricassees, pancakes, and fritters. As their stomachs were not strong enough to endure this incessant eating and drinking, the consequences were numerous indigestions, which filled the hospitals with sick. To an army, abundance is sometimes more injurious than want.

The supreme happiness with soldiers consists in gormandizing. In general, they would rather cook and coddle for themselves, than have two good meals supplied them at regular hours. In the environs of Ling, I was quartered with all my company on a wealthy farmer. Our host begged me to maintain discipline in his farm-yard, promising to furnish my men with everything necessary. They lay upon straw in a very spacious barn, and were supplied with three abundant and well-dressed meals a day. In going my rounds, I took it into my head to ask my fellows if they were satisfied with the way in which they were treated.

“Why, as for that matter,” said they, “not exactly.”

“I understand that your meals are good and abundant; it is right that, after so many fatigues, you should have some compensation.”

“We have not a great deal to complain of . . . . but . . . .”

“Is what they give you to eat bad?”

“No, . . . but . . . .”

“Is not the quantity sufficient?”

“Yes, . . . but . . . .”

“But . . . but . . . but . . . why don't you speak out? What had you yesterday for dinner?”

“Soup, bouilli, a dish of vegetables, roast mutton, a salad, cheese, a bottle of wine per man, and a small glass of brandy.”

“The devil! and you are not content!”

“Pardon me, lieutenant, but . . .”

“I wish you may never fare worse.”

“Ah! *pardi!*” said an old corporal, stepping up to me, “it is very good of you to take the trouble to convince those chaps that they are well off; but give them roasted angels and they would still grumble.”

They would, no doubt, have been much better pleased to have had less, and to prepare their meals themselves. They were enraged to see the oxen, the sheep, the poultry, and the pigeons, quiet in the farm-yard, and reposing on the faith of treaties. They would have liked to fall upon them with musket and sabre, to slaughter them all, to fritter all away in a single day, and then to proceed in the same manner in the neighbouring villages.

Another motive urges some of the soldiers to undertake the duty of procuring necessaries: while professedly searching for provisions, they enter houses, and sometimes find means to possess themselves of the purses of the owners. To search for provisions is an excellent pretext; when they do not receive regular allowances, it is impossible to prevent them from pillaging. The grand excuse of the marauders of an army is this:—“I am hungry; I am searching for bread.” This declaration admits of no reply. When you have not bread to give them, you must let them procure it how and where they can. The cavalry have a double excuse: they are seeking forage for their horses. A cuirassier was surprised by his captain while rummaging a chest of drawers.

“What are you about there?” said the officer angrily.

“Seeking some oats for my horse.”



“A likely place to look for oats!”

“I have just found in the peasant’s library a bundle of hay, between a thousand leaves of paper; why may I not meet with oats in this chest of drawers?”

The brave cuirassier had robbed the botanist of his herbarium, without discovering in it anything but an armful of hay for his horse.

It may not be amiss to remark here that the soldiers give the appellation of peasants to all who are not military men. My Philistine—so we call the soldiers who officiate for us as servants—said to me, one day: “A peasant is come to invite you to take soup (to dine) with him to-morrow, lieutenant.”—“What is his name?”—“Why, it is the baron, at whose house you lodged last week.”

In every regiment, in every company, there were determined plunderers, who marched on the outskirts of the track, two or three leagues from the column. Sometimes they were attacked by the enemy; but I can assert with truth, that the intelligence of the French soldier is equal to his bravery. These fellows chose one of their number for their chief, who commanded them as absolute dictator; and these new-made generals have fought serious battles, and gained victories.

During the retreat of the British army under Sir John Moore, to Corunna, our advanced guard which pursued it arrived, to its great astonishment, at a village surrounded by a palisade. The tricoloured flag waved on the steeple; the sentinels wore the French uniform. Some officers went up to it, and they soon learned that for three months past two hundred marauders had occupied that village. Their retreat being cut off, they had established themselves in this post, which they had fortified. Though frequently attacked, they had always repulsed the enemy. Their commander-in-chief was a corporal; sovereign of this colony, his orders were obeyed as implicitly as those of the Emperor. The officers, on

entering the village, proceeded to the residence of the commandant: he was out shooting with his staff. In a short time he returned and related his story, which showed how much bravery, seconded by intelligence, is capable of accomplishing.

This corporal, with his experience acquired by long habit, had fortified this village as well as any officer of engineers could have done; and, what is remarkable, he had contrived to conciliate in the highest degree the good-will of the inhabitants. At his departure he received from the alcalde the most honourable testimonials; we have known many generals who could not produce such.

From time to time, distributions of provisions were made to the army; pillage was then strictly forbidden, and terrible examples were frequently made; but this system was not followed up, and was enforced only by fits and starts.

When we were staying for a few days in or near a town, the principal concern of all these marauders was to get rid of the money which they had *found* in their nocturnal excursions. They dreaded but one thing, that was to die with a full purse. If they obtained leave for one day, they would take three. An hour before the expiration of the third day, they arrived at the bivouac where their regiment was, for they well knew that after that time they would be set down as deserters. At Vienna, at Berlin, at Warsaw, they were seen returning in elegant carriages which they had hired, accompanied by ladies, whose affection was in a direct ratio to the dollars that were still left in the pockets of these Lotharios, from whom they would not part but in the last extremity.

Knowing beforehand the punishment that awaited them, they ordered the drivers to take them to the camp guard-house, which serves for a prison when in the field. Thither the carriages accordingly proceeded, amidst the shouts, the applauses, of their envious comrades. As soon as they were

installed, they sent word to the captain and the sergeant-major; and during their confinement they amused themselves with relating minutely the games at billiards they had played, and sumptuous feasts they had enjoyed, the bottles they had drunk, and the like.

“Lieutenant,” said Dieudonné, the most intrepid marauder of the army, to me, one day, “if you would give me permission, I would go to a village, which must be on the other side of this wood, for I hear the cocks crowing, and, probably, I should find some hens, too, there.”

“You well know that it is forbidden.”

“Yes, but if you would . . . .”

“What?”

“Only just not take notice that I am absent at the *rappel*.”

“Get you gone, and contrive so that I know nothing about the matter.”

Dieudonné returned with a cart laden with provisions, of which he made presents to the officers, to keep himself in favour; and, thanks to his activity, our table at the bivouac was always well supplied. Observe, too, that as we went along during the day, a few hares and a few partridges had swelled out our game-bag. When evening came, all these savoury materials were placed in the hands of a cook, who had formerly been an assistant at the *Frères Provençaux*, and whom the conscription had dragged from their famous kitchen; the smell was wafted far away, even to the enemy's *videttes*, and, when you recollect that we had been marching all day, you will easily conceive that we enjoyed our dinner. A good dinner is always a good thing; but, in war, as after hunting, no superlative is too strong to apply to it.

I shall perhaps be told, that it was wrong to authorize pillage: to this I reply, that my conscience has never reproached me on account of the pigeons, the pullets, the ducks, which I procured in this manner. We should have

been stupid, indeed, if, while we were serving our generals as instruments for enriching themselves, we had not dared to indulge ourselves with a roasted chicken when their excellencies were pleased to forbid it. Very often they were well paid for these prohibitions; sometimes, too, they wished to gain at our expense a reputation for integrity, which some of them had great need of. They were like two ladies belonging to the court, who, by way of doing penance for the indulgences of the carnival, and finding all other ways too annoying for them, resolved to make their servants fast during Lent.

When a detachment of conscripts arrived, the first question put to each of them was what business he had followed before he had entered the service: when the young man owned the glorious title of cook, it became a point of dispute who should have him in his company. A cook!—he was an important personage at the bivouac: it is, in fact, nothing to possess the raw material; you ought to know, too, how to work it. A skilful artist subjects it to a thousand transformations: between a pullet cooked at a pot-house, and one set before the customers of the Rocher de Cancale, there is as wide a difference as between the moon and the sun.

These conscript cooks did not fight; they were left in the rear; we would not expose their precious lives. A captain falls; his lieutenant takes his place: but tell me, if you please, how you would replace a cook. In all ages, the duties of a cook have been highly appreciated by sovereigns and by the great. Henry VIII., who did not always jest, raised his cook to one of the highest dignities in England, for the skill which he had displayed in roasting a wild boar. The Emperor Wenceslaus ordered a scullion to be spitted and roasted, because he had suffered a sucking pig to stand and get scorched. Here were two sovereigns who knew how to punish and reward in a suitable manner!

Every captain had a man like Dieudonné; each of these

robbers was the chief of three or four others, who marched with him. To carry on this kind of profession, it was necessary to be indefatigable ; for, after marching the whole day with the regiment, the marauders ran about all night ; coming back in the morning to the camp, they started again with us, and scarcely ever lay down to rest themselves.

“Lieutenant,” said one of these fellows to me, “I have got some famous wine, wine in case, and I have put aside some bottles for the officers of the company. We have tasted it, and I do assure you it is the best that ever was drunk : in short, you must know, it is *Posa piano*.” He had taken the direction given on the case for the name of the place which produced this wine. As far as I can recollect, the *Posa piano* was pronounced delicious by a jury of taste.

Some days before the battle of Friedland, we were assembled to the number of nearly fifty thousand in the plain of Guttstadt. Each man had made his preparations for passing the night with as little discomfort as possible, when reports of musketry proceeded from a small neighbouring wood. At the same time cries of *To arms!* were raised. We concluded that we were attacked by the enemy. All the pots were instantly emptied ; the meat, which had been boiling for two hours, was slung to the knapsacks ; the regiments formed in order of battle ; and in an instant every man was at his post.

We expected to see some Russian column debouch, but the Russians had something else to do. They were dining, and we had made it impossible for ourselves to do the same. An enormous bull, which had escaped from the butchers, caused all this confusion ; the enraged animal upset everything in his way. He overthrew whole platoons, which endeavoured to stop him with crossed bayonets : at length, however, he fell, pierced with balls. The soldiers began to make their soup again ; but their meat, already boiled, had



lost nearly all its juice, and yielded but a very weak broth. For a long time afterwards, the soldiers, when their soup was bad, would compare it with that of Guttstadt.

This circumstance occurred near the field of battle of Eylau, over which we passed on the following day ; each recognized the position which he had occupied four months before, and also that of the enemy. Like the Trojans, after the retreat of the Greeks, our soldiers were delighted to revisit the spots which had witnessed their exploits and their dangers. For this famous battle *Te Deums* were sung in Paris and in Petersburg.

Pantagruel heard the shouts of combatants, and the cries of the wounded on a field of battle where not a creature was to be seen ; and Pantagruel was, of course, very much astonished. Panurge then explained the mystery. These cries had been uttered in winter, and, as the cold was intense, they were frozen in the air ; the sun thawing them by degrees, it was but natural to hear voices without seeing the speakers. If such a thing had happened on the day of the battle of Eylau, if the reports of the artillery and musketry had been frozen, what an uproar we should have heard on that day !

One fine night, we were in bivouac ; I was not sleepy. Seated near the fire, I was smoking my pipe beside the soldier who was cooking the soup. Looking at the pot, which was boiling vehemently on the fire, I saw something black rising to the top, and sinking again to the bottom of the enormous kettle. This something excited my curiosity the more, inasmuch as, appearing at very short intervals, I had reason to imagine that it had two or three companions. Gallantly drawing my sword, and making a lunge at it as it passed, after missing it several times, I at length caught it on the point. In this way I fished out one mouse, two mice, three mice, four mice. I awoke our cook.

“Halloo, comrade! you seem to have got some strange seasoning for your soup to-night.”

“The same as usual, lieutenant; potatoes and cabbage; I never put in anything else.”

“And the whole boiled in mouse-broth. Only look at the nice vegetables that I have taken out of your pot.”

“Impossible, lieutenant!”

“Possible enough and true enough. Where the devil did you get your water?”

“From a tub in the next village.”

“Did you look if anything was in it?”

“It was dark; I felt that it was water, and took some for my soup. Who could suppose that in a peasant’s tub there would be a squadron of mice?”

“You must throw away the soup and try to make more.”

“Impossible, lieutenant: I should not have time. All those fellows that are snoring round us will awake presently; their stomachs will be open before their eyes; and if the soup should not be ready, they would be sure to give me fifty slaps, you know where. Let me beg of you, lieutenant, as the mice are out, not to say a word about them to anybody; the soup will be none the worse, and you may get out of the mess by breakfasting with another company.”

“And you?”

“I shall take some of it, all the same.”

And he did partake of it, and afterwards told me that he never tasted better soup in his life.

This circumstance is to be thus accounted for. At many farm-houses in Germany, in order to destroy the mice, they use a tub half-full of water. Some thin pieces of wood are placed at top, and upon them is put bacon, flour, or some other bait. As soon as the mice are upon this bridge, it sinks under them, they drop into the water, and are drowned. The piece of wood is so contrived as to resume its first

position, and is ever ready to do its office. It was from a reservoir of this kind that our cook of the bivouac had taken the water of which he made his strange broth. However, the men, who knew nothing of the matter, thought it excellent.

Between the camp and the bivouac, properly so called, there exists something which is neither bivouac nor camp. In bivouac you are exposed, without shelter, to all weather; in camp, you live in regular barracks; but, in this something akin to both, you are under small sheds which screen you from the rain.

These are only constructed in places where you expect to stay for some days; for a single night one would not take so much trouble. These sheds consist merely of a straw roof upon three walls of straw. The open side is the highest, and the closed end is to windward. Each arranges for himself in the best manner he can, chooses what spot he likes, and the whole presents a very pretty picture.

In this sort of hut you cannot stand upright, except just at the entrance. You may sleep very well in them, but in the morning you have to make your toilet in the open air, which saves you the trouble of throwing up windows. What varied scenes a painter might find to sketch in such an encampment! but they would not all be admitted into the exhibition at the Louvre.

On the day of our arrival at Tilsit, there was talk of an armistice: sheds were immediately constructed of sufficient solidity to withstand the buffeting of the weather for a week. I had lain down one evening beside Laborie, my lieutenant, when we were visited by Hémeré, sub-lieutenant in our regiment. I was just falling asleep; his coming roused me again; but, from the turn which the conversation took, I thought fit to pretend not to be awake. The dialogue, which I shall never forget, was, word for word, as follows—

“Good evening, Laborie.”

“ Good evening ; why, how is it that you are not a-bed ? ”

“ A-bed, indeed ! I have something else to do, faith ! I shall have to run about all night.”

“ It is said that we are going to have peace, that they have even signed an *amnesty* ; and I believe it, for the quarter-master and the musicians have arrived.”\*

“ Whether they make peace or war, I only know this, that, after marching all day, I shall have a fine night’s work of it.”

“ What is the matter, then ? ”

“ The colonel has ordered me to seek a mill, which is six leagues off. I have nobody to direct me what way to take ; the villages are forsaken, and there is not a peasant to serve me for a guide. All I can learn is, that the mill is called Brünsmühl. I have four cart-loads of corn to get ground ; I am to take bakers along with me to make it into bread, which we are to bring back with us.”

“ Good news, my dear fellow ! Make haste, and be sure above all, to put aside two or three loaves for me.”

“ Of course I should do that, without bidding ; but I am come to look at your map ; I am told that you have one.”

“ Yes, I have one, and a capital one too.”

“ Do you think we shall find the mill ? ”

“ Find it ! *pardi*, everything is in my map.”

Now, you must know, that Laborie’s map was a map of the world, which he had picked up at the bivouac among the various things *found* by the soldiers in marauding. To give himself an air of importance, Laborie would every moment spread out his map : we frequently concerted together, and, as fast as he folded it up, one of us would come in and make him spread it out again.

\* The quarter-master, the musicians, and the master-tailor, follow the regiments at a distance, only when in the field. Whenever they join them, the soldiers cry : “ Peace is made ; here are the musicians.”

“There is my map,” said he, spreading it on the ground, and lying down at full length before it: “what is the name of your mill?”

“Brünsmühl.”

“Let us see . . . . stay . . . . there is Berlin, there is Petersburg: it must be between the two.”

“Quite right. . . . just so; yet I don’t see the mill; perhaps it has been forgotten.”

“Forgotten! everything is in my map, I tell you.”

“And I tell you, that I can’t see it.”

“Why, there it is, though, and big enough too,” said Laborie, pointing to the compass, placed in the margin, the four points of which were not unlike the sails of a windmill.

“So it is, I declare; the very thing!” exclaimed Hémeré, in admiration of Laborie’s superior knowledge. “Do you think it is far off?”

“Why, no, see yourself.” And Laborie measured with his hand the distance of the mill from the point midway between Berlin and Petersburg, which was not more than a foot.

“But what road must I take to get there?”

“It must be confessed that you are a very stupid fellow; the least thing embarrasses you; there’s your road . . . only look at the map . . . and there’s the mill. Well, when you are out of this, you make for the right flank; keep straight on, and if you march quick, you’ll soon be there.”

My conscience began to reproach me for suffering this poor devil to run about all night in quest of the compass, and I was on the point of awaking; but M. Hémeré was a quarrelsome blade, rather foul-tongued, clamouring against the young men who had become officers without having served, like him, in the army of Sambre and Meuse; and so I resolved to leave him to his fate, that I might rally him on his return. I assure you he was not spared when he came



back, three days afterwards, with his cart-loads of corn, without being able to find his mill.

M. Hémeré was a droll fellow, five feet high at most. He was very fond of physical gratifications; nay, I verily believe that he died without suspecting that there can be any others. His greatest, I may say, his only, pleasure, was to drink while smoking; and, for the sake of variety—I use his own expression—he would smoke while drinking. Lamenting one day, before me, the privations which he endured in the field for want of wine, brandy, and tobacco, his imagination immediately called up some most agreeable recollections.

“Oh! how well we fared,” said he, “in the environs of Anspach and Ellwangen, where we were cantoned for six months! We had as much wine as we could drink; the peasants furnished everything that we required.”

“If you only want as much wine as you can drink to make you happy,” said I, “you are easily satisfied.”

“And what the devil would you have more?” he replied. “In the morning, after exercise, I drank my two bottles to breakfast, which laid me asleep immediately. After snoozing for two or three hours, I took a third bottle, which I swallowed in bed, and went to sleep again till dinner. In the evening, a little walk, hot wine at my return; I went to bed upon it, and began again the next day. Never did I enjoy myself so much as in the environs of Ellwangen.”

The finest of all bivouacs, past, present, and to come, was that of the 4th of July, 1809. Never was there so great an assemblage of men on so small a speck of the globe. The whole French army had crossed the Danube on three triple bridges, and was in the isle of Lobau, drenched by rain, which fell in torrents for six successive hours. Two hundred thousand men bivouacked together in close columns, by regiments. We had each of us scarcely room sufficient to stir. There was still an arm of the river to cross. The

cannon thundered all night; the bombs poured down to defend it; the next day's battle, and the victory that was to follow—all this presented a superb prospect, held forth magnificent hopes.

Never before had the grand army been so collected. Every one recognized a friend in the veteran band which had come from Spain or Italy. Not only did individuals express their joy, but whole regiments manifested intense delight on meeting with other regiments with which they had shared danger and glory at the bridge of Arcole, at the Pyramids, at Marengo, at Hohenlinden. This fraternity of perils had strengthened friendship in some, and given birth to it in others. The friendships contracted in the field of battle are lasting. Old comrades had parted on the banks of the Nile or the Guadalquivir; they met again with transport in an island of the Danube.

The counters of the suttlers were beset by all those brave fellows, who, glass in hand, congratulated themselves on finding one another again. Each recounted the exploits of his regiment since the period of separation, and the list was a long one. Each, satisfied with himself, proud of his neighbour, had not the least doubt of victory. Like the soldiers of Casimir, all of them could have said to Napoleon: "Be easy, rely upon us; if the sky falls we will prop it up on the points of our lances." A moment afterwards they shook hands and parted. For a great number this was an everlasting adieu, for that day was the eve of the battle of Wagram.

All the nations had deputies in the isle of Lobau; all the languages of Europe were spoken there. The Italians and the Poles, the Mamelukes and the Portuguese, the Spaniards and the Bavarians—all those bands were astonished to find themselves marching under the imperial eagle. There, too, were seen Saxons and Westphalians, troops of Baden and of Wurtemberg; in those days our

friends, but friends no longer. There was running hither and thither, there was seeking without finding, there was talking without being understood. It was a swarm in motion, the tower of Babel, the valley of Jehoshaphat, where, as everybody knows, we are all to meet some day or other.

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## EDITOR'S REMARKS

ON

### CHAPTER II.

THE description given of a French bivouac, in the second chapter, is very entertaining: I conclude that the picture is a correct one. But it does not describe an English bivouac; our soldiers do plunder, they do drink horribly, they do commit the excesses of which the author accuses his countrymen: at the same time, I must say, that I never saw British officers connive at, much less encourage, such conduct, without exciting disgust among their comrades, and drawing punishment upon themselves. I do not mean to say that there may not occasionally be found one or two officers sufficiently infamous to pillage; but I assert that, knowing their fate, if discovered, they act, like all other thieves, by stealth; and I assert still farther, that no organized bands of pillagers existed, and were recognized, in each regiment, by the officers. I was not aware that such was the case with the French; but, from the enormous size of the imperial army, I can easily believe that the evils of loose discipline were necessarily gigantic; indeed, the proof of this may be found in the emperor's ordering movable columns for the sole purpose of police. I therefore would cast no stigma on the armies of France: I am only surprised that the officers, as M. Blaze affirms, should not only tolerate, but profit by, the atrocities

of these men, for I have ever looked upon the French officers as men of the highest honour.

When armies of several hundred thousand men are assembled, they are sometimes driven by necessity into courses that they would otherwise abhor. Our armies have no such excuse; they are comparatively small. We authorize not pillage, which we strenuously endeavour to prevent and punish. If the author be correct in his statements, and I suppose that he is so, then the difference between the two armies is this, that both pillage, but that in the French army the practice is tolerated; in the English army it is not tolerated.

Perhaps the difference has not been produced by any moral superiority in the British army, but by circumstances. I must, however, say that, having once entered a captured town with a French army, the military were as regular and correct in their conduct as any British troops. I have no right to doubt the assertions of the author, himself a French officer and a gentleman of ability; but I am unwilling to think that such a laxity of principle should exist among men so distinguished for their courage.

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## CHAPTER III.

### MARCHES.

WE marched to the right, to the left, forward, sometimes backward; in short, we were always marching: very often we knew not why. The bobbin that turns round to wind the thread does not ask the mechanist the reason of the movements which it is forced to make; it turns, that is all: we did exactly like the bobbin. This was not always amusing, but the habit contracted, the necessity for obeying, the example which each set and took, had all concurred to make us

mere locomotive machines : they move, so did we. When we halted, the soldiers, in astonishment, asked one another the reason. " 'Tis droll," said they; " the clock stands."

On the day after the first bivouac of a campaign, whoever had seen the enormous quantity of breeches, long gaiters, black and white, collars, and stockings, that strewed the plain where we had slept, would imagine that the enemy had surprised us during the night, and that we had run away in our shirts. Perhaps you may like to know why all those garments were left there, widowed and deserted.

Formerly, the soldier was furnished, gratis, with a pair of breeches, which he scarcely ever put on : he was obliged to pay for a pair of trousers, which he always wore. The contractors for linen and shoes, speculators having an eye to consumption, crammed the knapsacks with long gaiters, white and black, stockings and collars, black and white, all of them articles serviceable only to those who sold them. In garrison, the soldiers were obliged to keep all these things, upon pain of having to pay for others the next day. But, on taking the field, at the first bivouac, every one reduced his kit to the smallest possible dimensions, by ridding himself of all useless articles.

The colonels and captains laughed in their sleeve ; they were certain that, as soon as peace was made, they should have to provide and sell new ones in their stead. In like manner the booksellers rejoice when they see the missionaries make bonfires of the works of Rousseau and Voltaire.

Any one going after the army at such a time with vehicles, finding a complete load at the first bivouac, might have returned next day with as many pair of breeches as there were men in the ranks. The military administration has made immense progress since the peace. At present, the soldier is supplied with cloth trousers, and that is an improvement ; the breeches no longer exist. I never could account for it that, under Napoleon, when we were incessantly at war, the



soldier should have been clad in that ignoble short garment, which, clipping the leg, prevented him from marching freely. Nay more, the knee, covered with a long gaiter, which buttoned over it, was again clasped by a fresh garter compressing the knee-band of the breeches. Underneath, drawers tied by strings, also contributed to cramp the legs. Thus, in fact, there were three thicknesses of stuff, two rows of buttons placed one over the other, and three ties destined to paralyse the efforts of the most sturdy walkers.

Now tell me, if a person wished to devise a most inconvenient method of clothing the soldier, could he have hit upon one more to the purpose? Such was the practice during all the wars of the Republic and the Empire. Hence you should have seen the grotesque figure cut by the young conscripts, with these breeches and gaiters, which, not being kept up by calves, fell down about their heels. For this dress, a man should be well *built*, well made; he ought to have legs furnished with fair protuberances; whereas, wide trousers are suitable for everybody. A man of twenty is not yet formed; nay, we were joined by conscripts who were under nineteen; this accoutrement gave them an absolutely silly look: on the contrary, it sat extremely well on the imperial guard, which never fought unless in full dress, but which fought very rarely.

That body was moreover composed of picked men, who could easily have carried a heavier knapsack. It always marched on the high-road, with the head-quarters; it monopolized all the attention of the administration, and it may be asserted that the line had no supplies till the imperial guard was served. Our conscripts bent under the weight of a knapsack, a musket, a cartouch-box; add to these fifty ball-cartridges, bread, meat, a kettle, or perhaps a hatchet,\* and you may form some conception of the plight of those poor

\* Each mess, composed of twenty or thirty men, has a can, a pot, a hatchet, which are carried in turn by the men of the squad.

fellows, especially in hot weather. The perspiration trickled from their brows; and, in general, after marching for three successive days, they were obliged to go into the hospital. Our marches were far more toilsome than those of the imperial guard; we had to travel along much worse roads; and I think I am warranted in asserting that fatigue killed more young conscripts than the cannon of the enemy.

In 1806, Napoleon had adopted the white coat for the infantry; all the conscripts that came from France were dressed in jean, which formed a very disagreeable contrast when they were intermixed with other soldiers in blue uniforms. It was a preposterous idea to give a white dress to troops destined to pass their lives in bivouac.\* You should have seen how dirty all these young men were: in consequence, the moment the Emperor set eyes on them, a counter-order was issued, and the white dress was abolished. This circumstance did not prevent the authors of the restoration from repeating the experiment in 1815. They at least had an excuse; they purposed to do as had formerly been done. But how could the Emperor, who made us always sleep in the open air, ever think that he should have a fine army with soldiers dressed in white!

The imperial guard was magnificent, and rendered important services wherever it appeared. This ought not to excite surprise; it was recruited from the crack companies of our regiments. The strongest and bravest men, who had seen four years' service and two campaigns, were selected for it. What might not be expected from a body thus composed! it was the *élite* of the *élite*. The soldiers of the line called those of the guard the *immortals*, because they very rarely fought. They were reserved for great

\* This determination of the Emperor's was a corollary to the Berlin decree. As we could not procure indigo, except from England, Napoleon, by adopting a white dress for the army, meant to deprive English commerce of one of its branches.

occasions, and this course was no doubt extremely judicious, for the arrival of the imperial guard on the field of battle almost always decided the question. Between the line and the guard there subsisted a jealousy, which was the cause of many quarrels. It is well known that in the guard each had the rank of the grade immediately superior to that which he occupied. In the line loud complaints were raised against this privilege, and every one did his best to acquire it. Those who had obtained it deemed it perfectly just; they could not conceive how humble officers of the line could have the presumption to think of setting themselves on an equality with those of the imperial guard. Such is man, and such he will remain till the consummation of ages. In France, when everybody talked of equality, each was willing enough to share it with those who were above him, but not with those beneath him. "I am the equal of the Montmorencies, but the scavenger is not my equal"—thus thought a great many. An outcry was raised against titles and decorations; after taking them from their possessors, people bedizened themselves with them. How many austere republicans have we seen transformed into chamberlains—how many tribunes created peers of France, who had no scruple to exchange the title of citizen for that of my lord duke or most serene highness!

One day, being on march, an artillery-waggon, drawn by four mules, wanted to cross my regiment; but the soldiers, passing successively before the noses of the poor beasts, took a malicious pleasure in preventing their progress, because they belonged to the imperial guard. At length, one of them cried out in a waggish tone: "Come, soldiers of the line, make way for the mules of the guard."—"Pooh!" replied another, "they are but asses."—"They are mules, I tell you."—"And I tell you they are asses."—"Well, supposing they are asses, what does it signify? Don't you know that in the guard asses have the rank of mules?"

The imperial guard, formed originally of old regiments of grenadiers and chasseurs, had been reinforced by regiments of fusileers, and to these were afterwards added riflemen, voltigeurs, flankers, and pupils. The organization of these corps was wholly exceptional. The old regiments formed part of the old guard, and the others of the young guard. The superior officers and captains had been selected from the first to form the second; they there retained their rank and their prerogatives, while the lieutenants and sub-officers were treated nearly as in the line, excepting the uniform of the guard, which they had the honour to wear. There was consequently an enormous disproportion between the captain and the lieutenant, both as to rank in the army and as to pay. In the regiments of flankers, which wore a green uniform, the captains and superior officers had the blue coat of the old guard, which gave them a motley appearance.

Amidst all these new denominations there is still one wanting. I have often been surprised that the Emperor never conceived the idea of forming a few regiments of *marchers*. I have known in all the corps of the army men who never tired—who could walk thirty or forty successive hours, without taking a moment's rest. By collecting together all these stout-limbed fellows, an excellent regiment might have been composed.

Fancy to yourself two or three thousand picked men, capable of marching two days and two nights without stopping; arm them lightly; let there be neither baggage nor horse to retard their progress or to prevent them from ascending hills; and conceive what services such a body of men might render under certain circumstances. I submit this idea to the gentlemen of the war-office; perhaps it is deserving of their attention.

No man ever knew how to make an army march better than Napoleon. These marches were frequently very fatiguing; sometimes half the soldiers were left behind; but,

as they never lacked good-will, they did arrive, though they arrived later. Nothing ruffles the men's temper more than an order vaguely worded, and imperfectly comprehended, which causes them to go over more ground than is necessary; or when any hesitation keeps them for some time on the same spot, uncertain whether they are to remain there or to proceed. A French army is always in good humour when it is fighting; but the best soldiers are done up under the circumstances to which I have just adverted.

Require of them all possible efforts, and they will obey without a murmur; but let the orders be positive, clearly worded, and well delivered. In the contrary case, they will send the general *à tous les diables*. Frederic II. said one day, as M. de Montazet, a general in the Austrian service, then a prisoner in Berlin, who heard him, relates in his Memoirs: "Were I commander of the French, I would make the best troops in the four quarters of the world. To wink at some little thoughtless indiscretions, never to harass them to no purpose, to keep up the natural cheerfulness of their disposition, to be scrupulously just towards them, not to vex them with any minutiae—such would be my secret for rendering them invincible."

After the campaign of 1809, we were cantoned in the environs of Passau, on mountains covered six feet deep with snow. It was quite a new world, another Siberia. We might have said, like the soldier on the mountains of the Tyrol, who wrote to his parents: "We have got to the end of the world; a hundred paces from our camp, the earth terminates: we can touch the sun with our hands;" only we should have found it the more difficult to touch the sun, because we never saw that luminary. In this charming abode of wolves, the strata of snow, piled one upon another, are frozen so hard, that it is impossible to inter the dead in winter; they are, therefore, laid upon the roofs till a thaw comes. And, gracious heaven! what a thaw! what an



ocean of mud! every brook swells to a river, every road is a torrent.

We were very quiet in our villages, when, one fine night, we received orders to start forthwith, and to assemble at Passau. A south wind had been melting the snow for some days; no words can convey any idea of the labour we had to climb and descend all those inundated hills. A painter purposing to represent a scene of the deluge ought to visit that country under similar circumstances. Aides-de-camp, couriers, orderlies, on foot and on horseback, crossed each other in all directions, to hasten such detachments as they should fall in with! We were required to be in Passau, dead or alive, by daybreak. Officers, soldiers, everybody, concluded that hostilities had recommenced. What other motive could be assigned for this precipitate march in time of peace?

As soon as a company, or a fraction of a company, arrived at Passau, officers appointed by the general, embarked it on the Danube, which rolled down mountains of water. The current was so swollen by the melting of the snow, that we had to make a circuit of several leagues to reach the right bank. Artillery-horses fell into the water, boats were upset, men were drowned. Having crossed the Danube, we pursued our route without taking a moment's rest; we marched for forty hours. "But what are we running for in this manner?" said the soldiers. "What has happened that nothing is to stop us—neither night, nor torrents, nor rivers?" In the end, we learned the motives for this forced march, the longest, the most arduous, ever performed, even in time of war: we were going to Braunau, there to pay military honours to Maria Louisa, who was coming to France to marry Napoleon. To see the manner in which we were urged, you would have supposed that the Empress was waiting for us: we arrived, in fact, a fortnight too early.

On the frontiers of Bavaria and Austria, near the village

of St. Peter, not far from Braunau, architects from Paris had erected a superb temporary building. Here Maria Louisa was delivered by the plenipotentiaries of the Emperor Francis to those whom Napoleon had appointed to receive her. The Queen of Naples, the Prince of Neufchatel, had arrived with a host of chamberlains, ladies in waiting, equerries, valets of all colours, of all grades, of all kinds. These people are, no doubt, indispensable, for we find crowds of them in all countries, and under all sorts of governments; but, with what these *unbooted* gentry cost him, many a sovereign might set on foot an army of fifty thousand men. When her Majesty appeared, the artillery made an infernal din, the bands of the regiments played false, the drums beat with a dull sound, for the rain fell in torrents; we were up to our knees in mud, and the Paris newspapers were enraptured with the felicity which we had enjoyed of being the first to salute our gracious and august sovereign. Such is the way in which history is written! Next day the Empress set out for Paris; we returned by short marches to our mountains, striving to persuade ourselves that we had been exceedingly amused.

In order to reach the field of battle of Austerlitz, the third corps marched forty leagues in thirty-six hours; that is to say, one twentieth part of the soldiers arrived there, and the rest rejoined them from hour to hour. Officers, left upon the road, picked up the stragglers, and, after a few moments' rest, sent them forward to their regiments. This rapid march was very trying for the soldiers, but they did not complain, because they felt the necessity for it, because it had a great influence on the results of the day. Our trip to Braunau, on the contrary, was with them a perpetual subject of complaint and grumbling. It was the point of comparison, whenever they were harassed to no purpose. "It is somewhat like our march to Braunau," they would say to one another.

The march of thirty-six hours to Austerlitz, without a moment's rest, was of the utmost importance. An officer, who had been taken prisoner, was asked by the Emperor Alexander : " To what corps of the army do you belong ?" — " To the third." — " Marshal Davoust's ?" — " Yes, sire." — " It is not true ; that corps is at Vienna." — " Yesterday it was ; to-day it is here." The Emperor was astounded at this intimation.

Nothing is more fatiguing to the soldier than night-marches : the first necessary for man is sleep. Pichegru paid thirty thousand francs for one night's rest, during which he was apprehended. Sometimes the soldiers slept while marching ; a false step made them roll into a ditch, one over another.

In Bavaria and Austria a great many bees are kept ; and, consequently, there is abundance of wax : the soldiers found great quantities of it in the houses of the peasants. In the night-marches, when the weather was calm, each would light two, three, four, tapers ; nay, some carried so many as fifteen or twenty. Nothing could be more striking than the appearance of a division, thus illuminated, ascending a hill by a winding road ; all those thousands of moving lights presented a most delightful view. Here the jovial fellow of the company sung a sentimental song, which was chorused by all the rest ; there another related the interminable history of La Ramée, who, after quitting the service, came back from the country and travelled two hundred leagues to claim a ration of bread of his sergeant-major. La Bruyère has ascribed to Menalque all the traits of absence of mind that he was acquainted with ; in like manner our soldiers father all the stories of old troopers on La Ramée—he is the type of the French soldier. No soldier of any nation knows how to accommodate himself to his position so well as the French soldier. In the most difficult circumstances a *bon mot* caused everything to be forgotten ; this one soon gave rise

to another ; presently the air rang with merriment ; and the mind, recovering its temper, acquired new energy.

When you see a regiment upon a high road, you think, perhaps, that nothing can be easier than to direct it. At the command, *March!* the men start, you will say, and if they keep marching long enough straight forward, they will be sure to get to their journey's end. If a colonel were to pay no other attention to the men of his regiment, he would leave half of them behind. The sub-officer who marches at the head ought to have a short, regular step ; for, if the right goes at the ordinary pace, the left will gallop. The least obstacle that presents itself on the way, were it only a wheel-rut to cross, obliges all the soldiers of the last battalion to run, in order to overtake their comrades. If the first who comes to the obstacle slackens his march but for half a second, the last will have to gallop for a quarter of an hour. An experienced chief sees these things at a glance ; he orders a halt for a moment, and all resumes its accustomed course. After marching for an hour, there is a halt of five minutes for lighting pipes, and therefore called the *halt of pipes*. The soldier ought not to be deprived of any pleasure, for to many this pleasure is an absolute want.

At mid-day there is the grand halt, which lasts for an hour ; each dines upon what he has in his knapsack, and the march is then resumed, broken by a halt of five minutes after every league.

Little causes frequently produce great effects. Regiments have sometimes been beaten, because the soldiers had no straps to their gaiters. To some, this may look like a joke, but I will explain myself. When the roads are bad, if the soldier is not well shod, if the gaiter does not entirely cover the shoe, the mud finds its way into it, makes the feet sore, occasions blisters ; the men fall behind, the ranks are thinned, and the regiment, reduced to one half, cannot be so efficient as if it were complete.

A very important point for an officer is to see that the soldiers have good shoes, and that each of them has in his knapsack gaiter-straps, an awl, and strong thread, to sew them on in case of need. The neglect of this precaution may cause the loss of a battle. The captains, the *chefs de bataillon*, the colonels, are deeply interested in keeping as many men as possible in the ranks; in fact, if they have any commission to execute, if they receive orders to carry a position, to attack a post, the giver of those orders will not consider what number of men they can take with them: the regiment, the battalion, the company, will be required to start; and the more men he has, so much the better for the leader; the business will be done with the greater ease. Thus the glory, the honour, the personal interest, of the officer, imperatively command him to pay incessant attention to these petty details, which may be productive of the most beneficial results to himself. I have seen captains, who, by taking these and other precautions, had kept their companies, when in the field, one fourth stronger than those of others.

In marching in hot weather, the soldiers swallow a great deal of dust, and stop at every well and every stream to drink. What is the consequence? The more they drink, the more thirsty they are; the water, which they swallow in excessive quantity, frequently gives the fever to many of them; and the hospitals are filled to the detriment of the army. This serious inconvenience may be avoided by a very simple expedient, that is, by obliging the men to carry a straw between their lips: their lips being thus closed, the dust cannot get into their mouths; they are not thirsty, and they do not want to drink. I recommend this receipt to persons travelling on foot, and especially to sportsmen.

In order to appreciate all these things, you must live with the soldier, you must see him at all times, you must be with him under all circumstances. The officers of the old *régime*



were as brave as those of the new ; but, never seeing their soldiers unless on the day of battle, or at reviews held by the king, and returning immediately after to Versailles, they were utter strangers to those minutiae of high importance. Had they been acquainted with them, I much doubt whether they would have taken the trouble to attend to them ; their business was to travel post to the army, the day before it was to fight, and not one of them was missing at the rendezvous.

When a regiment travelled in Germany, the towns through which it passed furnished carriages to convey the baggage, the sick, and the lame. When an officer was going alone, either on a particular mission, or to rejoin his corps, he was provided at each station with a fresh carriage, and, without opening our purses, we had traversed Germany in all directions. At the post stations a carriage was kept ready harnessed, night and day ; this was very commodious for us, but it must have been very burdensome to the country.

We travelled post, as you see, at a very cheap rate. At the risk of making enemies of the French postilions, I will tell you an economical method, to which an eccentric acquaintance of mine one day had recourse. You know that the regulations allow the driver seventy-five centimes for every post you travel ; nevertheless, when you give him no more than double, he is not satisfied. My acquaintance said to himself at starting : “ I will only pay the allowance granted by law, and I will be driven full gallop.” His inventive genius supplied him with the following receipt : “ My friend,” said he to the postilion, who came to drive the first stage, “ I am very ill, racked with pains, with rheumatism ; the least jolt makes me cry out ; you must drive me as gently as possible, or I shall die in the carriage.” They started. The postilion avoided the pavement, drove the carriage over the soft ground, took care to keep it in perfect equilibrium, and

on reaching the next stage, was presented with a fifteen sous piece, as the reward of all his attentions.

“Surely, sir,” said he, “you have made a mistake.”

“No mistake whatever.”

“But everybody gives at least double.”

“Others may do as they please ; I pay the allowance.”

“But, sir . . . .”

“Read the law of . . . .”

“That law has not common sense.”

“For my part I think it extremely sensible.”

“Because it is in your favour.”

“It is in everybody’s favour.”

“You will give me something to drink.”

“The law mentions nothing of the kind.”

“Oh ! d—n the law !”

“Let me alone . . . . Oh ! my pains are coming again !”

Away went the postilion, grumbling, to find his successor, who was to drive the next stage. Showing him the piece of fifteen sous, “You have got a profitable job,” said he, “the allowance and nothing more ; nothing to drink ; the bare fifteen sous. He knows the law by heart ; but, in your turn, you may serve him a trick. The miserly rascal is ill ; the least jolt makes him cry out as if he was being flayed alive. He likes to be driven at a foot-pace, and on the soft ground ; I was stupid enough to do as he wished, because I expected him to pay handsomely, but he gives the mere allowance. Take him upon the pavement, lash away, drive at full gallop, and if he dies in his carriage . . . so much the better.”

His comrade punctually followed his directions ; the horses flew like the wind, and the artful traveller laughed in his sleeve. From time to time, in order to encourage the postilion, he shouted to him to stop, to set him down, to slaeken his pace ; his words were lost in the air ; the driver pretended not to hear him, and the carriage dashed away

like lightning. The private directions accompanied him from Paris to Marseilles ; the miser was driven like a prince. Luckily the carriage was a strong one.

I was on my way from Warsaw to Posen ; the carnival had induced me to stay a few days longer than I should have done in the Polish capital, and I had no more time than was strictly necessary to reach Posen, at the moment mentioned in my instructions, by travelling night and day. On the road I had well nigh been devoured by wolves. The commandant of Lowiez, an officer of the 111th regiment, whom I knew, strove to dissuade me from setting out at nightfall, saying, that the forest of twelve leagues, which I had to pass through, in order to reach Kutno, was full of wolves ; that the most imminent danger threatened imprudent travellers, especially in winter ; and that those animals had frequently devoured horses and men.\* I replied, that if the forest was full of lions and tigers, I should not hesitate to set out. I had committed a fault, and I wished, at any hazard, to keep it from being known. The commandant then offered me a musket and cartridges, for my soldier and myself ; his forethought saved our lives.

Scarcely had we proceeded a short league before our sledge was escorted by a regiment of wolves : we saw their eyes glaring like burning coals, and we could plainly distinguish the beasts themselves upon the snow. The position was critical ; but I thought that with coolness and steadiness I might extricate myself from it. What gave me most uneasiness was the panic that had seized the peasant who drove the sledge. I said some words to him in Polish, to

\* At the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV., a detachment of dragoons was attacked near Pontarlier, in the mountains of the Jura, by an innumerable multitude of wolves. The dragoons fought with courage ; they killed several hundred of the animals ; but overwhelmed by numbers, they were all devoured, together with their horses. A cross, erected on the spot, with an inscription upon it, recording the event, was still in existence at the commencement of the revolution of 1789.

cheer him up ; for, unacquainted with the language, I could not harangue him after the fashion of Homer's heroes. The poor fellow shivered with cold and fright ; he lashed his horses, and we went like the wind.

I knew that wolves are afraid of fire : my soldier and I discharged our pieces at them as fast as we could load them ; we must have killed many, for our balls, fired upon a dense mass, were sure to hit some one of the greedy animals : but we felt no inclination to go and pick up the dead to fill the game-bag. Several times they approached in close array to within ten paces, but two musket-balls and the flash of the priming ridded us of their presence for a few moments. Had they leaped upon the horses, it would have been all over with us ; but, luckily, they contented themselves with howling, like wolves, and following us to the first houses of Kutno, which we once more beheld with inexpressible pleasure. The distance from Lowiez to Kutno is twelve leagues ; we performed it in less than three hours : justly may it be asserted that fear gives wings.

In Spain we never travelled singly : the first tree would have served as a gibbet for the imprudent wight who should have ventured alone upon any road. It was necessary to go in bodies, with advanced-guard and rear-guard always in readiness to fire. The governor of Bayonne stopped the detachments and the officers proceeding singly to Spain ; and when the whole formed a mass capable of resisting, he permitted them to set out for Irun.

When I crossed the Bidassoa to enter the kingdom of Don Jose primero, sovereign of Spain and the Indies, as he called himself, our convoy consisted of a dozen detachments, belonging to different corps, a great number of single officers rejoining their regiments, persons attached to the commissariat, young men going to Madrid to solicit appointments, and administrators of the *droits réunis* proceeding to Spain to organize it in the same manner as France ; for it behoved us

to put that country in possession of all the advantages which our supremacy was capable of procuring for it.

At the moment of our departure from Irun, the commander of the convey regulated the march of this motley assemblage, a task that was none of the easiest. Sixty carriages, drawn by oxen, were laden with the baggage, and marched in the centre; two waggons, with three horses, would easily have carried the whole; but the carts of Biscay are so small that four knapsacks would completely fill one of them. The wheels are of a solid piece, without spokes or fellys, and look like the top and bottom of a butt, with a strong stake run through them, the whole turning together with an infernal creaking. When several of these vehicles are proceeding along the road together, they make a most tremendous clatter, that can only be compared to that of the old machine of Marley.

Between Irun and Hernani, some guerilleros, whom we called brigands, fired a dozen shots at us from the top of the hills; our riflemen soon put them to flight. You should have seen at that moment the pale, wan faces of our Paris fashionables; they hid themselves behind the baggage-carts, when they could not find room enough behind the oxen. Whenever the like circumstance occurred in the sequel, all those who did not wear the uniform separated from the military, with whom they had previously been intermixed, and sought a shelter which did not always protect them. "Why," said I, "are these people afraid? and how is it that the soldiers, who run the same risks as they, never think of danger?" Here is the answer which I gave myself to this question.

It is said that the dress does not make the monk; now I contend that it almost always makes the soldier. Among the military who heard the balls whizzing past, there certainly were many on whom their shrill discordant sound made a



disagreeable impression ; but, in this case, each is afraid of betraying weakness to his neighbour ; he dreads the jeers, the taunts, that would be the inevitable consequences. Duty, honour, pride, all concur to combat fear ; and I have often seen the greatest cowards the first to cry : “ Forward ! ” If all those clerks, advocates, auditors, had had the uniform on their backs, if they had formed part of a regiment, if they had been forced to be brave, they would not have dared to show fear, they would not have betrayed in any way their inward emotion. But all this did not in the least concern them ; they could tremble at their ease, without being noticed by any one. Their clothes, cut according to the latest Paris fashion, exposed a nicely plaited shirt-bosom ; a stray ball might have deranged its elegant disposition, and this unpleasant circumstance they were anxious to avoid. The soldiers cracked their jokes upon them ; and very often, to divert themselves at their expense, would tell them that in a quarter of an hour the convoy would be attacked by troops which they had seen stealing along behind the hills : that the best thing that could happen to them would be to get killed in the action ; for, if they were taken, they would be sure to be hanged, burned, or flayed. It is certain that, on hearing this language, messieurs the fashionables sincerely wished they had never left France, and they would gladly have renounced all their dreams of ambition to be safe at home again.

The mountain of Salinas was frequently celebrated at that period for the ambuscades which Mina, Longa, and El Pastor were incessantly laying for our convoys. Never was spot more favourable : a mountain which it took four hours to climb, a road bordered by heights and precipices, could not be cleared by the riflemen ; the enemy concealed himself behind rocks ; you never saw him, but you heard the reports of his musketry, which made some amends. We had the

gratification to furnish the subject of a farce and of several pictures exhibited at the Museum, which cannot but be accounted an honour.

We had been ascending for three hours, preceded by our advanced guard, which had not seen anything, when all at once a pistol, discharged close to us, gave the signal to two or three hundred muskets to fire at the same moment. A ravine separated us from the Spaniards; our men immediately set about descending into the valley, with the intention of getting to the other side, but the guerillas had soon disappeared. We lost fourteen men in this affair; a charming woman, the wife of one of the superior *employés* of the hospitals, and who was going to him at Madrid, was wounded by a ball in the breast, and died two days afterwards at Vittoria. The guerillas, however, had not effected their retreat with sufficient celerity to avoid the return made to their fire; three of them were wounded, and presently brought in by the voltigeurs who had gone in pursuit of them: they were carried to Vittoria, and hanged on the following day. One of our dandies was slightly wounded in the leg: thenceforward, proud of his wound, and assuming the air of a little hero, he always kept among the grenadiers, disdaining the society of his former companions; it seemed as though he meant to punish them for not having been so lucky as himself.

But, in travelling in Spain, we were obliged to make frequent halts. At each town some portion of the convoy found themselves at the place of their destination; the column, thus weakened, needed fresh reinforcements before it could pursue its route. Half, nay, I may say almost the whole, of the French army, was occupied in escorting couriers; we had garrisons in all the towns and in all the villages upon the high roads: and very often midway between them there had been erected little forts, block-houses, redoubts, each occupied by perhaps a hundred soldiers.

All these posts, all these garrisons, furnished a greater or less number of men for escorts, according to the presumed force of the bands of insurgents that were in the environs. This service was extremely arduous, and it may be affirmed that it caused the death of more Frenchmen than the most sanguinary pitched battles. We were masters of all the towns and villages upon the road, but not of the environs at the distance of one hundred paces. It was a war of every day, of every hour. If the escort was numerous and well commanded, it met with nobody in its way; in the contrary case, the enemy appeared on every side of us: it may be said that in Spain he was everywhere and nowhere.

The reports that reached us, respecting his force and his movements, were scarcely ever true; whereas he was apprized, day by day, hour by hour, of what we were doing: we were counted in every village, and the enemy's leaders always knew which was our weak side. A colonel, on arriving in a town, demanded two thousand four hundred rations for his regiment. "You have eighteen hundred and sixty men," replied the alcalde; "you shall have no more than eighteen hundred and sixty rations: they are ready for you."

The profession of spy in the army is a very dangerous one; and, to get well served by men who every day run the risk of the gallows, a general ought to pay liberally. The government transmitted to the commanders-in-chief considerable sums for this purpose. But several of them were niggardly in the expenditure of this money. To obtain services which the prospect of gain alone can induce a man to render, they preferred terror. After imprisoning the wife and children of a poor fellow, they would say to him:—"You must be gone immediately, and get back to-morrow, and tell me all that Mina, Longa, El Pastor [or whoever it might be] is doing; what is his force, his position. If you deceive me, or fail to return, I will order your whole family to be hanged."

What was the consequence? The peasant did not come

back, and not a creature was hanged ; or, perhaps, he went and told all he knew to Mina, who gave him his cue, and so contrived it that the truth one day was a falsehood on the morrow. The money allowed for secret services, for the pay of spies, was sent back to Paris, and matters went on most prosperously—according to the bulletins.

Though the Spanish nation had risen *en masse* against us, though it was waging a national war with us, yet, by paying liberally, we should have found traitors. The love of country was not the sole motive of the insurrection ; it had furnished the pretext for it—that was all. Most of the guerillas, when they found nothing to do against the French, plundered their own countrymen : all were alike to them. They thought only of enriching themselves, leaving the country to settle its business as it best might. This course is not a novelty : we find it in all countries, in all ages, in time of peace, as well as in time of war.

In many villages the peasants called both the French and the guerillas brigands. When I one day asked an alcalde :—“ Is it long since you had the brigands in this part of the country ?” he inquired : “ Which do you mean ?—the French or the Spaniards ?”

In proof of what I am asserting, I may adduce the celebrated Chacarito. This chief of a band, after making war upon the French, turned his arms against the Spaniards in his leisure moments, in order to keep his hand in. He had struck such terror into Castile, that the Spaniards had joined the French to endeavour to take him. Betrayed by one of his men, he was seized in a *venta*, which he defended like a lion. A few days afterwards he suffered the most horrible of deaths in the public place of Valladolid. Quartered by four horses, his disparted members were placed on wheels at the four cardinal points of the city ; but this example did not deter other brigands from pursuing the same course.

For the rest, these bands fled before a few riflemen : unless



greatly superior in number, they would not dare to attack us boldly; and, in this case, they had the immense advantage of surprising us in ambuscades. The country is so broken by mountains and precipices, that it is impossible to guard the roads properly. When a chief of guerillas had come back from an expedition, his whole band dispersed, the arms were hidden, and each returned to his home, after agreeing to meet again on such a day, perhaps twenty or thirty leagues off. The French set out in pursuit of them; they did not meet with a creature; and the Paris newspapers proclaimed to all Europe that such or such a general had, with an intrepidity deserving the highest admiration, driven the brigands into their mountains; that they were a cowardly crew, unworthy to bear arms, &c., &c. But all these fine official phrases did not prevent the brigands, as they were termed, from assiduously pursuing their vocation. By harassing us incessantly, they fatigued our men, who fell ill: they occupied half the army in protecting couriers, and very frequently a battalion was not sufficient to escort a letter.

The great art in partisan warfare is always to attack, and never be forced to accept battle. The guerillas made it their study not to be found when we looked for them; to pounce upon us like vultures when we least expected them; and it must be confessed that they completely performed their task. Sometimes it happened that they were hanged when taken in arms: this was the dark side of their profession, the reverse of the medal; but they served the French who fell into their power in the same manner; nay, they frequently carried their reprisals to the most revolting barbarity. On several occasions they flayed alive the prisoners whom the fortune of war had thrown into their hands: many of those miserable wretches were sawed asunder between two planks; one of my friends was buried alive in the ground, all but his head, which served as a mark for the savages to play at bowls. One might fill volumes with the atrocities



committed on both sides in this graceless war; but I can affirm, without fear of being contradicted by any one, that we were always less cruel than the Spaniards.

It is astonishing what a quantity of indulgences may be earned on a march in Spain. In the towns, in the villages, on the high roads, you find saints and virgins set up in niches. You read underneath, in large letters:—"One thousand years'—two thousand years'—ten thousand years' indulgences for every one who will say five Paters and five Aves before this holy image."

In Spain the Christian religion has sunk to that point at which paganism had arrived among the Romans. With the major part of the Spanish people, a saint, a Virgin of gold and silver, is the object of adoration. The devotee kneels before the image, sees but that, and conceives no higher thought. Remove the statue, and all is gone; if you set up another, it will have no efficacy. The old one wrought miracles, and, till its successor has performed at least a dozen, it will be thought nothing of. The Spaniards have confined Christianity to ceremonies: they think that they have done all that can be done, when they have fasted, worn the scapulary, and read mechanically so many pages of a book.

According to their notions, religion cannot exist without monks and processions: they must have relics, and miracles, and ecclesiastics in grotesque dresses, and convents, where every one may find prayers and soup. In religion, they are materialists, without being aware of it; in love they are materialists, and they acknowledge it. In regard to everything else, they are happy after they have satisfied their material wants: this is proved to demonstration.

They have a respect for God, but one may affirm that they show a much greater for the saints: each village has its patron, whom they invoke, and to whom alone they pray. The Virgin shares the honours paid to the saints of each particular place or district. It is to her that a Spanish female

appeals to witness the truth of what she affirms ; it is in the name of the Virgin that she swears constancy to her lover, that she promises to meet him. The Spaniards think nothing of God ; they very seldom mention his name. A peasant one day said in my presence : “ At Matapasuelos there is a saint who has as much power as God.”—“ And a great deal more,” added another.

You cannot invent a story so absurd, so silly, so stupid, as that a Spanish monk shall not be able to make his countrymen believe it. Such a saint has shed tears, such a Virgin has moved her arms, her foot, her head ; everybody believes it, because a man in black has told them so. Presently, every one affirms that he has seen it : how is it possible afterwards to doubt a thing which the whole town maintains to be true ! Voltaire somewhere says, that if twenty thousand men were to come before him and swear that they had seen a dead person come to life, he would not believe them. Voltaire was quite right ; for, in every village in Spain, you may find plenty of people who would affirm that they beheld this miracle.

On my arrival at Burgos, I went to see the magnificent cathedral. My cicerone told me that at the hospital they would show me a Christ on the cross, whose nails grew so fast that it was necessary to cut them every week. I went, therefore, to the hospital to see the crucifix. The keeper was absent, but I was shown the man whose office it is to perform every week the chirurgical operation.

This reminds me of the story of a poor devil, who, to get a few sous from the cockneys of Paris, had installed himself in a booth on the Boulevard. After sounding the trumpet and beating the drum to collect the simpletons, “ Walk in, gentlemen,” said he, “ to see this rare and curious animal ; he has travelled all over the four quarters of the world, namely, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Norway. Never was his likè before seen ; he is the offspring of the incestuous

loves of a carp and a rabbit ; and, what is most astonishing, gentlemen, the carp is the father." The gaping fools paid their two sous and entered the booth. "Gentlemen," said the confederate of the barker, "Monsieur the Count de Lacepède, grand chancellor of the Legion of Honour, and director of the Museum of Natural History, has this very moment sent for the animal, for the purpose of drawing up a report concerning it for the Emperor Napoleon. I cannot, therefore, show it to you to-day, but you shall see the father and mother." Then, for his two sous, the cockney gazed at leisure at a rabbit in a cage and a carp in a pail of water.

Many women followed their husbands to the army, either because from conjugal affection they would not be parted from them, or because their circumstances did not allow them to keep two establishments. When we took the field, however, they remained at the dépôt ; but, as soon as peace was made, they arrived by carriage-loads. These ladies travelled in cabriolets, in calèches, in carts ; their chaste ears must often have been shocked by the language which they heard ; and, at every halt, their eyes must have encountered objects still more hideous. In Germany, these ladies, who followed the army, lived in a very comfortable manner ; they were in no sort of danger : but, in Spain, the case was totally different. In travelling along the road, they were, like us, exposed to the fire of musketry ; and when their escort, falling into an ambuscade, left them to the mercy of the Spanish brigands, they underwent the most infamous usage.

In a skirmish near Burgos, the wife of an officer of my acquaintance had her carriage broken in pieces, and she was forced to proceed sorrowfully on foot. She was soon overwhelmed with fatigue ; the perspiration trickled down her face ; her delicate limbs could no longer support their burden ; it was impossible for her to go a hundred paces farther. Her husband was extremely distressed to see his wife in such a condition.

“Poor Laura!” said he to me, “she will certainly die upon the road, if I cannot meet with a carriage, a horse, or a mule, to carry her.”

“We shall not find any to-day, but I think I observed in the rear-guard a soldier driving an ass, and if you can prevail on him to sell or lend it you . . . .”

“An excellent thought! you are my best friend, that you are. Where is that soldier? where is that ass? I would give fifty louis for an ass; I must have an ass for Laura. Poor Laura, how tired she is!”

“She cannot stir another step.”

“I would give a hundred louis for an ass. Money was made to circulate; and of what benefit is it to have money if Laura suffers? Let us go and look for this ass.”

“I dare say you might get it at a much cheaper rate.”

“What signifies the price, so I do but find an ass! But where shall we find one?”

“At the rear-guard. I think it belongs to some marauder, who is keeping out of the way. Let the regiment pass on; we shall soon see.”

“Courage, Laura; walk a little farther; I shall soon be back.”

The column had by degrees passed us. The rear-guard appeared, and we saw a voltigeur leading by the bridle a long-eared animal, upon which he had slung his knapsack on one side, and his musket as a counterpoise, on the other.

“Aha! there is the ass that we are looking for!—I say, voltigeur, my wife is ill; she cannot walk any farther; you must sell me that ass.”

“That I will, captain.”

“How much do you ask for it?”

“Twenty francs.”

“Are you joking? Twenty francs! twenty francs! and for a stolen ass—for you have stolen it—and it would serve you right if I were to inform the general-in-chief.”

“But, captain, I did not steal it; I found it as we were passing through the last village.”

“You *found* it, did you? I am not such a simpleton as to believe that.”

“But, even if I had stolen it, you ought to be very glad, since you are in want of such a thing.”

“Well, I will give you two pieces of one hundred sous for your ass.”

“Oh, no! I must have twenty francs.”

“Well, take your choice between my two hundred sous and a complaint to the general-in-chief.”

“Here, take my ass.”

“My dear fellow,” said he, turning to me, “it is horribly dear—ten francs for a stolen ass! but, never mind, money was made to circulate.”

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## EDITOR'S REMARKS

ON

### CHAPTER III.

THERE is little to observe upon in the third chapter; still, a few remarks may be made on these amusing stories, as my chief object is to exhibit the difference between foreign armies and the British army, whether favourable to our troops or otherwise.

1st. The difference between the imperial guards of France and her Majesty's guards in England, is striking: the imperial guards were, as ours are, highly favoured; but unlike ours, they earned that favour by severe service. They had, individually and collectively, done more than the troops of the line. Ours have done less. There is not a regiment of the British line which has any cause to feel itself inferior to the guards in merit. Many hold the guards to be inferior.



This is prejudice; the truth being that, with regard to merit, all regiments are upon a par. In the general course of service, each may be at times better, and, at times, worse, than its neighbour, according to the abilities of its commanding officer, and the place where it is quartered. No quarters are more trying, and more likely to injure discipline, than London and Windsor, where the guards are usually quartered. The men are tempted night and day, and the black book of the household troops is no criterion by which to judge of their comparative merit. I should say that the guards might have more punishment than most regiments, and yet be in as good, or better, order.

But with great admiration for the regiments of guards as fine bodies of men, ever ready to do their work in battle as becomes British soldiers, still they do not do the hard work of the service like other regiments. The British army is different from every other. Our real hard trial is colonial service, and the guards do not take that. Nor do they form a body of men chosen for individual merit. Were such the case, it would render their peculiar privileges unobjectionable to the line. It does not appear that the Emperor Napoleon favoured the officers of the Imperial Guard by an undue proportion of command as general officers. His favour seems to have been bestowed upon them as a corps, and (according to the French soldier) of the asses he made mules; but there he stopped.

2nd. The observations made upon the French republicans are very good. Many of those gentlemen are alive, and may defend their conduct against the sarcasms of the writer, if they can. I believe that Carnot remained the most free from reproach; but, able as he was, and honest as he is said to have been, he acted in conjunction with the assassins of the "Reign of Terror," and finally he took the title of "Count" from Napoleon. How republican giants dwindled into pigmies, in the hands of that commanding mind! The first

must remain a stain upon Carnot's character for ever. The last, as he pretended to be a "stern republican," was pitiable or laughable, or what the reader pleases. Republicans are fond of being "stern." One was "stern," and put his own son to death. Another was "stern," and assassinated his benefactor, if not his father; being a usurer, he was also "stern," especially with his debtors, so stern as to starve a cityful; for Brutus did these things by wholesale, just as the French republicans used grape-shot at Lyons. Sometimes Whigs, Tories, and Radicals, are "stern path-of-duty men," as Cobbett called them. But why men should pique themselves on being truculent instead of just I know not; but so it is, that republicans seem to rejoice (to use a newspaper word) in the title of "stern." Malesherbes was not stern, though he was bold, when he defended Louis XVI., yet posterity will hold his character in higher estimation than that of the "stern" Carnot. Men should be stern to their enemies, but not to their countrymen; and, above all, not to those who are in their power. To be called "stern path-of-duty men" seems to gratify some men; they seem to consider it as a virtue: so the men described by M. Blaze were, no doubt, stern republicans, till the great Napoleon came, who was, I may say, bred in a republic; but no sooner did he get power enough to save his head from the guillotine, than he put an end to all that bloody work, and *sterns* were turned into *prows*, or at least, *figure-heads*, bedecked with coronets. Finally, they have finished by being objects of ridicule to the writer and other sensible men; and, in a few years more, will only be remembered, as other executioners are, by those who rummage history to find out the disgusting transactions of the age.

3rd. The horrors committed by the French and Spaniards in the Spanish war are recounted by the author with a just feeling of disgust. I believe he is right in saying that the Spaniards were the worst of the two nations; and I also be-

lieve that the latter *began* the infamous cruelties inflicted upon the prisoners. However, one thing every English officer knows, namely, that both the British and French armies behaved like honourable soldiers to each other; and the former protected the French prisoners from the cruelty of the Spaniards as much as was in their power. I speak generally. There might have been a few infamous exceptions: but I never myself witnessed anything so disgraceful to military and national honour as the maltreatment of a prisoner of war by *military* men.

I will not say the same of the Transport Office in England, whose treatment of the French prisoners appeared to me to be absolutely dreadful. The whole government was implicated in this detestable affair, from the effect of which, numbers, it is said, became idiots. The idea of shutting up honourable soldiers, who were prisoners of war, in the hulks of ships for years, a punishment far beyond that inflicted on the most infamous felons, who are only shut up for a few months, is too painful to any honourable man to speak of without expressing his abhorrence of it. It was disgraceful to the government of those days, and forms a strong contrast to the honourable treatment which the English prisoners received in France, by order of the Emperor Napoleon: at least, I have never heard that, as a body, British officers or soldiers who were prisoners complained of the treatment received: individuals may, but we have only *their* story. We were told that the French prisoners *were so numerous* that it was necessary to confine them in hulks. This was an idle excuse. What was to hinder these honourable and brave men from being placed in one or two of our Western Islands, which they would have cultivated, and whence they could not have escaped, if we had forbidden all boats to approach the islands, save an armed vessel or two to guard the coast? This was proposed at the time, but there was in those days a desire to insult the French, which prevented this humane, honour-

able, and useful proposal from being received : and the cruel expedient of shutting brave men up in those floating prisons for years, exposed to everything horrible, was adopted. No honest British soldier will ever speak of this matter without expressing his detestation of such conduct towards prisoners of war.

Now to return from this long digression, which I made from necessity, because, whenever I think of the Transport Office, and the ill-treatment which the French prisoners received, and compare it with the kind treatment which I myself, and all who were with me, received from Marshals Soult and Ney, it gives me such a fit of spleen that I must necessarily give vent to it ; the reader will, therefore, pardon me, in consideration of the physical necessity by which I am impelled.

All the horrors committed by the French and Spanish soldiers upon each other, and upon women and children, are hateful, as are all the cruelties of a similar nature perpetrated in the East Indies and in the colonies. All these horrors are fairly and justly laid to the charge of Napoleon in one case and of British ministers in the other. It is in vain that sophistry and national prejudice endeavour to throw off from the shoulders of an English government the responsibility for crimes committed in an unjust war. Napoleon was the author of the Spanish aggressions. The English were the aggressors in India ; and, although our sovereign can do no wrong, his ministers can, and no man can lay a heavier charge upon Napoleon, than rests upon the English ministers who conquered India and Australia, and protected those who there committed atrocities equal to any recounted by our author. There is one thing to be said, however—that Napoleon was tempted by the folly of the reigning monarch of Spain : his wish, if it had been accomplished, would have promoted the happiness of Spain ; he had nothing vile or cruel in his object. Whereas, the object of the English government was to enrich a parcel of shopkeepers ; the

“shopocracy of England,” as it has been well termed; and a more base and cruel tyranny never wielded the power of a great nation. Our object in conquering India, the object of all our cruelties, was *money—lucre*: a thousand millions sterling are said to have been squeezed out of India in the last sixty years. Every shilling of this has been picked out of blood, wiped, and put into the murderers’ pockets; but, wipe and wash the money as you will, the “damned spot” will not “out.” There it sticks for ever, and we shall yet suffer for the crime as sure as there is a God in heaven, where the “commercial interests of the nation” find no place, or heaven is not what we hope and believe it to be! Justice and religion are mockeries in the eyes of “a great manufacturing country,” for the true god of such a nation is Mammon. I may be singular, but, in truth, I prefer the despotic Napoleon to the despots of the East India Company. The man ambitious of universal power generally rules to do good to subdued nations. But the men ambitious of universal peculation rule only to make themselves rich, to the destruction of happiness among a hundred millions of people. The one may be a fallen angel; the other is a hell-born devil!

The English must be a noble people that can do the evil things we have done, and yet be the first nation in the world! We are so grand and so good that, like a powerful ship, which bears being heavily laden, we can carry a vast cargo of sin, and yet sail better than the whole fleet. But to add to our honesty will do us no harm; our mediation between America and France, in 1836, will never do us discredit, nor injure our prosperity: there is something that warms the heart when a man can feel that his country has done a great and noble action. I like better to think of our mediation between France and America than to think of the eternal disgrace which we incurred by sending the Emperor Napoleon to St. Helena.



## CHAPTER IV.

## QUARTERS—GERMANY, POLAND.

IN general, the places that we liked best were precisely those that we quitted soonest, and *vice versa*. It was very rarely indeed that superior orders were in accordance with our pleasures. A person travelling post changes his apartment every day, and sees nothing. I know one who passed through Florence on a fine moonlight night, and exclaimed, with the utmost satisfaction: "Another city seen!" Though marching quickly, we always lodged with people whom we had opportunities to study. One day in a mansion, the next in a cottage, we saw much more of the inhabitants of a country than he who leaves one inn to go to another. In this chapter the reader will find some observations on manners, made on the spot, from day to day, in the different countries that we visited. It is by lodging with people, by eating and drinking with them, by associating with them, that you learn to know them.

Soldiers, travelling in France, are furnished with a billet of lodging, which gives them a right to a place at the fire and the candle: for this reason our Romans of the Empire preferred Germany to France. Among those good Germans they found their dinner ready; their pay remained untouched, and could, therefore, be applied to other purposes—*schnapps*, tobacco, and the like. In Spain they were frequently worse off than in France; they found in their lodgings neither fire nor candle.

In order to obtain good fare the soldiers had recourse to a singular expedient. Lodging several of them together, they agreed what parts to play before they entered the peasant's house. One of them pretended to be in a furious passion: he would swear, storm, draw his sword, and threaten everybody. The women were frightened, ay, and sometimes the

men too. His comrades strove to soothe him, and declared that he was the best fellow in the world with those who knew how to humour him; and presently they pointed out his weak side.

“He is fond of good eating and good wine, you must know; that is his hobby. When he is furnished with what he likes, he is as gentle as a lamb, as a new-born infant; but when you give him nothing but potatoes to eat, and sour beer to drink, he is terrible; none of us, nay, not all of us together, should then be able to prevent him from doing some mischief or other. Why, no longer ago than yesterday, about eight leagues off, this real devil set fire to the house of a peasant who carried his incivility to such a length as to put water into the wine that he gave us. We ought not to say so, perhaps; but, after all, our comrade was not so much to blame, for it is wrong to cheat anybody. Consider . . . look about you . . . do things conscientiously . . . let the dinner be nice, the drink good, and all will be right, we will answer for it.”

Such speeches, amplified and commented on by the party, usually made a deep impression: the host cheerfully produced his best; our fellows desired nothing more, and all passed off extremely well. These scenes were sometimes performed by officers, though opportunities for this rarely occurred, as they were seldom quartered so many together as to be able to distribute the parts.

We were not liked in Germany; very far from it. The passage or stay of French regiments was an enormous burden to the country. But, though the people abhorred our army in mass, they were fond of us, individually. The jovial, frank, and open character of the French, easily conciliated the friendship of the good Germans, who are in general serious. Notwithstanding the antipathies of nation against nation, it was rare that, an hour after his arrival, the French soldier, who would take any trouble to please, was not as

great a favourite as if his host had known him for ten years. Do as they do; smoke, drink beer, and the Germans will be fond of you. And then, such pains had been taken to make them believe the French to be devils, that, when they found they had to deal with well-bred men, they spared nothing to express the joy which they felt.

In Spain, the people liked individuals no better than masses. In a general insurrection, a Spaniard would have cut the throat of a Frenchman sleeping under his roof; a German would have saved him. Almost everywhere in Germany I was kindly received; almost everywhere I was requested to come again, if chance should bring me that way. A soldier, however, ought not to construe these invitations too literally: they are forms of civility which are offered to him at his departure—nothing more. One day I took it in my head to call again upon an honest German: he did not know me; I was obliged to tell my name, my christian name, my age, and quality; in consequence, your humble servant vowed that he would never more place himself in so awkward a predicament.

Once settled in quarters, every one, officer, subaltern, or private, set about paying court to the mistress of the house, or to her daughter, if she had one. My captain was married, but he often forgot this: I have known many officers, who, under certain circumstances, had no more memory than if they had been dipped in Lethe. In all our lodgings he passed himself off for a bachelor. The moment he spied a young female, he began to say sweet things to her, talked of marriage, and now and then he was listened to. Marriage!—there is magic, you know, in that word for a young female; many a man whom she would not deign to look at as a man, she regards with kindness as soon as she believes him to be susceptible of becoming a husband.

Be that as it may, my captain gained a hearing by means

of this petty stratagem ; while I, who had always a declaration ready, but did not look like a marrying man, was very often repulsed with loss, though I was twenty years younger than my rival. The respect which I have always professed for good morals, for conjugal fidelity, and, perhaps, also a spice of jealousy, suggested to me an expedient for supplanting him.

As soon as my Lothario began to play the gallant, "Captain," said I to him, aloud, "the *vaguemestre*\* is just arrived ; I dare say he has a letter for you from your wife."

"Hold your tongue," he replied in a whisper. But I pretended not to comprehend him, and rattled away.

"Your Napoleon [all officers' sons were named Napoleon] must be a great boy by this time ; he is, no doubt, forward in his learning ; he always was an intelligent child. Is he still at the Lyceum of Antwerp ?"

"What is that to you ?"

"And little Hortense," [all officers' daughters were then named Hortense ; subsequently they were called Marie Louise] "is little Hortense as frolicsome as ever ?"

"Have done ! have done ! that does not concern you."

"Upon my word, it must be a pleasant thing to be married, and to have children : this bachelor's life is frequently very wearisome, and I never felt more disposed to give it up than to-day."

The young lady immediately showed more coldness in her answers to the captain ; presently she did not even look at him ; he was married, consequently he was a useless being. All the ground that he lost, I gained by degrees ; and sometimes I had reason to congratulate myself on these indiscretions.

\* The *vaguemestre* is a subaltern, who goes to the post-office to fetch the letters for the regiment and delivers them according to their addresses—in short, a military postman.

“Why, the devil,” said he to me, when we were alone, “do you come and talk to me every moment about my wife? I really believe you do it on purpose.”

“Certainly.”

“But don’t you know that it is very wrong?”

“Do you think it is right to violate the vow you made to your wife at the altar? to strive to seduce a young female, by making her believe that you will marry her? Is not this frightful?—and then the morality of the thing!”

“Morality! morality! Do you imagine that you impose upon me with your pretensions to high principles? I see clearly that all your annoyance is but a cunning manœuvre to get into my place.”

“It is possible.”

“And will morals be a greater gainer by you than by me?”

“It is possible again; for, at any rate, I can marry; you cannot.”

“But you will do no such thing.”

“How do you know? For some time past, I have felt within me a certain vocation for matrimony; an idea, a whim, may decide me. If I were to see a good example, perhaps I might follow it. You know the story of Panurge’s sheep, which, because the leader jumped into the water, all plunged in after it. Besides, you have the advantage of rank over me; allow me that which I have over you. Whenever there are two damsels, you shall have a right to court one of them; but when our host has but one daughter, recollect that to me alone belongs the right of making love to her. I am the younger, and gallantry is in an inverse ratio to military service.”

A few days afterwards, we had just arrived at Magdeburg, when I went to see my captain. I found him with a face a yard long: he was sadly heaving deep sighs, mingled with very energetic interjections.



“What is the matter?” said I to him. “Something seems to have ruffled you to-day.”

“The matter, my dear fellow! the matter! I will tell you. The fun is at an end . . . Hymen is coming.”

“What am I to understand by those words?”

“My wife is coming to join me. I have received notice to that effect this morning.”

“Well, captain, accept my most sincere congratulations on the pleasure . . . the felicity . . . which . . .”

“Thank you, thank you; you are pleased to be facetious but I should like to see you in the same predicament.”

The Germans were not fond of lodging married officers; their ladies were, in general, extremely troublesome: as they wished to pass for *well-bred* women, they always affected to be dissatisfied, either with the lodging or with the diet, in order to induce a belief that they lived in much better style at the paternal home. During the Restoration, the officers on duty at the Tuileries dined at the palace; it was the fashion in the royal guard to find fault with the fare: a man gave himself the air of a person of consequence by insinuating that it was far inferior to what he had at home. I know not how the kitchens of those gentlemen were organized; but, for my part, when I compared my father's table with that of the Tuileries, I gave the decided preference to the latter.

Wherever I have been quartered, my host has assured me that he would rather have ten soldiers than one officer's wife. In Germany, people liked better to have four Frenchmen quartered upon them than one German of the Confederation of the Rhine. The Bavarians, the Westphalians, the Wurtembergers, were intractable; they began by administering blows with the flat of the sword, and sometimes they went still farther; whereas, the French almost always stopped short at threats.

The King of Wurtemberg had imposed a singular tax in

his dominions. Every female who took the unwarrantable liberty of producing a child without being married was obliged to pay a fine; and this fine brought one hundred thousand dollars per annum into the coffers of his Wurtemberg majesty. Small profits ought not to be neglected. This money was appropriated to the royal kitchen. The grand-master of this essential part of a good government exercised the control over all children born without the sanction of the clergy. A hint this for the governments of other countries. In France, for example, there are born annually about seventy thousand natural children; lay a tax on all these brats. Such a tax would not be vexatious, for it is an established fact that people can live without having children; it would be essentially moral, because it would impel to marriage those who feel a decided vocation for the propagation of their species. I exhort our ministers to consider this suggestion.

After lodging one day with a cobbler, we found ourselves, perhaps, on the morrow in a palace. This was actually the case in the environs of Ulm. Prince Henry of Wurtemberg was exiled by the king, his father; till he should be reinstated in his favour, he led a jovial life at the castle of Wippling. His highness sent us an invitation to dine with him; we accepted it, as officers never fail to do.

The prince drank nothing but champagne; from the beginning of the dinner to the dessert, it was poured out in bumpers; we thought this a strange fashion at first, but we soon got used to it. National spirit contributed to reconcile us to it; for the benefit of the vine-growers of Champagne, we encouraged the consumption. Many other wines were on the table, but the prince touched none of them; they were for us alone; and the prince did the honours with great condescension.

One of the guests at this dinner was a Bavarian officer. I soon perceived that this brave man wore on his left thumb

a gold ring of extraordinary dimensions; it was at least four times as large as his finger. A black ribbon, tied round his wrist, held it in its place. But is it a ring? said I to myself. If it is not a ring, what is it then? I had never seen one of such size, and placed in such a manner. All dinner-time, my attention was engrossed by the monster ring; scarcely could the champagne effect from time to time a little diversion. Had I been obliged to go to bed without satisfying my curiosity, I should certainly not have been able to sleep.

I determined, therefore, to seek an explanation. On leaving the table, I approached the officer for the purpose of beginning a conversation. We had made the same campaigns, we had been in the same battles, fighting for the same cause, and we soon got acquainted. We began to talk of professional matters; but I kept my eyes fixed upon the ring.

“Sir,” said I, at last, “may I, without indiscretion, ask you what you call the thing which you wear on your left thumb?”

“Don’t you see? it is a ring.”

“It is very large.”

“Yes, that is the reason why I fasten it by the ribbon tied round my wrist.”

“But, pardon me, how happens it that you wear a ring of such calibre?”

“Because, in my house, all the seniors have worn it from time immemorial. It was made expressly for one of my ancestors, Otto von Ringelbaum: judge what a man he must have been, and how we are degenerated.”

Taking off the ring, he showed it to me. Resembling those large brass rings by which our curtains are suspended, it was of massive gold, and weighed at least a pound.

“Sir,” said I, “you have more patience than I should have, for this must be very troublesome.”

“Yes, it is troublesome, for it is very heavy; but, you see, all my ancestors wore it, and I must do so too. It is even a privilege which my family enjoys, which I cannot, I ought not, renounce.”

“And you are perfectly right.”

Among the sovereigns whom accident and my billet procured me the honour of closely observing, I must place in the first rank the Duke of Anhalt-Dessau. That excellent prince united the qualities of the scholar and the courtier with the patriarchal manners of the German burghers. No French officer quitted Dessau without feelings of gratitude for the kind reception that he had experienced. It is in Germany alone that you still find that antique good-nature, that unaffected politeness proceeding from the heart, that frankness in the language as well as in the face of the host.

The moment we had uttered the name of Worlitz, the prince gave orders to his officers to conduct us thither. We knew those celebrated gardens from some verses of Delille's, which I repeated. This seemed to please the duke: he immediately placed carriages, horses, everything, at our disposal.

This was, certainly, the most pleasant excursion that ever I made in my life. Nothing can be more beautiful, more delicious, than the park of Worlitz. Nature and the fine arts have vied in its embellishment: all that refined taste, all that imagination can devise is there, in the compass of a few square leagues. The lawn, as you enter, of immense extent, with a stream running through it, presents an enchanting prospect, with its bridges, sometimes of elegant, at others of grotesque forms; here are flowers, there cascades, yonder rocks, farther on obelisks, statues, museums.

You lose yourself in a shrubbery, on emerging from which you find yourself before a temple with Corinthian columns: this is the library. Beyond it is a farm, with its appropriate

animals, utensils, and labourers. A dairy of white marble is managed by young females suitably clad. You would fancy yourself at the Opera. Still farther on, is another edifice of the noblest architecture; this is the cabinet of medals; and beyond it is the picture-gallery. In short, Worlitz is to the Duke of Anhalt-Dessau what to us would be our museums, our library, our cabinet of natural history, collected in a magnificent park.

In passing through the duchy of Anhalt-Dessau, we felt a vague desire to live there for good; on seeing the prince who then governed it we should cheerfully have submitted to all his laws, without demanding of him the guarantees of a representative government. He was a good father amidst his children; they never asked why their sovereign did this or that, knowing that he could do no other than right.

This happy country is not so large as many a department of France, but it is one vast garden. All the roads are bordered on each side by three rows of cherry trees; these present a magnificent sight in the month of June, when they are laden with fruit, from which is made a prodigious quantity of *kirschwasser*.

A fondness for gardens is, indeed, general in Germany; every one, from the prince to the petty shopkeeper, has his own, which he is continually embellishing. The cities, which formerly were fortified, have converted their old bastions into clumps of lilac, their curtains into alleys of flowers, their muddy ditches into handsome pieces of water, studded with islets. Leipzig and Bremen may be mentioned as models of this kind: you may walk round those cities all the way under fine trees, and through alleys of flowers.

These fortifications, converted into pleasure-grounds, presented of themselves inequalities of surface, which, under the management of men of taste, look most delightful. The prospect changes at every step; you have always something



fresh to see. This is not like our symmetrical promenades in France, where you have seen everything as soon as you have reached the end of one of the alleys.

A country in which we fared very well and very ill is Poland: there you meet with indigence and luxury at every step. The filthiness of the villages is frightful: in every peasant's dwelling there is a room, or rather a stable, where horses, cows, pigs, and poultry, pass the night: one-fourth of this room is occupied by a prodigious stove, which serves as a bed for the family. The father, the mother, the daughter, and the son-in-law, here sleep all together, on straw laid upon the stove, and everything is transacted there nearly the same as among a herd of swine. Quit this hovel, where you leave human nature in its primitive state, go to the mansion, and you will there find all the refinements of civilization—a select library, all the politeness of well-educated people, agreeable conversation, in short, all the comforts that it is possible to possess in Poland. A journey in that country is a perpetual series of contrasts.

The Polish nobility, in fact, pass in general eleven months of the year at their country-seats. They live there in a very economical manner; but they compensate themselves by the indulgences of the carnival and the feast of St. John, when they go to Warsaw, Posen, or Cracow. There each pursues a ruinous round of dissipation: dinners and entertainments succeed one another from day to day; the streets are thronged with superb equipages; extravagantly high play takes place; at length, the travellers return home, and seek to restore the equilibrium of their finances by making their peasants toil.

This country life is not very agreeable in Poland: each family is confined to its own village; the roads are execrably bad, and there is no such thing as visiting, unless in summer or in severe frost. I would not advise professors of gastronomy to go to Poland in the expectation of realizing there the sublime meditations of Brillat-Savarin. Nowhere but in

the towns is there either butcher or baker : a gentleman must have at his own mansion all that is subservient to animal life. He has an ox killed, which supplies his family with fresh meat for three days, and salted beef for three months : and so it is with everything else. Bread can scarcely be reckoned among the necessaries of life for the Poles : all their dishes are seasoned with pastes, flour, or meal. Their ordinary drink is beer of bad quality : in many mansions where I have dined, I have seen but one glass in the middle of a table, and each emptied it in turn. I have seen beautiful, elegant, well-bred young ladies, drink after a nasty, dirty, long-bearded steward, without any repugnance. Accordingly, as soon as I became acquainted with the habits of these people, I procured a goblet, which I reserved for my own separate use.

In Poland I have seen young ladies who had the strange habit of sticking very black pear-pips upon their faces : these looked somewhat like the *mouches* with which our ladies formerly tattooed themselves, and served to set off the whiteness of their complexion.

“I cannot conceive,” I once said to one of them, “how you contrive to place your pips on the very same spot to-day as you did yesterday.”—“I never take them off.”—“Not to wash your face?”—“Why should I wash my face?—it is always clean.”

At Warsaw, one half of the inhabitants is composed of foreigners, and especially of Germans. The Polish Jews carry on all, or nearly all, the traffic ; they are innkeepers, shopkeepers, tailors, shoemakers ; the Germans are physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, lawyers ; the Poles, properly so called, are either nobles or peasants, either slaves or great landed proprietors : in this country there exists no intermediate class.

Society at Warsaw closely resembles that in Paris. The ladies there are extremely amiable, and they are not in any respect behind our charming countrywomen. They follow

the French fashions, and affect the manners of Paris. The Poles speak nothing but French, even in conversing with one another ; it is thought extremely vulgar in Warsaw to speak Polish, unless when you are talking to your servants. The Polish language is banished from good company, as the *patois* of Provence is at Marseilles. The study of foreign languages serves as the ground-work to the education of the Poles of both sexes. It is very right of them to learn the languages of other nations ; for nobody, I think, would be induced to learn theirs. I certainly did make the attempt ; but how is it possible to acquire the pronunciation of words, in which you find four or five consecutive consonants !

A hackney-coach horse, at Paris, is not quite so miserable as a Polish peasant, who toils all the year round for the profit of his lord. The country is fertile in corn, yet the peasant never tastes bread. Potatoes, milk, and millet, constitute his food. These people are always clothed in sheep-skins, with the wool inside in winter, and outside in summer. Their excessive filthiness engenders not only hosts of vermin which devour them, but also a disease, known, I believe, only in Poland and Russia. When a person is attacked with this disease, called the *plica*, his hair is clotted and twisted together, and looks like the serpents of the Euminides, and blood oozes from it if it be cut : there is no cure for the complaint, and the patient expires in frightful convulsions. Nothing can convey an idea of the nastiness of the Polish villages. No peasant in Poland ever thinks of sweeping before his door. In the cantonments occupied by the French army, the inhabitants were obliged to sweep the streets, and a greater vexation could not be inflicted upon them. These filthy, indolent clowns, nevertheless, make very cleanly and also very brave soldiers. In their peasants' dress they have a dull, stupid, brutish look ; but when they have put on the uniform, and been sharpened up at the regiment, you would not know them again. These brutes become proud, cleanly,

intelligent men, and are not in any respect behind the soldiers of the most civilized nations.

The Polish horses are small; they are harnessed four abreast; they are excellent animals, and very swift: they will eat anything that is given to them, even the old straw which has served to thatch houses. They were not affected by the privations incident to war, while our fine Norman horses were reduced to skeletons if they went without oats for a fortnight. The carriages of the gentry are usually drawn by four or six horses, two abreast. The traces are of immoderate length. At Warsaw, a carriage and four occupies more space than, in Paris, that of the king, with eight horses before it. This is a pompous way of moving about, and for that reason it is that it has been adopted by the Poles: they are fond of ostentatious display, of whatever has an air of magnificence. Their servants are covered with gold lace—false gold, it is true—but, at a distance, it makes a show. It is in winter that the Poles exhibit the greatest extravagance in their equipages. You then see sledges of all shapes; the horses covered with bells, and the servants with furs, present a singular sight. In summer, the north of Europe resembles our southern provinces; but in winter it has a particular physiognomy, which is exclusively its own.

I had established my head-quarters of sub-lieutenant at the mansion of Kludziensko, five leagues from Warsaw, the owner of which had forsaken it. I was its lord and master. The account of a little adventure which befel me there will serve better than all I could say to prove the excessive misery of the Polish peasants. I was alone in my chamber; the soldier who lodged me slept in an adjoining room. One night I was awakened by the creaking of my door, which some one opened with caution, and I saw, by the light of my fire which was nearly out, the bearded face of a peasant belonging to the household, who used to cut up the wood that I burned for fuel. He looked about, and as I pretended

to be asleep, he entered. Not knowing with what intention this man had come to my chamber at such an hour, I gently stretched out my hand, grasped my sword which was near the bed, and prepared to run him through the body if I perceived any hostile demonstration: but the poor devil had not the least notion of attempting my life; a parcel of candles was the aim of his nocturnal expedition. I had hung it up near the fire-place; thither the robber directed his course; he seized the candles, retired, and shut the door. If the candles had been unfortunately placed near my bed, I should have concluded that the intruder had come to murder me, and most likely have killed him.

Astonished at his running this risk for such a trifle, I was curious to ascertain what he would do with my candles; for in Poland, and even in many German villages, the peasants light themselves at night by means of pine splinters, which they burn one after another; and I could not suppose that my man coveted such a luxury for the purpose of lighting his smoky cabin. I dressed myself forthwith, and, knowing his house, I ran thither. Through a wretched casement I could see them engaged in frying my candles with potatoes; the poor fellow's whole family was impatiently awaiting the moment for partaking of so savoury a dish; they watched with looks of delight all the details of the culinary operation, and presently all of them eagerly joined in devouring the delicate mess. I returned home with my head full of philosophical reflections, and the peasant never was aware that I knew the thief who had stolen my candles.

In pleasures, with a single exception, there is nothing positive in this world: every gratification is relative to the position of the individual; and the more severe have been the privations, the greater is the pleasure. Hence it was that with the persons saved from the wreck of *La Meduse*, a drop of liquid dentifrice composed of alcohol was an inestimable favour, which each was anxious to obtain in his turn. My



candle-eater, who had never swallowed potatoes cooked in any other way than simply boiled in water, made of them when fried brown in tallow a most delicious meal, as good, nay, perhaps better, than Verey's and Beauvilliers' dinners are to the dilettanti, long habituated to the scientific combinations of transcendental gastronomy. The Cossacks, accustomed to plum-wine, and to the stinking fermented sap of the birch-tree, preferred brandy saturated with pepper to our best Burgundy, which imparted but obtuse sensations to their horn-cased throats.

Some time afterwards, my lucky star caused me to be quartered at Kozerky, the seat of Count Lesseur, formerly chamberlain to the last king of Poland, whose kind hospitality I shall ever hold in the most grateful remembrance. M. Lesseur was of French extraction; he had held high appointments at the court of Stanislaus, and, since the partition of Poland, he led the life of a philosopher with his wife and Mademoiselle Annette, his most virtuous and amiable daughter. This worthy family combined the information, the talents, and the urbanity, of civilized life with the simplicity of the patriarchal manners. I shall give a description of the mansion of Kozerky, that the reader may be able to form some idea of what is called a mansion in Poland. Some rich nobles certainly have finer seats, but the number of those who live in worse habitations is infinitely greater: I therefore take that of Kozerky as the average medium.

At the end of a long line of huts, cabins, kennels if you please, called houses, and serving as stables and lodgings for peasants and their horses, you perceive a small, neat, nay, superb-looking house, because the points of comparison beside it are all to its advantage. It has only a ground-floor, raised a couple of steps, and attics above: the door opens upon a corridor, which runs from one end to the other. In this corridor are seen four doors; on the right is the dining-room, on the left the drawing-room, beyond are

two bed-chambers, and that is all. Each apartment, floored with deal, and neatly furnished, is provided with an enormous stove, heated from without. The windows have double-glazed sashes, to keep out the cold: between the two are kept flowers, and sometimes birds. The whole house is thatched, and, among the generality of the country nobles, it differs only in the greater or less number of rooms in proportion to that of the inhabitants. The kitchen, the servants, the horses, are in a neighbouring building: there the steward lives, but he eats at his master's table, and, as I have observed, drinks out of the same glass with the family. This steward is almost always an educated man; I have seen many a one who spoke Latin extremely well, but, from the manner in which it is pronounced in Poland, the professors of our university would not understand a word of it. In Latin, as all who have learned that language well know, you *thou* everybody; but, in Poland, the habit of servile expressions has introduced a phrase which was not known to Virgil and Cicero. Instead of saying *tu* (thou), the Poles say *dominioniat tua* (thy lordship), and this periphrasis occurs incessantly in their conversation, requiring perpetual agreement in gender, number, and case, in a most perplexing manner. A peasant is always bent down to the ground when he speaks to his lord, or to any man dressed otherwise than in sheepskin. Every time he opens his mouth, he extends his right-hand and bows his head to touch the feet of the person facing him; which made our soldiers say, when a peasant desired to speak to us: "Lieutenant, here is a man who wants to measure you for gaiters."

Were you to see a Polish gentleman travelling and in his mansion, you would not believe that it is the same person. At home he lives upon salted meat, cabbage, and paste-balls; he drinks nothing but wretched beer and still more detestable brandy. When he travels, it is in his carriage drawn by four or six horses, escorted by a party of moustached lacqueys,

beplastered with lace, and champagne is his only beverage. At such times nothing is too costly, for the essential point is to cut a figure: if he has not money, he borrows; the Jews are always ready, and God knows at what interest they furnish it. For no consideration in the world would a Polish noble renounce his journey to Warsaw at a certain time of the year, and still less the entertainment which he annually gives there; because his ancestors did so, he must do so; and were he to miss, he would think that he was disgracing his most remote posterity. There is a striking resemblance between the French character and that of the Poles. Like them, we are fond of display: like us, they are brave, as they have proved thousands and thousands of times.

When a Pole travels in winter, he always has a sledge upon the imperial of his carriage. If snow falls, the carriage is set upon the sledge; if it thaws, the sledge is lifted upon the carriage. In this manner the journey never suffers any interruption. The traveller must take his bed with him, if he wishes to lie on something better than straw; he must also have with him provisions of all kinds, if he would make sure of dining every day. The master's carriage is followed by one or more carts, filled with baggage and servants; it is a real caravan. In all the villages you find a *Jew's house*: this is the inn, and, good heavens! what an inn! Go in, ask for anything but beer, wretched brandy, half-baked paste, which they call bread, and the invariable answer will be—*Niema* (we have none). In Poland, this is the answer to everything, excepting when you ask for water; in this case, they say *Zara* (directly). You should see what nastiness pervades these abodes of the children of Israel. One day, when I was quartered at one of these inns, I perceived that dirty sheets had been put upon my bed. I sent for the landlord, and begged that he would have them changed. "And why so?" he asked.—"Because they are not clean."—"You are quite mistaken; they have only been slept in

by three or four French officers." I could not make this son of Jacob comprehend that sheets may be dirty before they are quite black.

The Jews of Poland are a distinct people; they certainly resemble the Jews of other countries, inasmuch as they are incessantly striving to make money; but they differ from them in not spending any. They heap dollars upon dollars, and they are content, though frequently beaten. In France, in Germany, a rich Jew lives like a rich Christian; but, in Poland, he goes about in the garb of a pauper; and if, deceived by appearances, you offer him a couple of sous, he will not refuse them.

In Poland, the roads are neither firm nor paved: no farther trouble has been taken than to cut them through the forests—that is all. In winter, and when the French army was traversing the country in all directions, we met with oceans of mud, which it was impossible to cross. The mud of Pultusk has acquired unlucky celebrity; horse-soldiers were smothered in it, together with their horses: others blew out their brains, despairing of ever being able to extricate themselves from it.

The mention of the mud of Pultusk reminds me of the melancholy adventure of an officer of engineers. He had sunk in a slough up to his chin, and could not extricate himself. A grenadier came up. "Comrade," cried the officer, "come and help me; I shall soon be smothered by the mud."—"And who are you?"—"An officer of the engineers."—"Ah! one of those fellows who make problems! Well, draw your plan." And the grenadier went his way. The soldiers disliked the officers of the engineers, because they never saw them fight with the bayonet. They could not conceive how it was possible to render services to the army with a pencil and a pair of compasses; and were like Laborie, who did not think that Malte-Brun could be a good geographer because he was not on the field of battle of Eylau.



When the roads become so bad as to be absolutely impassable, then, and not till then, are repairs thought of. Logs, cut to the same length, are then laid across the road, close to one another. If you wish for a sound shaking, just trot over one of those roads. These singular pavements are of unequal width; no pains are ever taken to cover them, and Heaven knows how you are jolted. Roads, thus repaired, are very dangerous for the horses; for it frequently happens that two pieces of timber separate, or perhaps they break, and the animal sprains his leg. But who cares for that? horses are cheap enough. Between Warsaw and Posen, the road is frightful in winter; the villages are the filthiest that can be imagined; the only tolerable station is Lowiez, a pretty little town; but Kutno, Sempolno, Klodawa, Slupc  —what sewers!

Posen, as well as several Polish and Prussian towns is built of wood and brick: stones are very rare in that part of the country. The streets, nevertheless, are paved; and the way in which this is managed is as follows:—Every peasant, entering a town with a cart, is obliged to bring and throw down, near the gate, a stone of a certain size: those vehicles whose drivers do not pay this tax are not allowed to enter. Hence a heap of stones is seen at each gate of the city, and from these heaps are taken the materials for repairs. At first sight, it would appear easy to pay such a contribution; but persons coming every day, who have of course to bring three-hundred and sixty-five stones, are obliged to go a great way in search of them, for the environs of the towns have been, as it were, sifted through a riddle.

I have said that the Poles eat very little bread; a bit, about the size of a crown-piece, is placed for each person, and they leave half of it. The first time that I dined in a Polish mansion, the servant handed me a plate, containing a number of small pieces of bread, and I swept off the whole of the contents. I perceived a smile upon every face, and my neigh-



bour informed me that I had taken the bread destined to serve fifteen persons. Still it was far from satisfying my appetite, for, to the great astonishment of those gentry, I was obliged to ask for more.

It is a general custom in Poland for the men, after each meal, to kiss the hands of all the ladies. When the guests are numerous, the ceremony is long, and it is curious to observe the bustle which then prevails in a spacious saloon, while the gentlemen cross one another in all directions, for each of them must kiss all hands. The ladies keep their notes *in petto*, and woe betide the wight who should fail to kiss with the requisite fervour!

Balls open with the *promenade*, in which all who are present may join: the eldest gentleman chooses a lady, and, while the music plays, he gravely walks away, taking her by the hand. As soon as he is in motion, all the gentlemen take their partners and place themselves behind him, down to urchins three years old, who are not excluded from the party. The column winds in the apartment to prolong the promenade, like the soldiers in a melodrame, who march round the stage to make their exit at the side at which they were stationed. To join in the promenade, nothing is required but a couple, male and female. When a gentleman has not been able to find a partner, he puts himself at the head of the column when it is in motion, bows, claps his hands, and makes his spurs clank from time to time by putting his heels together.\* The gentleman who walks first then resigns to him the hand of his lady, turns round, claps his hands, clanks his spurs, and receives the hand of the partner of the person immediately behind him; the latter performs the same ceremony, and so on to the end of the column, where the last gentleman finds himself alone and goes and begins over again the

\* In Poland, everybody wears spurs, they are never without them; they wear them when they dance, and I am not certain that they take them off when they go to bed.

same manœuvre, by dispossessing the leader of the file. In this way they proceed in general till the person who was first, having given his hand to all the ladies in succession, finds himself put out of the line; as he is always the senior of the party, he goes and sits down, and everybody follows his example.

Lovers find the promenade very agreeable, because, without exciting notice, they are sure to fall in with the lady of their choice; and everybody knows that when you take by the hand the object of your affection, you may say a great many soft things to her without uttering a word. The tune which is played to the promenade is known to everybody, it may be said to be a national air: at the very first bar, each he takes his she, and falls into the ranks. Alphonso, King of Aragon, surnamed the Magnanimous, said: "The only difference between a madman and a man who dances is that the latter is sooner out of his fit." I was always of the same opinion as that worthy monarch. I never learned the art of performing *entrechats* and *jetées battus*, or of displaying my graces in making the *queue du chat*, and yet I excelled in walking the promenade; I clapped my hands loudly enough, and I could accompany that sound with the clanking of my spurs, when I had them on.

The day after my arrival at Posen, I was quartered on the Countess Fischer, who possesses a handsome mansion in the environs. She was a tall, beautiful, and most agreeable woman. For about an hour I had been in her saloon, chatting with her, when a handsome man entered. "My husband," said she, "let me introduce you." This husband treated me with great politeness, and the conversation continued. We talked about politics, about rain, and about fine weather, when another person was ushered in, a remarkably fine man, bowing very gracefully. He grasped very cordially the hand of M. Fischer, and kissed that of his lady.

"It was very unkind of you, my friend," said she, "not

to come yesterday: we expected you to dinner, and were in an ill humour all the evening on account of your absence."

"You must be convinced, my dear countess, that reasons of the utmost importance prevented me from coming, for you know that I am nowhere so happy as here."

"We are fond of believing so," replied the husband.

"To prove it, I have to tell you that I am come to stay a week with you."

"That is delightful!" exclaimed the count and countess both at once; "that is very kind of you; nothing could gratify us more."

"Till dinner is ready, my dear friend," said M. Fischer to the last comer, "I wish to acquaint you with a plan of embellishment. Come along, let us leave the French officer for a moment alone with the countess. The character for gallantry which those gentlemen possess, and which they deserve, causes us to hope that she will not miss us." And the two friends retired, arm in arm.

The countess looked at me, striving to read in my eyes what I thought of the new comer.

"Your brother, I presume?" said I.

"No, sir."

"A relation."

"No, sir."

"Ah!"

"What means that ah?"

"Oh! nothing."

"Confess the truth; you fancy, I dare say, that this gentleman is my lover?"

"Madame . . . ."

"No matter; I will satisfy your curiosity. Besides, why should I make a secret of what everybody knows? That gentleman was once my lover, and for three long years he was . . . . my husband!"

“Your husband !”

“Yes, sir.”

“That is very extraordinary.”

“So you may think ; but it is the truth. We loved one another at twenty to distraction ; it was a romantic passion, a mania, an adoration. Some obstacles opposed our marriage ; our love was increased by them, if possible : at length we married. You will conclude, no doubt, that we were now happy. Our happiness lasted a fortnight at farthest : the rest of the three years that we lived together was a hell upon earth. Our tempers could not agree in anything ; we were incessantly quarrelling ; in short, we could not bear the sight of one another. We parted by mutual consent ; a divorce was subsequently obtained, and some time afterwards I married M. Fischer. But mark the capriciousness of human nature !—the man whom I adored as a lover, whom I detested as a husband, I have now the highest esteem for as a friend. M. Fischer is fond of him, and we cannot do without him. He is a delightful friend ; he is devotedly attached to us, that we are both certain of. There is no sacrifice that he would not cheerfully make, if he could be of service to us.”

“I can easily imagine that your first husband regrets what he has lost. I am quite sure that in his place . . . .”

“French gallantry, all that. You are mistaken, sir. He regrets nothing.”

“But in M. Fischer’s place, I should be very much afraid lest . . . .”

“Lest what ?”

“Do you know our La Fontaine’s tale of the *Troqueurs* ?”

“I do, sir.”

“Well then, you must now know what I should be afraid of.”

“That idea will never enter any of our three heads. I know that in the world people talk scandal on the subject,

but that gives us very little uneasiness. We have resolved to be happy in our own way, and to adopt for our motto :—  
*‘Honi soît qui mal y pense.’*”

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## EDITOR'S REMARKS

ON

### CHAPTER IV.

THE most striking part of the fourth chapter is that which describes the state of the unhappy Poles, by which I do not mean those brave men who have been driven from their country by the false and ferocious government of Russia, and who are obliged to seek refuge in other countries. I mean that unhappy peasantry which these very refugee nobles have reduced, by their oligarchical rule, to a state of such servitude, that they bow to the earth before every man who is not clad like themselves in sheep-skins! In short, what the Emperor Nicholas has done to the Polish nobles these did to their serfs: the consequence is, that the nobles are in exile, the country wild, and without roads that are passable, and the labouring man thinks it a luxury to eat tallow-candles fried with potatoes, and even that he cannot have without committing a robbery. Such are the effects produced by depriving man of his rights! such are the fruits of slavery! Is it strange that a people reduced to such a state of brutality should be partitioned? I think not. The Poles are brave, but they were never free. The people fought for their tyrannical oligarchs, not for their own freedom. They fought bravely, because serfs naturally adhere to their chiefs against strangers; it was not that they loved their chiefs, but that they hated the Russians. The Poles could not have been subdued by Russia, had the people possessed any



degree of freedom ; but an oligarchy always is, and always must be, feeble.

However, all rational people must pity the Polish refugees. Had they been victorious, a constitutional sovereign would probably have ruled Poland, for in these days no new government can be formed upon any other than free principles : instruction pervades the poorest classes of labourers, and instructed millions will not submit to the rule of an oligarchy. A constitutional kingly government, or a self-styled republic, are the only forms of government that the press will permit : and the paramount power of the universe is the press. When Polish peasants learn to read and write, Poland will throw off the Russian yoke, or, which is the same thing as far as human happiness is concerned, make that yoke just. It is assuredly of no moment to a nation who may be its rulers, provided that the people have just laws, that is to say, laws made by their representatives : just laws amalgamate the conqueror and the conquered, or would do so, were the experiment to be tried—which it will never be ; for men do not encounter the dangers attending the work of robbery for the pleasure of restoring their plunder to the owners. England begins at last to discover that a system of robbery and murder is bad policy, as well as bad morality. She now begins to find that Ireland and the East will be better markets for being well treated, and the “turn of the market” is to England both the law and the gospel.

I shall not continue these notes, because there is nothing in the remaining chapters to compare with the English troops. These chapters are admirable descriptions of military life, and do great credit to the wit and abilities of the author, who is an extremely agreeable writer, and whose style and subjects are peculiarly suited to the expressive language of his country.

## CHAPTER V.

## QUARTERS (CONTINUED)—SPAIN.

I HAVE NOW introduced to you the Germans and the Poles ; since we have time, both you and I, let us take a trip to Spain. In general, when you cross a frontier, you are prepared long before-hand for the change of manners and language by insensible demi-tints. Here, the people speak French and at the same time understand German ; farther on, they speak German, while they mangle French. It is not till you are ten leagues on the other side of the Rhine that you find yourself in Germany. The same is the case on the frontiers of Italy and of Poland ; but once across the Bidassoa, you are in Spain, completely in Spain. Two minutes before you were in France ; you are a thousand leagues from it when you are over the river : manners, language, dress, in short everything, are different. The transition from St. Jean de Luz to Irun is as great as from Calais to Dover, and yet the Bidassoa is but a rivulet.

In this singular country everything was new to me, and I passed my days in running about the streets, into the coffee-houses, into the shops, to make my observations. The Spanish language is very easy for a Provençal who understands Latin, and I could soon keep up a conversation with anybody. But the Spaniards are not talkative ; instead of the gaiety, the open, frank, and straightforward manner, which characterize our nation, I met with none but care-wrinkled brows and dark scowling faces, of which the tyrants in our melodramas are admirable copies. Look at those groups at the corners of the streets, in the public places. To smoke a cigar, and to do nothing, seem to constitute supreme felicity for these people. In France, when ten persons are collected together, you cannot hear your own voice : every one wants to speak, every one seeks to shine in

the conversation. In Spain, all is sullen silence. Muffled up in a dingy mantle, convering garments still more dingy, suffering nothing to be seen but half their faces and the two fingers that hold the cigar, the Spaniards remain whole hours planted one opposite to another, without speaking, and puffing clouds of smoke into each other's faces. From time to time, some one takes it into his head to open his mouth : the most loquacious of his auditors then reply *Puès*. This *puès* is a preposition, a conjunction, an interjection, that is, an answer to everything. According to the manner in which it is pronounced, according to the affirmative, dubitative, or negative movement of the head which accompanies it, this word signifies, yes, no, but, nevertheless, it may be so, you are right, I do not believe it, &c., &c.

What a difference between our quarters in Germany, and especially the good-natured faces of our hosts ! Instead of the most scrupulous cleanliness and the kindness of the people beyond the Rhine, we had to encounter the nastiness and sour looks of the Spaniards. Though accustomed to the climate of Poland, we felt cold in Spain. - In Biscay and in Castile it is impossible to have a fire in winter ; nobody has the least notion that a door, a window, is made to shut. A floor-cloth, a carpet, are unheard-of luxuries ; the trade of chimney-sweeper is unknown, for there are no chimneys. In the kitchens you see a hole at which the smoke escapes, when it can escape at all. In large towns, such as Burgos and Valladolid, you find one or two fire-places in the houses of the great, and most of these were built by French generals, who wished to make their quarters comfortable. General Dorsenne had a fire-place erected in all the houses in which he lodged.

People everywhere warm themselves with a *brasero*, an iron vase filled with charcoal, lighted in the morning in the street. It is placed in the principal room, where all the inmates of the house meet. There, forming a circle, they

scorch their knees ; thus making, it is true, due compensation for their backs, which are always chilled with cold. Men and women hand round the cigarito, which serves alternately for all, and the conversation is as animated as in the streets. The handsomest woman feels no repugnance to take the cigar that is just withdrawn from the mouth of a monk ; for my part, I smoked all alone for myself, as in Poland I drank by myself out of a glass of my own.

In France, the landlord of a house lets you an apartment, a chamber ; you bring your bed, you dine upon what you think fit to provide ; that is nothing to him. The same is the case in the Spanish inns ; you hire the place which you mean to occupy during the time that you intend to stay ; it is afterwards your business to run about the town in quest of provisions, if you are hungry ; and to procure a truss of straw, if you dislike sleeping on the bare boards. Next day you will be required to pay the rent of the chamber, and over and above for the noise, *el ruido*, which you made the day before. This custom certainly harmonizes with the manners of a people who never talk, to whom the least noise is an annoyance, and who answer all questions by the monosyllable *puès*.

When we were quartered at inns, as it was militarily, they never made a charge for noise : the bill would have been too long for our slender purses, for we sometimes revenged ourselves for the privations that Castilian frugality imposed upon us by singing lustily. This revenge was always sure to hit its mark.

Of all the people in the world, the Spaniard is certainly the least eater and drinker ; with what a hundred tradesmen in Paris consume, you might keep a thousand Spaniards. In them this temperance is not a virtue, it is the offspring of avarice and idleness. Those gentry are dainty and greedy too, when it costs them nothing to indulge. If occasion presents itself, they will pass the day in eating tarts and con-

fectionary, and in drinking ratafia and rosoglio. The women of the Peninsula are fond of having sweet things said to them, but they would much rather have some put into their mouths. Invite a Spaniard to dinner; let the viands be delicate, abundant, and your guest will not rise from the table till he has swallowed the elements of a smart indigestion.

That man must have had his throat lined with horn, who first introduced the custom of drinking wine kept in a goat-skin. The first time I tasted it, I thought that I was poisoned; I cast up the perfidious liquor, and began to drink water. When, however, the inconvenience of abstaining altogether from wine was represented to me, I drank it in spite of myself. Man gets accustomed to everything in this world; so by degrees I contrived to swallow it without making too wry faces. The *pelieco*, the *botta*, is a tarred goat-skin, sewed together, with the hair inside; a cork, or a cock, is fitted to one of the animal's feet, and it is there that the liquor is introduced and drawn out. Differing in this respect from every other movable, the older the goat-skin the higher the price which it fetches. It is the public-houses that first begin to use them; some time afterwards these sell them to the towns-people, who subsequently dispose of them to the gentry. Consequently, in the public-houses, at the inns, you are sure to find at all times fresh-tarred wine. When the goat-skins, passing through all their transitions, have arrived at the height of their glory, the wine in them acquires a very agreeable flavour. They never use casks in Spain, because there are scarcely any high roads; and because all the other roads, excepting some which run through the kingdom from end to end, are very bad. As the transport can be effected only upon the backs of mules, the cask would be too awkward a load; and besides, it would be nearly as heavy as its contents.

With the skins of young kids they make bottles that hold



one, two, three, and even four quarts : we found them extremely convenient, and each of us was provided with his *botta*, which cut a very good figure on the pommel of the saddle, between the pistols.

The *olla* composes of itself the three dishes of Spanish repasts, to which the cigarito always performs the office of an unsubstantial dessert. Put into a pot full of water, grey peas, *garbanzos*, cabbage, a plentiful allowance of capsicum, and a little piece of bacon or butcher's meat ; boil the whole sufficiently, and you will dine as all Spain dines, when it has a good dinner.

Nineteen-twentieths of the Spaniards live upon the *olla*. People of distinction affect, on the contrary, great luxury in eating and drinking, but it is only in cities of the first class that you meet with these privileged beings. Their kitchens are well furnished ; while the inferior tradesmen and gentry have nothing but a pot for the *olla*, and a few trifling utensils, worth, altogether, the sum of half-a-crown. But, great or small, rich or poor, the Spaniards are strangers to that useful instrument derived from clock-work, which we call a spit. In the kitchens of the great, a scullion performs its office ; he turns *el asador* before a rousing fire, and never leaves it till the pullet and himself are thoroughly roasted.

In the villages, go in anywhere at meal-times, and you will always find the same fare without variation. Those persons who live by themselves eat bread and raw onions ; they do not take the trouble to make an *olla*, because they would be obliged to light a fire for that purpose. Articles of the first necessity are cheap ; and hence, a family in Spain, possessing an income of six hundred francs (£25 sterling) lives in a relative opulence, envied by all the neighbourhood.

I was frequently reminded in Spain of a sort of drama, which I had read in my youth. The Spaniards, methought, must all have learned it by heart. This *morality*, for so it was called, was written by Nicole de la Chesnaye ; it has

thirty-eight dramatis personæ. Its title is: *La Condemnation des Banquets, à la Louange de Diepte et de Sobriété, pour le prouffit du corps humain*. This curious piece is printed at the end of a black letter quarto, entitled: *La Nef de Santé avec le Gouvernail du corps humain*.

The author strives to prove that it is dangerous to eat too much. The *morality* concludes with the trial of Banquet and Supper. Experience is the judge. Banquet and Supper are accused of having caused the death of four persons by excessive indulgence at table. Experience sentences Banquet to be hung. Diet is the executioner. Banquet confesses, says his creed, and receives absolution. Diet puts the rope about his neck, pushes him from the top of the ladder, and poor Banquet dies. Supper is only condemned to wear leaden wristbands to prevent him from setting too many dishes on the table; and moreover, he is required, upon pain of being hanged, to keep at the distance of at least six leagues from Dinner. I recommend this *morality* to the attention of our playwrights; with a few little alterations, they might manufacture a very pretty new drama out of it.

Since I have begun to quote old books, I will subjoin a passage from one which, among many silly things, contains some very pertinent observations.\* “Tell me,” asks one, “what are the different degrees of content.”—*Answer*. “If you would have it only for a day, get shaved; for a week, go to a wedding; for a month, buy a good horse; for six months, buy a fine house; for a year, marry a handsome wife; for two years, turn priest; for your whole life, be sober.”

The Spaniard, who never reads, nevertheless practises all these precepts of sobriety. It is universally admitted that the people of the South have fewer wants than those of the North. Look at the Arabs, they live a day on a few dried figs or dates, and sometimes a handful of maize-flour. The

\* This book, in Latin, is entitled: *NUGÆ VENALES, seu Thesaurus videndi et jocandi*, 1644; apud neminem tamen ubique.

Spaniard is a stranger to the enjoyments of luxury, and to those superfluities which with us are matters of the first necessity. The arts, agriculture, mechanics, have not advanced a step since the time of Charles V. Advanced, did I say?—they have retrograded. The inns have remained at the same point; they have retained the same physiognomy as they exhibited when the heroes of Cervantes flourished. With the most beautiful plantations of olives, the Spaniards eat detestable oil; with superb vineyards, they drink muddy wine, without conceiving the slightest wish for any improvement whatever. When I have chanced to make observations on this subject, they have replied:—"Our fathers always lived so; how can we do otherwise?"

In Spain, the comfortable is unknown, perhaps disdained; the native of the Peninsula does not set his heart on those trifles, to which we attach such value. The supply of absolute necessaries, which he always found at the door of the convent, has long instilled carelessness and indolence into his habits and manners. If he is backward at engaging in regular, continued labour, he is active enough in contraband pursuits. Among no people would you find men more robust for performing long marches, more daring for attempting hazardous enterprizes, more persevering and more obstinate in following up a scheme which they have adopted.

The wars which the Spaniards waged for ages against the Moors caused the population to collect in the towns. You rarely see hamlets scattered over the country; villas, such as we have around our towns, are absolutely unknown. This congregation of the inhabitants at certain points gives a singularly dreary aspect to the country, and renders the roads unsafe. Spain has been in all ages the country of adventurers; no other could have been the native land of Don Quixote. The numerous lines of custom-houses that intersect the Peninsula have produced smugglers. A smuggler who finds his stratagems defeated, sometimes turns high-

wayman : these two professions are brothers. The Spaniards, accustomed to extol the exploits of the former, have been led by an insensible progression to admire those of the latter. Thus robbers and smugglers, heroes placed upon the same line, have always been in readiness to become chiefs of the guerillas. Their troop was formed, the nucleus was there ; it increased, like the snow-ball, the farther it went.

All those men who have gained an illustrious name in a corps of partisans, would, probably, have remained unknown in a regular army. Each was anxious to be thought something of ; fighting under the observation of his neighbours, he was sure to be seen, praised, celebrated in extempore ballads. Every day he was repaid for his courage by the commendations of his countrymen : in a regiment, he would have been lost in the crowd, and, if he had distinguished himself, in his own village his merits would have been unknown. This fondness for celebrity was always a prominent trait in the Spanish character : for this it is that the torreador risks his life, amidst thunders of applause, which he fancies he has as richly deserved as if he had saved the country ; and for this it is that the Spaniard, when he finds no legitimate occasions for signalizing himself, turns bandit or smuggler.

No country in the world is more favourable to partisan warfare than Spain. It everywhere abounds in excellent military positions, and if, to these topographical advantages, you add the temperance of the inhabitants, you will know the secret of all the insurrections past, present, and to come. You will also know why civil wars are interminable in that country. The chiefs of all the parties have a certain importance which they would lose the very day on which peace should be signed. Every commander of troops is a sort of viceroy, who governs without control all the countries which he overruns. He makes requisitions of provisions, he levies imposts : in a state of peace, he would be reduced to his moderate and ill-paid appointments. Hence it is that the

war, which is at this moment desolating Spain, lasts so long and hence, too, no one can foresee its termination.

In the time of Louis XIV., Marshal Villars was in Catalonia. One day, his nephew, who was serving as his aide-de-camp, came to him in breathless haste :—" Sir," said he, " I am come to bring you important intelligence. A corps of six thousand Spaniards is to pass a certain defile in two hours. I have received positive information to that effect. If you will despatch a regiment immediately to occupy the mountains, you may catch all those Spaniards at a single haul of the net."

" Very well, desire breakfast to be brought."

" Yes ; but shall I not first carry your orders to the colonel ?"

" I tell you I want my breakfast."

" But, sir, if you let this opportunity slip, you may not have such another."

" Let us sit down to breakfast."

The marshal made a hearty breakfast without speaking a word. His aide-de-camp was dull, and could not account for his conduct. By and by, taking out his watch :—" 'Tis now too late," he exclaimed ; " the Spaniards have passed the defile !"

" Why should they not pass, simpleton ? Certainly I could have taken them all, and put an end to the war to-day. But what would have been the consequence ? I should have returned to Versailles, to be lost in the crowd, or, perhaps, to Villars, to die of *ennui*. Now, I like much better to stay here as commander-in-chief of the armies of Louis XIV."

An insurrection like that of Spain, against Napoleon, would be impossible in France for any cause whatever. Among us the meanest house-keeper possesses furniture, provisions, a certain degree of comfort ; to these he is as strongly attached as to life ; he would not forsake his house, for fear of finding it empty at his return. In Spain, all these things



are reduced to the simplest expression : the Spaniard, for it is the man himself who undertakes the duty, buys every day the necessaries that are wanted. He goes to market for the wood, the charcoal, the wine, the bread, the oil, the salt, requisite for the day ; by night all is eaten, burned, drunk : there is nothing left ; the family might set off, it would have nothing to leave behind it but a few old pieces of furniture of no intrinsic value. Compared with the Spanish tradesmen the artisans of our cities possess all the luxuries of material life ; they are Sybarites, real Sardanapaluses.

In Spain, people have scarcely any linen : the peasant is wrapped in a brown mantle, the citizen in a blue one, which admits of his having a dirty shirt, or even none at all ; consequently they can shift their quarters at a very trifling expense. In Madrid and the large cities, you see fashionable people dressed in the French style, but these are exceptions.

All the arts owe their origin and their improvement to the necessity for eating, which is of daily recurrence among men. If there existed in nature any common and abundant food, which each could procure without labour, as there exists a beverage of which we may drink as much as we please ; if this food were at the command of all, like water ; we should still be in the woods, clad in the skins of beasts, and never think of building cities and constructing rail-roads. It is the necessity for eating that gives rise to all the ideas of art, science, and civilization. Rabelais calls the stomach *Messire Gaster*, the first master of arts in the world, and Rabelais is right. After what is necessary, men want the superfluous ; from the cake baked in the embers, to the box at the Opera, there exists a long series of things, an uninterrupted chain of wants, which has its origin in the stomach.

The Spaniard has stopped half-way ; when he possesses twenty-pence, he is sure of his food for a week, and will not do anything for that time. The love of gain will not over-

come his hereditary indolence, that unconcern for the morrow, which raises between France and Spain a barrier loftier than the Pyrenees. The *far nada* is supreme happiness for the Spaniard, as the *far niente* for the Italian. He has not the fortitude for labour; no matter, so he has that for privations. The happiest man is he who has the fewest wants; this applies to nations as well as to individuals.

In France and elsewhere, when we have satisfied the cravings of the stomach, that is not sufficient; we want decent clothing, linen, furniture, which we renew at certain periods. The Spaniard never renews anything; his furniture, his utensils, confined to what is strictly necessary, served his grandfather, and will suffice his great-grandchildren. Over him Fashion has no influence; that divinity of the first order among us has no altar in Spain. People there dress as they did in the time of Philip V., and as they will do a hundred years hence. In every part of the kingdom, both sexes wear the same costume: at Madrid, Seville, Valentia, and Vittoria, it is the black gown and the black veil for the women, the brown or blue cloak for the men.

I never could conceive how it happens that, in our theatres, the managers of which pique themselves so much on truth in regard to costumes, they should permit the Rosinas, the Countess Almavivas, to dress in white and pink. Never was Rosina dressed in this manner; never had she any other than a black gown, trimmed with jet, a black mantilla, nothing but black, and that to set off the fairness of her complexion. To dress a Spanish woman in pink is as preposterous as to represent Manlius in the habit of the middle ages, with moustaches and a large dagger. It is singular that, in the hot climate of Spain, black should be the only colour adopted for the apparel of women. Imparting a certain severity to their persons, it forms a strange contrast with bright and wanton eyes, and a voluptuous air. The young look like nuns who have run away

from their convent to seek their fortune in the world ; the old, like ancient sybils ; who lack nothing but a tripod to fall into convulsions.

A friend of mine, who was fond of good cheer, had a great aversion to pot-luck. Whenever he happened to come into a house where the inmates were just sitting down to table, and any one said to him:—"Dine with us without ceremony," he would immediately reply:—"It is impossible to-day ; I had rather come to-morrow." He hoped that on the morrow, the master, calculating on an additional guest would give the necessary instructions to his cook for providing something out of the common way. A Spaniard would never take so much trouble. If you give him an invitation, he will accept it to a certainty ; and let your fare be what it will, be under no concern, he will be sure to think it excellent.

From the commencement of the war, a swarm of French restaurateurs had settled upon Spain. They had fixed themselves from stage to stage, from Irun to Seville inclusive. At their houses the best productions of the French soil were to be found ; their active correspondence with the Chevets, the Corcelets, furnished the lovers of good cheer who had well-lined purses with a salutary resource for making a diversion to the *olla* of the Spaniards. These dealers in beef-steaks and cutlets charged extravagant prices for all that came out of their kitchens ; and these could only be afforded by those who in an army are accustomed to treble their pay by what they call perquisites. The generals, commissaries, store-keepers, could dine as they would have done at Very's or Beauvilliers'. After watching an action at a distance with his glass, a clerk in the victualling department would go to recruit himself to the great restaurant of Wagram, and dine by the card as at the Palais Royal. I attempted at first to imitate these high financial notables, but was soon obliged to stop short. *Non licet omnibus*

*adre Corinthum* said a sage, who would not have been such if he had had his pockets full of money. Having no inexhaustible source to supply me with ducats, I was forced to live upon my rations; for it is mathematically demonstrated that it is impossible for a captain, whose pay amounts to two thousand francs, to give a louis every day for his dinner.

The day after my arrival at Vittoria, I went to a shoemaker's to get some repairs done to my boots. There was nobody in the shop; the master was on the opposite side of the street, smoking his cigarito. His shoulders covered with a mantle full of holes, he looked like a beggar, but a Spanish beggar, appearing rather proud than ashamed of his poverty. He came over to me, and I explained my business. "Wait a moment," said he, and immediately called his wife.

"How much money is there left in the purse?"

"Twelve *piecettas*" (fourteen francs, forty centimes.)

"Then I shan't work."

"But," said I, "twelve *piecettas* will not last for ever."

"*Quien ha visto magnana?*" (Who has seen to-morrow?) said he, turning his back on me.

I went to one of his colleagues, who, probably, not having so considerable a sum at his command, condescended to do the job for me.

The pride of the Spaniards is become proverbial. The meanest beggar in Spain deems himself as noble as the sovereign. Clothed in rags, he drapes himself like a Roman senator: if you refuse him alms, you must do it in a civil manner: and this is a ceremony which you are obliged to repeat frequently, on account of the innumerable host of beggars with which Spain swarms: it is the native land of Guzman d'Alfarache; this hero of the mendicant tribe could not have been born in any other.

The proverb, "Proud as a Spaniard," applies to all the classes of society. In no country, perhaps, is the feeling of equality so profound as in Spain; nowhere are the common people less

cringing. The beggar preserves a sort of dignity. If he meets a nobleman, treating him as an equal, he asks permission to light his cigar at that of the marquis, and the marquis considers the application as a matter of course. These two men, who have been puffing volleys of smoke at one another, will, nevertheless, remain each at his post: the one will be still a beggar, the other still a marquis. For, in Spain, it is not as in other countries: everybody there is stationary. My father did so; I must do as he did.

Begging is a profession. Every church-door, every corner of a street, decorated with the image of a virgin or a saint, has its appointed beggar. It is a fund which they work and turn to account. A ruined man, who knows not what to do, buys the first saint he meets with, baptizes him St. Jago or St. Pancratio, sets him up near a post, and turns *santero*. The peasants give him alms; he prays for the dead, if he is paid for so doing; he recites before you the seven penitential Psalms, which he applies to any person whom you may name: this costs his employers about a penny. But, if you choose to bespeak Psalms of him, to be repeated in leisure moments, these are less expensive; he will sell you as many as you please at fifty per cent. under the current price. In such a bargain, as the seller delivers nothing, there is no reason to fear that he will sell to others what you have just paid him for; and, besides, it is impossible to recognize the property. The devotee who spends a real in this manner, conceives that she is expiating her old sins, as the courtesan thinks she is not seen when she has drawn the curtain before the image of the Virgin, which always adorns her boudoir.

When a servant has deserved punishment, his master administers a certain number of strokes with the flat of his sword—a punishment essentially noble. *Caya te, hombre!* “Hold thy tongue, man!” is the expression with which the Spaniard imposes silence on his child, boy or girl. Other



people have children, our's are men—this is what they think. “The eldest sons of sovereigns are princes,” said Napoleon; “mine shall be a king.” The Spaniards are proud not only of themselves, but also of their sun, their towns, their villages. Read a proclamation, and you will find mention made of the heroic city of Madrid, of the invincible Valentia, of the glorious Seville. In the *Gradus ad Parnassum*, all nations are denominated brave, *armipotens*; the Spaniards gave this epithet to everything connected with their country, and never employ any but superlatives.

The Moors bequeathed to them these ideas of grandeur, together with the bull-fights. A king of Spain conceives that his equal cannot exist on earth. His widow is bound to continue a widow for life. No king is deemed worthy to possess her after him: the same principle even extends to his horses. A horse that a king of Spain has ridden must never be mounted by any other. The person of the queen is so sacred that no man dare touch her, even though it were to save her life. When the king is tired of a mistress, he sends her to a convent, where she is not allowed to be visited by persons of the other sex. This is paying rather dear for the signal honour of having shared the bed of a Spanish monarch. It is related that Philip IV. one night condescended to tap in person at the door of a lady belonging to his court, not doubting that he should be received with open arms; when she had ascertained who the gallant was, she called out to him from her bed: “I shall not open the door; I have no mind to be made a nun.”

All the towns in Spain have a square, surmounted with piazzas. *Los arquillos* are a necessity for the inhabitants of the Peninsula. In fact, people who spend half the day opposite to one another, without thinking, without conversing—for the few words which they waft now and then to one another, along with a cloud of smoke, cannot be called conversation—such people have need of a shelter from sun and

rain. Without *arquillos* what would they do in bad weather, or when the sun makes the thermometer rise to ninety or one hundred degrees? they would be obliged to stay at home, and they could not keep siesta the whole day.

In Spain everything is alike—the towns, the villages, the costumes of the men, those of the women: in short, everything looks as if cast in the same mould: and, if all the ladies are not handsome, it may be asserted that they all have a grace and a fascination which are inconceivable, and constitute what the Spaniards call *salero*—a term to which no language furnishes an equivalent, because in no other country is there to be found what it expresses in Spain. Virgil's *vera incessu partuit dea* seems to have been written expressly for the Spanish ladies. What eyes! what magic in their glance! You are almost tempted to say to them:—“Pray, do me the favour not to look at me.” Add to these means of attraction an enchanting voice, which admirably accords with the finest language in the world, the noblest, and the most harmonious expressions; and, if you mean to keep your heart, you will not go to Spain. The black costume of those ladies, their robe, revealing their charming forms, is most becoming: they take good care not to imitate the French women in their perpetual change of fashions. No hat or bonnet ever covered their heads, and intercepted the fire of their eyes. The *mantilla* covers their hair with a skilfully calculated negligence: when, for a moment, it hides some of their charms, be certain that very soon a lucky chance will make you ample amends.

The wealthy, in general, have mass said at their own houses; their wives, who are extremely indolent, and do not rise till very late, frequently hear it in bed. Those who go to the churches sometimes attend ten or a dozen masses; and it may be affirmed that, during this whole time, nothing is farther from their thoughts than God. The church is the usual place for making assignations. The Spanish women

are adepts in the language of the eyes and of the fan ; with these two ways of expressing themselves, they have the talent to make their meaning perfectly understood. During the performance of the mass, they keep fanning themselves even in winter ; and, as neither chairs nor stools are admitted into the churches, they are continually on their knees, squatting on their heels, a position far from graceful for a female.

When a Spaniard dies, he takes care to leave wherewithal to say a great number of masses for the peace of his soul. If he is in debt, so much the worse for his creditors, who cannot be paid till afterwards. This is called in Spain, *dexar sa alma heredera*—"to leave one's soul one's heir." Philip IV. directed in his will that one hundred thousand masses should be said for the peace of his soul ; that, if he had no need of so large a number, the surplus should be said for his father and mother ; and that, if they had no farther need of them, they should be applied to the benefit of the souls of those who had fallen in the Spanish wars. I should like to know in what way this king expected a judgment to be formed here, in this world, of the number of masses which it would be necessary to say, and the point at which the priests were to stop.

The Spaniards, and the women especially, are extremely afraid of spirits. Each of them has seen in his life, at least, half a dozen ghosts. Hence they are very careful, before they go to bed, to make a great number of signs of the cross, to prevent spectres from coming to disturb their slumbers ; and this, as everybody knows, has been in all ages an infallible recipe.

Upon the whole, all the customs of this country are tinged with a certain varnish of devotion, of mysticism, which is not to be found anywhere else ; not even in Italy. If you go to a tertulia, if you enter a drawing-room, or, in short, any place where several persons are assembled, you salute them with the words : *Ave Maria purissima*. The

company immediately responds in chorus: *Sin pecado concebida santissima*. Among the women, every exclamation of pleasure or pain is preceded by *Ave Maria*: the men use this invocation less frequently.

If the Spaniards are taciturn and reserved, the women are lively, sparkling, fond of chat, and clever in conversation. In general they are very ignorant; but natural intelligence, and the grace with which they utter nothings, prevent the deficiency of instruction from being perceived at once. They are thoroughly versed in the whole vocabulary of gallantry: all the phrases of love and sentiment are familiar to them. These flow from them upon occasion as from a spring; you would say that they had learned them by heart. These ladies display, with a certain self-complacency, the immense riches of their sensibility; they try incessantly to persuade you that their love is wholly ærial—that it resembles that of the sylphs—but they would be greatly disappointed were you to take them at their word. While distilling sentiment, if I may be allowed the expression, the Spanish women are fond of its necessary consequence. After soaring to the clouds, they descend with pleasure to the earth, to partake there of more positive enjoyments.

An officer of hussars was quartered at Valladolid, at the house of a lady of great beauty, whose husband, though old, was not jealous, which, by the by, is rather extraordinary, especially in a Spaniard. The hussars always have a declaration in readiness; the lady in question and her guest soon understood one another; but the difficulty was how to find an opportunity for being alone. The husband never quitted the house in the day-time; and at night, after the good old fashion, he shared the conjugal couch. What was to be done?

One evening, madame was seized with one of those indispositions which women always have at their call. Headache, nervous complaints furnish in Spain, as well as in France,



excellent pretexts for being ill for a day ; on the morrow the sufferer has a right to be as well as ever.

“ My dear,” said she to her husband, “ you must sleep alone to-night : I am very unwell ; I am in great pain ; I should prevent you from sleeping, and that would make me still worse.”

“ Yes ; but how will you manage not to be frightened ? You know, when you are alone at night, you are always restless.”

“ Well, I will tell you : keep ringing your bell every now and then. When I hear it, I shall fancy that you are with me ; and I promise you not to be afraid.”

“ I will do so—good night.”

The orderly-word was passed to the captain, who stole into the chamber. But I ought first to tell you that the husband spoke French extremely well ; and our hussar had lent him, among other books, La Fontaine’s Tales. The Spaniard took up the volume to lull himself to sleep, and at every leaf that he turned over, he laid hold of the bell-rope and gave a lusty pull. “ It is impossible,” said he, reading on ; “ this La Fontaine is a slanderer ; women never could devise such stratagems. None but Frenchmen could believe such absurdities ; we Spaniards are not stupid enough for that.” These reflections were interrupted by the frequent tinkling of the bell, which proved to the lady that her husband was thinking of her, but that he had no intention of coming to visit her. The chimes continued till sleep overpowered the happy Castilian.

Next morning the captain was laughing all alone in his chamber, when his hair-dresser arrived. The Figaro of Valladolid was astonished to find his customer in such good humour.

“ Good morning,” said he, “ señor officer ; you seem to be merry this morning : I congratulate you upon it. To laugh quite alone is not laughing at all : I should like to know the



cause of your mirth, and then we should form a very pretty duet."

"Ah; it is nothing; no great matter, at least."

"So you may say, but it must have been something extremely droll."

"It was a dream that I had last night."

"Surely you will tell it to me."

"To what purpose?"

"To make me laugh, and then we should laugh together."

Thereupon our hussar unable to bridle his tongue any longer, related the occurrences of the night, under the guise of a dream. The headache, the separate bed, the repeated ringing of the bell, were none of them forgotten. Figaro thought the story extremely diverting, and, on leaving the officer's room, went to shave the good-natured husband. On entering, he laughed till he could scarcely stand.

"What plant have you been treading on this morning?"

"You need not ask me twice to tell you. I shall be delighted to relate the story; it will do you good, and make you laugh as heartily as I have done. Your captain has just been telling me one of his garrison adventures: he said it was a dream that he had last night; but it is impossible to dream anything so comical. He does not choose to name the masks, I guess; the hussars are sometimes discreet; and, besides, the affair may have happened in our city. Oh! if the husband did but know it! Oh! the women! the women! are they not artful jades!" After this exordium, the barber related the story, without omitting the slightest circumstance; and, when he had finished, he was extremely surprised that it had failed to excite even a smile on the countenance of his auditor.

When the Spanish women mention the devil, they make the sign of the cross on the mouth with the thumb of the right-hand; and the name of Napoleon was treated like that of the devil. I lodged at Pampeluna, in the house of a

young and charming woman. I attempted to flutter around her, but was always repulsed. Whenever I met my pretty hostess and would have enacted the gallant with her, she drew back, as far as possible, shrunk into a corner, trembling with fear, and there, moving the thumb of her right hand, with extreme celerity, made thousands of signs of the cross, to prevent the devil, who, no doubt, was in me, from sallying forth with my words and taking possession of her. Though persevering as he is mischievous, I declare that this time he was completely foiled. Too vigilant guard was kept: a sign of the cross always made him turn tail; and devil though one be, one cannot cope with such means of defence.

And all this because I was a soldier of Napoleon's! to a certainty the executioner, returning from the performance of his office, could not have excited greater horror than I did. At first, out of self-love, I strove very hard to inspire her with more favourable sentiments, but was soon obliged to desist from the attempt, for she was ready to faint whenever I wanted to detain her for a moment to make her listen to me. Long did the thought of Señora Juana de Artieda haunt my mind in a disagreeable manner. One may console one's self for being indifferent to a woman, whose love one would wish to gain, or when forsaken by her for another; but to inspire horror is an idea with which I never could familiarize myself.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### A DAY OF BATTLE.

WHEN the Romans of old fought battles, the hostile armies frequently agreed to meet in a plain; each general arrayed his troops, and then, on a given signal, clouds of darts obscured the sun, and each did his best to kill his

enemy without being killed by him. In the field of Fontenoy, the French and the English commenced in this manner.

“Begin, gentlemen.”

“No, do you begin, if you please.”

“Well, since you insist on it—present! fire!”

This procedure savoured strongly of the age of Louis XV. Red-heeled marquises, who had quitted the saloons of Versailles only the day before, could not fight like obscure plebeians. They could not dispense with elegant forms, and, nevertheless, they were not deficient in courage.

Now-a-days we no longer give a signal when we fight: begin who will, kill who can. Our generals no longer make long speeches, as generals did in Homer’s time, when those gentlemen were terrible babblers. Ajax, son of Oileus, Agamemnon’s general of brigade, never could command a battalion to fire without making a speech of three pages. If this is amusing for the haranguer, it is extremely tedious for the harangued.

In our days, on a day of battle, little is said, but that little is to the purpose. When the army is on the point of marching to attack the enemy, every one, from the commander-in-chief to the corporal, uses the same form of expression:—“*Sacre nom de Dieu*, forward!—forward, *sacre nom de Dieu!*” This is understood from one end of the line to the other. At Marengo, at Austerlitz, at Wagram, there was no greater expenditure of eloquence. Verily, this sort of expression produces, in certain circumstances, a much stronger effect than well-turned academic phrases. If you speak too polished a language, everybody does not understand you; while the most perfumed exquisite of them all is sure to comprehend the meaning of interjections.

Our army is in march, preceded by its advanced guard, composed of light troops. The hussars dash on like devils; they trot, they gallop, the enemy flies before them; but he soon halts; our hussars halts too. A village defended by

some hundred men is in front : riflemen are sent to attack it. At the moment when our men have penetrated into the gardens, a hostile battalion comes up and makes them fall back. We send a regiment to support them, our adversaries send two ; we march off ten, the enemy meets us with twenty : each brings forward his artillery ; the cannons roar ; presently all take part in the fray ; they fight, they knock one another on the head ; this cries out about his leg, that about his nose, others about nothing ; and there is plenty of food for the crows and the bulletin-writers.

The science of a commander-in-chief is reduced to this—to bring up the greatest possible number of men to a given point by a certain day. Napoleon has said so, and Napoleon was a consummate judge of the matter. A general ought to know what point of the map will be seriously contested with him. It is there that the enemy will give him battle ; it is, consequently, thither that he ought to bring forward his troops by twenty different routes. An order, ill expressed and ill understood, frequently causes the miscarriage of the most skilful strategic combinations, witness Grouchy's corps, which did not reach Waterloo. The first consul, before he left Paris, had, with a pin, marked on the map the plain of Marengo for the theatre of a new triumph : the event justified his calculations.

The science of the general consists farther in ascertaining the force of the enemy at such and such a point, and his weakness at such another. To accomplish this, the service of spies is indispensable. He must have clever ones, and, above all, he must pay them well. Napoleon was extremely liberal to such men ; it was money well laid out. We have had generals put to the rout, because they were stingy of the funds destined for secret services.

A terrible profession is that of a spy ; he is obliged to risk his life daily at cross or pile. In general, these people serve both parties : they have two passports, which they

show according to circumstances. When a place is blockaded, when a corps is separated from the rest of the enemy, then not a creature is allowed to pass, and passports are unavailing; in this case a man must be a very clever spy to smuggle in any piece of information.

While the emperor was at Madrid, an aide-de-camp acquitted himself of this difficult mission with a boldness which was completely successful. Marshal . . . . .—I really do not recollect whom—was cut off from the rest of the army by a corps of Spaniards very superior in number; the enemy's position and the nature of the ground left no hope of our being able to force it. It was important that the emperor should be made acquainted with all these circumstances, in order that a useful diversion might be effected on other points. It was impossible to pass without giving battle; and the Spaniards, masters of the heights and of the defiles, would have had too many advantages.

“Well,” said the youngest of the marshal's aides-de-camp, “I will undertake to go to Madrid; I shall get there to-morrow, and I will inform the emperor of all that is passing.”

“And how will you contrive to escape the gallows?”

“Leave that to me; only give me your orders.”

The officer immediately repaired to a convent of monks, and went to the prior, a respectable and highly respected man, who passed for a saint all over the country, for twenty leagues round.

“Father,” said he, “you must give me immediately a dress of your order: meanwhile direct the best mule in your stable to be saddled. We must both mount it and start immediately for Madrid.”

“But, my son, the thing is impossible.”

“No explanation.”

“I cannot . . . .”

“Not another word. Here is a brace of loaded pistols;



one for you, if I am discovered, the other for myself. We shall have to pass through the Spanish army together: your habit, your character, will readily open every way to you. I shall pass for one of your brethren; if you are questioned, say whatever you please; if any one speaks to me, you must answer for me. I am ill; my tongue is paralyzed; I am going to Madrid to consult the physicians: my father is a Spanish grandee; my illustrious family is anxious that I should be cured. Find the best reasons you can to save your responsibility—that is your affair. If we are taken, you are a dead man, as well as myself: I shall then have but one thing to do, and that is to despatch you. If we succeed, as I have no doubt we shall, the marshal promises you his high protection. If we should not return, your convent will be burned to the ground.”

“But, my son, only consider; at my age . . .”

“At your age, father, a man can travel on a good mule. At your age, he commands respect from all; it is for this reason that I have fixed upon you. Consider the important interests that are entrusted to you; you will be answerable to God for your own death and for my suicide.”

The journey was prosperous. The Spaniards knelt down before the prior, who gave them his benediction; and they even received that of the French officer into the bargain. The travellers arrived safe and sound at Madrid. On entering the city, the aide-de-camp was recognized by his comrades, who carried him in triumph to the emperor's palace. It is scarcely necessary to add that his zeal was duly rewarded.

Sometimes, in order to avoid attacking a fortified and well-defended position, it is turned: but the enemy, anticipating this movement, places troops on the other points, and the battle instantaneously becomes general along a whole line of several leagues, as at Ratisbon. At Eckmühl, Taun, and Landshut, the armies fought on a space of fifteen leagues.

On approaching a field of battle where the combat has begun, there is nothing so disheartening to young soldiers as the language held by the wounded who are coming back from it. "Take your time," says one; "don't be in such a hurry; 'tis not worth while to run so fast to get killed."—"The enemy is ten times as numerous as we," cries another.—"They have cut off one of my paws," observes a third; "you will be lucky fellows if you don't lose both yours." To no purpose would you strive to silence them; an arm in a sling, a slash on the face, insure impunity, confer the right of insolence, and these Job's comforters continue their remarks so long as they can find any one to listen to them. You should see the faces of the conscripts on hearing such language, and especially on perceiving the first dead bodies they come to. They make a circuit of twenty paces around them for fear of touching them; presently they approach nearer; and at last they march over them without scruple.

Man gets accustomed to everything, to pain as well as to pleasure. How often have you not found that a vehement sorrow, a vehement delight, has in a fortnight become an obtuse sensation, a very ordinary matter. Recollect this at the first chagrin which befalls you, and say:—"This will pass away as other troubles have done." The true philosopher, in his course through life, runs over its unpleasant accidents, and considers them as a necessary evil, like rain for instance, from which he ought to strive to screen himself. If he cannot, but must get wet through, let him hope that a fine day will come to dry his clothes. This fine day will not fail to arrive sooner or later; have patience, and you will find that I am right. But, if you meet with pleasures by the way, take care not to let them give you the slip; seize them, as it were, by the collar, hold them tight, enjoy them while they last, and catch as many of them as you can.

I have always pursued this method myself; imitate me, and you will be the better for it. For, after all, if any irre-

parable misfortune befalls you, of what use is despair? none whatever. Fret yourself ill, dash your head against a wall; of what benefit will that be? none at all. On the contrary you will make a big bump on your brow; you will want a doctor, and doctors are rather expensive.

To prove to you the truth of my reasoning, I will relate to you a little story. You know that, after the siege of Toulon, the Republic caused all those who at that time were opposed to it to be shot. After the cannon had mowed down whole ranks, a voice cried out: "Let those who are not dead get up! the Republic pardons them!" Some unfortunate wretches whom the grape-shot had spared, seduced by this promise, raised their heads; instantly a squadron of executioners—History says a squadron of dragoons, but History must be wrong—fell upon them sword in hand, completing the slaughter which the guns had commenced. The sun soon set upon this horrible scene of carnage.

It was a fine night when one of the sufferers awoke to consciousness amid this ocean of slain: he had received ten wounds, in the head, the legs, the arms, the chest, everywhere. He rolled, he crawled, along.

"Who is there?" cried the sentry.

"Put an end to me."

"Who are you?"

"One of the poor creatures who have been shot. Finish me."

"I am a soldier, not an executioner."

"Put an end to me; you will render me a service; you will be doing an act of humanity."

"I am not an executioner, I tell you."

"Finish me, I beseech you: all my limbs are broken, my head is smashed; I cannot possibly recover; you will spare me excruciating sufferings. Put an end to me."

The sentry approached, and examined the state of the wounded man. In the belief that his cure was impossible,

he gave way to pity. If he had fired his piece, the post would have flown to arms; he thought it better to use the bayonet, which he thrust through the body of the hapless sufferer. After all—would you believe it?—the man did not die. Next day, a grave-digger, coming to bury the corpses, found him yet living: he carried him home, took care of him, and all his wounds were healed. This man was M. de Launoy, a naval officer in the time of Louis XVI., who might certainly as well have spared himself that last thrust of the bayonet.

It must not be supposed that everybody belonging to an army is brave. I have seen men who never could get accustomed to the sound of the cannon. At Wagram, a soldier of my company fell into a violent fit of epilepsy, occasioned by the whizzing of the first ball. An officer of my regiment, after thirty years' service, had never seen fire; like the English King James I. he turned pale at the sight of a drawn sword, and he frankly confessed, "I should like much to go to the field of battle, but it is not possible; I should run away at the first musket-shot, and that would be setting a very bad example." He was, therefore, left at the depôt, where he made himself very useful in training the conscripts.

At the moment of taking the field he went back to France, and did not return till the conclusion of peace. This was a settled matter; no human power could have detained him. In war-time, he frequently brought conscripts to the army, but on the following day left it again all alone. On one occasion, however, he was obliged to stay: parties of cavalry were prowling upon our rear; it was equally dangerous to recede and to advance. Poor Ch . . had the fever; he was in a state of nervous contraction, which it is impossible to describe; and yet all was confined to marches and counter-marches, without a shot being fired. One morning, in the gorges of the Tyrol, a post of ours was attacked; there was

a slight fire of musketry, a fire that did not concern us, as it was a thousand paces off. Ch . . . started and ran off twenty leagues in the rear without stopping: the wags of the army even said that, though a heavy corpulent man, he leaped two ditches fifteen feet wide. It was a long time before we heard of him again; we concluded that he was either a prisoner of war or dead, but we subsequently received intelligence of his arrival at the depôt of Antwerp.

People rallied him a great deal, and he took their jokes in good part, nay, he even joined in the laugh against himself, and whenever a coward was talked of, he would say: "He is just such another as I am." He would thereupon relate what a fright he had had, how he had leaped the two ditches, and all the particulars of his journey from the Tyrol to Antwerp. He confessed so ingenuously that with him fear was an incurable complaint, that nobody liked him the less on that account. How many, not more brave than he, nevertheless talked every moment of knocking on the head and of cleaving in two; while others made a practice of getting themselves taken prisoners of war in the first skirmish, that they might be delivered at once from the dangers of the campaign; and others, again, wounded themselves, slightly it is true, in order to have a pretext for retiring till the conclusion of peace. Then they were seen returning: by their account, they had a right to all the rewards, and yet you would have needed a microscope to perceive the honourable scars of those pretended wounds. These instances were, however, rare, though some of them might be mentioned in every regiment.

If everybody belonging to the army was not brave, there were men to whose courage nothing can be compared, and that in all ranks, in all grades, from King Murat to the private fusilier, from General Dorsenne to the drummer. I could fill a dozen volumes with anecdotes of the almost fabulous bravery of our



warriors. I shall relate but one, witnessed by the whole 3rd *corps d'armée* in Spain.

General Suchet had just taken Mont Olivo, in spite of the predictions of the Spaniards. "The ditches of Mont Olivo," said they, "will bury all Suchet's troops, and the ditches of Tarragona all the armies of Bonaparte." He met a wounded soldier, whom his comrades were carrying to the surgeons. "Victory! victory!" he shouted, "Olivo is taken."

"Are you severely wounded?"

"No, general, but unfortunately so much as to be obliged to leave my rank."

"Well answered, my friend; what do you wish for as a reward for your services?"

"To mount first to the assault when you take Tarragona."

"Better and better."

"Do you promise me that I shall?"

"Yes."

On the 30th of June, 1811, that is to say a month afterwards, the general-in-chief was ready for the assault. The troops were forming their columns of attack, when a voltigeur in full dress, smart as on a parade day, stepped up to Suchet. "I come," said he, "to remind you of your promise that I should lead the assault."

"What! is it you, my brave fellow! 'Tis all very well, but soldiers of your kidney are too rare for me to be prodigal of their blood. Stay with your company; by communicating to all your noble courage, you will render greater service than in getting killed by yourself."

"I wish to be the first to mount to the assault."

"You will infallibly be killed. I cannot permit you."

"General, I have your promise, and I am determined to lead to the assault."

"So much the worse, my brave fellow, so much the worse for us! Do as you will."

The columns started; our voltigeur went about twenty

paces before them; he dashed on, amidst the shower of grape-shot, was the first to mount the breach, and there fell, riddled with balls. Being picked up, by Suchet's orders, this brave soldier was carried to the hospital; a remnant of life permitted him to see, that same day, the whole corps of officers, headed by the general, who came to visit him. Suchet took off his own cross of honour to place it on the bosom of the voltigeur, who died admired by the whole army. This brave fellow's name was Bianchelli.

I shall subjoin a trait of courage of a different kind. During the civil wars in La Vendée, a republican soldier was taken prisoner and sentenced to death with all his comrades. When led out to the spot where they were to be shot, one of the Vendean chiefs, admiring the martial bearing of the grenadier, solicited his pardon of the general-in-chief.

"No pardon," he replied; "they granted none to our men, in the republican army."

"What signifies that! be you generous, and save a brave man. He is a Frenchman; he will be an additional supporter gained for our cause, and for you an attached friend, who will owe you his life."

"Well, on this consideration, I consent: if he will march with us, and cry, *Vive le roi!*"

"I promise for him.—Grenadier, come hither: I have solicited your pardon from the general; he grants it, if you will cry: *Vive le roi!*"

"*Vive la république!*" shouted the soldier.

"Let him be shot."

The grenadier proudly returned to his comrades, some of whom were already despatched. There he stood with arms crossed and head haughtily uplifted, opposite to the muskets, when the Vendean chief threw himself at the feet of the general. "I have always served with honour," said he, "as you know; in return for the blood that I have so often spilt, I beg the unconditional pardon of this grenadier; will you refuse me?"

“Be it so ; I grant it you.”

“Come forward, grenadier : the general grants you life, and I hope you will not employ it against us.”

“And without condition?”

“Without condition.”

“Well, then, *Vive le roi!*”

I did know, but I am ashamed to confess that I have forgotten, the name of this brave fellow. Had he lived of old, in Greece or Rome, writers and sculptors would not have failed to render him immortal.

I shall not play the part of a Bombastes, and assert here, what I have frequently heard others declare, that I never felt fear. I confess, on the contrary, that the first time a ball whizzed over my head, I saluted it with an involuntary bow ; to the second I was less polite ; at the third I remained firm ; but, whenever I came into fire, I must own that the same forms of politeness were always exactly followed.

Yes, indeed, a man had need to be covered from head to foot with triple steel, to stand coolly amidst a shower of grape. I have often analysed the sensations experienced during the ceremony, and I confess that I was afraid. Very often the infantry plays a purely passive part in a battle ; it protects the artillery, and receives the balls fired against that. It is obliged to stand motionless, to receive without returning. Ah ! if the point of honour, if pride, were not there to prevent a break-up, what droll scenes would frequently occur ! But each is observed by his neighbour, each wishes to have the esteem of all, and not a creature flinches. It behoves the officers, in particular, to set an example ; they remain firm, and, with a loud voice, order the ranks to close.

I shall not set myself up for a hero by assuming the tone of a braggart. I shall, therefore, tell you frankly, that the finest battle I ever saw was that of Bautzen. Why so ? you will ask. What was there in it more pleasing than in any other ? Did the mortars, the balls, and the bullets, fall in

a less dense shower?—No; but the reason why I always thought that battle a very fine one was, because I was not in it. I was at it, to be sure, but on the top of a steeple. With a telescope in my hand, I saw everything; I judged of the passing events in a place of safety.

While they were knocking one another on the head in the plain, we were in reserve in a village; and, having nothing to do till an order should arrive to call us away, we ascended the church-steeple, and there witnessed all the exploits of our warriors. This way of being present at a battle is the most agreeable of any that I know. When you are yourself an actor you see nothing, and then . . . and then . . . and then . . .

When you manœuvre, when you fire, when you are actively engaged, these qualms go off; the smoke, the thunder of the cannon, the shouts of the combatants, intoxicate every one; you have no time to think of yourself. But, when you are forced to continue fixed in your rank, without firing, and exposed, at the same time, to a shower of balls, that is by no means an agreeable situation.

There are men, however, who, endued with extraordinary strength of mind, can coolly face the greatest dangers. Murat, the bravest of the brave, always charged at the head of his cavalry, and never returned without having his sabre stained with blood. This one may easily comprehend; but an extraordinary thing, which I have seen done by General Dorsenne, and by him alone, is to stand immovable, turning his back to the enemy, facing his regiment, riddled with balls, crying, "Close your ranks!" without once looking behind him. In other circumstances I have tried to imitate him, and turned my back too; but I could not remain in that position: curiosity always obliged me to look the way from which the balls proceeded.

At the battle of Ratisbon, one of my comrades was dreadfully wounded by a cannon-ball, which hit him precisely on the muscular part on which it is customary to sit. The sur-

geon cut and carved and pared away not less than four or five pounds of flesh; in short, the whole was gone—the whole moon, to use the expression of the Vicomte de Jodelet. Now, before that wound, this officer was five feet high at most; after his cure he measured six. People did not know him again. He had to tell his name to all his former acquaintance; for, not only had he grown so much taller, but he had filled out in proportion. Few men are so tall and stout as he became. I give this receipt for the benefit of all those who wish to increase their stature, and I guarantee its efficacy. Besides, it is not difficult of execution; a cannon-ball, duly applied, is sure to do the job.

An army cannot march entire upon a road, with its artillery and its equipages; the head would have reached Strasburg before the tail had left the Place du Carrousel; and then, this army must be subsisted: when collected, it could not find provisions; especially as the jolly fellows who compose it usually have an enormous appetite. When you see the separate divisions drawing together, when the detached generals are rejoining the principal corps, you may confidently predict a battle. Of all those which have been fought in our time, the battle of Wagram was longest foreseen; the field was known; every one had studied it. For forty days both sides had been making, at leisure, all the arrangements for attack and defence.

The storm of the 4th of July, 1809, was, certainly, one of the most violent that ever burst over our poor little planet. It is alleged that it seconded the plans of Napoleon, by preventing the enemy from observing our movement; I can say nothing on that head; but, what I can conscientiously affirm is, that in the evening there were about fifteen officers of us together at a suttler's, where we strove to neutralize the effect of the rain by copious libations of mulled wine.

Fleuret came in: he was our eagle-bearer; he had fought bravely at Valmy, at Fleurus, at Hohenlinden, and steadily



pursued the path of honour, though he frequently deviated from that marked out by grammar. We called him the S and the T box, because the worthy fellow continually transposed those two letters. He approached to partake of our bowl of wine.

“It is likely,” said he, “that to-morrow there will be a great many spare caps. So much the better, for mine is not good for much, and I may take my choice. Here is one that just fits me.”

So saying, he tried on that of a friend of mine, M. Guillemot, a distinguished officer, who commanded the company of artillery of my regiment.

“Have a care, Fleuret,” replied Guillemot; “perhaps your cap may to-morrow be found to fit some one who has a worse.”

“Impossible; it is too old.”

“Then it will be picked up by some peasant, or, it may be, thrown into the same ditch as yourself.”

“What do you mean?”

“I say that you, who think of inheriting the leavings of others, look very like a man who will not see the sun set to-morrow.”

“Pooh! the balls and bullets know me. For these twenty years that I have been in the army, I have never yet been touched: those Imperialists are too awkward.”

“The pitcher goes a long while to the well: it gets broken at last.”

“To the health of him who shall be left.”

“That means me, and I shall empty my glass.”

Here the conversation ended. Each returned to his company and lay down. The cannon was still playing to protect the labourers, but that did not concern us, so we went to sleep. At two in the morning, Guillemot was smoking his pipe, while superintending the repair of a gun-carriage that had been damaged the preceding day, when he saw Fleuret walking all alone. He called to him.

“Up, already!” said he; “you are stirring early. We shall not cross the last arm of the Danube for a long while.”

“What you said to me, last night, has prevented me from sleeping a wink. I am sure to be killed to-day.”

“Pooh! an old soldier, and afraid. Fie! fie!”

“Fleuret never was afraid; he never so much as thought of danger—but, to-day, I feel that I am a dead man.”

“Come, come; don’t be downhearted. This battle will pass over as many others have done, and . . . .”

“Adieu.”

At four in the morning, we crossed the last bridge; at ten, our division was placed in first line, and the first ball was discharged at us. It hit Fleuret on the head. This brave fellow kept his money in his cravat. It was stuffed with louis-d’ors. The ball set at liberty all these prisoners, who had not seen the light for a long time. It was horrible to see the soldiers rush upon the corpse to secure the blood-stained booty.

An officer of my acquaintance wore on his finger a superb diamond, reputed to be worth from five to six thousand francs. One day a ball carried away the arm, the hand, and the diamond. He fell, but was presently on his legs again. “And where is my diamond?” said he, running amidst the soldiers who were about to pick it up. He slipped it off the finger, and, throwing the hand to the finders, “There, my friends,” said he, “I give you that; do what you please with it.”

In the evening, after the victory, we were exhausted with hunger and still more with thirst. Some of our soldiers having penetrated into a house, found some Austrians drinking there, half-tipsy and making no hostile demonstration. They drank with them, and the two parties were soon on the best possible terms. Two officers of my regiment arrived.

“What are you about there?” said they to the French

soldiers. "Why are not these Austrians prisoners? Break their arms, and take these men to head-quarters."

"'Tis very kind of you, sir. What! would you have us put these good friends in prison, these brave fellows who have been treating us, these excellent Austrians who mean us no harm?"

"I order you to obey."

"If you do not take yourself off this instant, you shall see how much we care about your orders."

The drunken fellows immediately took aim and fired at their officers. It was found necessary to send a company of grenadiers to reduce them to reason; several were killed and wounded in the brawl.

The whole French army was drunk the night after the battle of Wagram. It lay in vineyards, and in Austria the cellars are situated in the grounds upon which the wine is grown. The vintage was good, the quantity abundant, the soldiers drank immoderately; and the Austrians, had they but known that we were overcome with liquor and sleep, and made a sudden attack upon us in the night, might have put us completely to the rout. It would have been impossible to make one-tenth of the soldiers betake themselves to arms. On what threads hang the destinies of empires! All might that day have been changed; the fifth act of the great drama which had so long been performing in Europe might have had a wine-cellar for denouement. Men of genius, make your calculations; there needs but a trifle to baffle them. It is probable that the Austrians were in a similar state; for if we had drunk to celebrate the victory, they had no doubt done the same to make them forget their defeat. In the field, the great difficulty consists in knowing what state the enemy is in; a general possessing that knowledge would always be victorious.

The battle of Wagram had no great material results, that is to say, there was no great haul of the net as at Ulm, Jena,

and Ratisbon ; scarcely any prisoners were made ; we took from the Austrians nine pieces of cannon, and we lost fourteen. When this was reported to the emperor, he very drily replied, "Take nine from fourteen, there remains five."

In general, after a battle, an order of the day acquainted us with what we had done ; for we often achieved great things without knowing it. In his proclamations to the army, which Napoleon drew up himself, and the style of which was perfect, he told us sometimes that he was satisfied with us, that we had surpassed his expectations, that we had flown with the rapidity of the eagle ; he then detailed our exploits, the number of soldiers, cannon, and carriages that we had taken ; it was exaggerated, but it was high-sounding and had an excellent effect. After Wagram, we had not the least proclamation, not the least order of the day ; nay, for upwards of three weeks we knew not the name that it was to have in history : we called it among ourselves the battle of the 5th and 6th of July ; the name of Wagram we learned only from the Paris newspapers.

This battle led to the victory of Znaim, the armistice, and peace. The Austrian army effected its retreat in good order ; it was beaten, but it was neither cut off nor demoralized, as on other occasions. Thus, for instance, the battle of Ratisbon had carried us on to the walls of Vienna, and that of Wagram led us no farther than Znaim, that is to say, four days' march. There we were to begin again, and we did begin again.

In the evening, the whole Austrian army was enclosed. We perceived the fires of its bivouacs within a vast circle formed by ours. We anticipated some general and decisive engagement for the following day, when it was rumoured that an armistice was signed, and that peace was about to be made. Great was our astonishment on hearing these tidings. Why did not the emperor crush his enemies when so fair an opportunity offered ? Why did he consent to cease hostilities in a spot which must have been either a vast trap or a tomb

for the Austrian army? Such were the reflections that occurred to every mind.

When, at a later period, the marriage of Napoleon was talked of, each reverted to the events at Znaim, and the whole army concluded that the hand of the archduchess had been the express, secret, and *sine quâ non* condition of that suspension of arms. But, it may be objected, his divorce from Josephine was not only not consummated, but there was yet no question concerning it. Granted: but was Napoleon accustomed to communicate all his plans? His marriage was not talked of till after Austria was evacuated by the French army; he wished not to have the appearance of conquering an empress by force of arms. The demand was subsequently made in the regular way; it was complied with; we considered all this as a comedy, in which each performed the part previously agreed upon. But, you may again reply, in all the diplomatic notes there is to be found nothing that tends to confirm such an assertion. It is very possible, I admit, that nothing was ever written on the subject; the pride of the two emperors would have been compromised. A man no more chooses to have it believed that he takes by force the woman whom he marries, than to appear compelled to give his daughter to a son-in-law whom he detests. Perhaps the whole affair was concluded by means of a promise given at the bivouac. Be this as it may, it was generally believed in the army that the hand of the archduchess Maria Louisa was bestowed on the 11th of July, 1809.

In stating the report which was then current, I pretend not to affirm anything: in the obscure position in which I have always been, one does not see much. What I certify as true is, that officers, soldiers, everybody, believed what I have here ventured to relate. My reader may take it for a truth, worthy to figure in history or for camp gossip, just as he pleases.



Apropos of gossip—I have read in many books written during the Restoration, that there existed in the army secret societies formed to overthrow Napoleon and to re-establish the republic. It has been asserted that the society of the *Philadelphes* numbered among its members a great quantity of officers of all ranks; that its principal head was Oudet, colonel of the 9th of the line; that in the evening of the battle of Wagram he was assassinated in an ambushade, with twenty-two of his officers. Is it possible to invent such tales, and to hope, when one publishes them, to be believed on one's word? To no purpose have I ransacked my memory, which nevertheless is tolerably faithful; I can find nothing that has the least resemblance to this story. I have questioned many of the officers who were at Wagram; none of them ever heard a word of this melo-dramatic scene; and certainly such an event would have made some noise in the army. A colonel and twenty-two officers of a regiment cannot be shot *incognito*. The *Contemporaine*, in her Memoirs, has also a good deal to say about Oudet; she does not relate his death in the same manner, but her account too is mixed up with the marvellous. She makes mention also of the *Philadelphes*, whose name was unknown till the *Histoire des Sociétés secrètes* made its appearance. Oudet was a brave officer, who died at Wagram by the enemy's fire, as every soldier must wish to die, on the field of battle, doing his duty, and not in an infamous ambushade. He was colonel of the 17th regiment of the line, and not of the 9th; he was struck by a ball, which entered his chest and came out at his left shoulder, and this ball, to a certainty was not French. The officers of his regiment erected a monument to him at Vienna. Would they have dared to do so, if he had been shot by order of the emperor?

It is not enough for a general to possess talent; he must also be lucky. In war, circumstances combine in so many different ways, that something unforeseen is constantly oc-

curing. When any fresh man was proposed to Cardinal Richelieu for a military appointment, the wily statesman always inquired if he was lucky, and if the reply was affirmative, the appointment was conferred. Napoleon believed in his star, though he possessed an astonishing genius—this was modesty. How many epochs were there in his life, when he was favoured by chance and by the stupidity of his enemies! At Essling, for instance, the Austrians broke down our bridges by launching against them barges laden with stones: the blame of all this mischief was laid on a sudden swelling of the Danube: the poor Danube could not contradict the report. Our bridges being broken down, the army was cut in two. If the enemy, taking advantage of our situation, had dashed headlong upon us, I am convinced that our situation would have been much more critical; our ammunition was exhausted; we only fired from time to time to keep up appearances; we had our bayonets left, it is true, but human efforts have their limits. Luckily, the Austrians knew not that our bridges were broken, though they had done all that lay in their power to destroy them. In this case, why not ascertain whether the purpose was accomplished? Most assuredly, if we had been in their place, and they in ours, the whole hostile army would have laid down its arms. In Russia great numbers of the French perished; but, reverse the parts, and not a soldier would have returned to his own country.

It is certain that great men never like to admit themselves to be in the wrong. The “sudden rise” of the Danube, the “premature winter” of Russia, furnished an excuse for want of forethought. In Russia, a winter that begins in November is not premature. It was not expected till the 1st of December, when the frost generally sets in. But who would reckon thus with the almanac! In Paris itself it frequently freezes at the same period. Besides, it was not the cold that destroyed the army; it was the want of provi-

sions. If the soldier had been supplied with bread, if he had had a slice of beef and a glass of brandy in his inside, he would have defied the cold. As sovereigns never fail to place to the account of their vast genius what is very often but the effect of chance, it would be but fair of them to avow their faults when they commit any.

Most certainly, in the army chance must be accounted something; it is like a lucky stroke at billiards, like several partridges killed out of a covey by firing without taking aim. Nay, it is equally certain, that chance frequently baffles the calculations of the most profound diplomatists. When Frederick I., King of Prussia, was still but Elector of Brandenburg, he directed M. Bartholdi, his ambassador at Vienna, to negotiate with the emperor, in order to obtain permission to assume the title of king. He was charged most especially to avoid Father Wolf, the Emperor Leopold's confessor. The instructions were in cipher. The copyist made a mistake; instead of the word *avoid*, he put *employ*. Accordingly, the ambassador addressed himself to Father Wolf, who was not a little astonished. "I have always been strongly opposed to this," said he, "but I cannot withstand the mark of confidence which the Elector confers on me; he shall not repent the application which you have made to me." The Elector gained his point. But for the mistake of the copyist, he would, probably, have been disappointed.

How many generals have become illustrious through the stupidity of their adversaries! An aide-de-camp is sent to carry an order; his horse is killed, the rider wounded; he does not arrive in time; the general is beaten: owing to this accident alone, the conqueror becomes a man of genius. Causes still more trivial may produce equally important results. Sometimes, by a caprice of chance, an army does all that it ought to do to be beaten; this is like a bully plunging his sword into his own bosom.

We were in camp, near Ratzeburg, in Holstein. The

enemy was two leagues from us. We were not fighting, or at any rate, fighting but little, merely to show from time to time that we were there. Each general well knew that it was not for him to decide the question : everything depended on what should befall the grand army, which was then at Leipzig.

One day, Marshal Davoust resolved to make a general reconnoissance to force the enemy to take arms, that he might ascertain what number of men were opposed to us. A formidable column started one fine morning, and in two hours we found ourselves before the camp of the Russians, Prussians, and Swedes ; for it was composed of those three nations. The camp appeared to us to be uninhabited. Fearing an ambuscade, we advanced with caution : scouts were sent forward ; they went through all the hovels, and found not a creature. What is become of the enemy ? Till an answer could be obtained to this question, orders were given to set fire to the camp. In a moment, all those straw huts were transformed into a heap of ashes.

While we were looking at this immense bonfire, and each was forming his conjectures concerning the disappearance of the enemy, the cannon thundered behind us ; the noise increased, and everything proved to us that our camp was attacked. " We are cut off," said the soldiers ; " the Russians must have been aware of our movement ; they allowed us to make it ; they are taking possession of our camp, and then they will easily settle our business."

The French soldiers readily give way to panic. Four hussars on their rear disturb them more than a thousand in front of them. " We are cut off !" they always cried in such a case ; and you would have great difficulty to prove to them that, if anybody were cut off, it must be the four hussars. But, in the position in which we then found ourselves, the surmises of the soldiers appeared to be correct, and their fears well founded. The Russians, apprized of

our movement, had, no doubt, suffered us to pass; they had taken advantage of our absence to crush our comrades. All hesitation was impossible; we must fly to their support, we must, above all, take possession of certain heights, where three hundred men might cut off all communication between us and the rest of our troops.

We set out, and proceeded nearly on the run to the defile of Gross Mulsahn; not a creature did we meet with. We then began to see clearly that the enemy must necessarily be ignorant of our march, since he had not secured so important a position. For the same reason that we were not acquainted with his movement an hour before, he could not be acquainted with ours. These conjectures were changed to certainty, when, on approaching our camp, we saw it attacked on all sides.

Chance had caused the two hostile generals to conceive the same idea, on the same day, and in the same hour. Each meant to attack the other, and each had taken a different route. General Walmoden, who commanded the allies, was extremely astonished to see our column coming up on the rear of his troops; it was a considerable time before he was convinced that it was we; he gave us credit for a scientific manœuvre, and issued immediate orders for retreat. All his riflemen were taken, and laid down their arms. It was high time for us to arrive; for our camp, weakened by the departure of our column, was not strong enough to sustain the conflict. Had General Walmoden known how small a number of troops was left, he would certainly have made a more vigorous effort, and the consequences would have been disastrous for us. But we arrived in time, and all was saved.

A circumstance nearly similar occurred at Wittenberg. The same night and at the same hour, the besiegers and the besieged armed themselves, the former to attempt an assault, the latter to make a sortie. The two parties met full butt;



a fire of musketry was kept up for a few minutes. Each concluded that he had fallen into an ambuscade, and both ran off in the utmost confusion.

The emperor was fond of conferring promotions and decorations. After a battle, he reviewed the troops, distributing ribbons and epaulets: each hoped for something: but, after a petty affair, in which two or three hundred men were engaged, whatever might be the result, the small fry of officers and the soldiers had no room for hope. The commanding officer had taken care to draw up a superb report, sprinkled with glory, intrepidity, skilful manœuvres; and, if any reward afterwards arrived, it was always for him.

I shall here give some idea of the manner in which history was then written. In the campaign of 1813, we had an affair of advanced posts at Sprottau, a little town in Saxony. The Russian rear-guard defended itself for a moment; and on either side three or four companies of riflemen were engaged. The enemy retired, leaving in our hands a few prisoners and some baggage-waggons. An hour afterwards, we were walking in the market-place of Sprottau, talking over our morning's exploits.

"There is food for the bulletin-writers!" said an officer. "You will see by and by that we have done superb, magnificent things."

"I don't know that we have done much," said another; "but I'll be bound a great deal will be made of it."

"We shall be told that the general has gathered loads of laurels, but our regiment will not be mentioned."

"I dare say we shall have a line, and he a page."

"No mention will be made of anybody; the thing is not worth it."

"You will see, when the Paris newspapers arrive. But that we may be the better judges of their accuracy, let us immediately commit to writing the brilliant results of the day, lest we should forget them. Here are the prisoners; let

us count them ; sixty-four, besides three baggage-waggons drawn by twelve horses, one piece of cannon, and one artillery waggon.”

A fortnight afterwards the papers arrived. Heavens ! what glorious exploits we had performed !—when I say we, I mean General S . . . . With unexampled intrepidity, and by means of the most skilful manœuvres, he had surrounded, attacked, thrown heels over head, taken, killed, all that came in his way. Three hundred slain, one thousand wounded, two thousand prisoners, ten pieces of cannon, sixty baggage-waggons, were the glorious results of his strategical skill and his noble valour. He had done all this alone ; our regiment was not even mentioned.

Had the general said that with such or such a regiment he had performed these brilliant achievements, everybody would have thought this perfectly natural, and the honour would have been divided : but when he wrote that, “giving way to his natural impetuosity, with a small part of his advanced guard, he had overthrown the enemy, who, of course owed his safety solely to the swiftness of his heels,” the glory belonged to him alone. This part of the advanced guard is an ideal, fantastic being, whom it is impossible to personify. It is, perhaps, four men, and, as the general accomplished so much with such a force, what a fierce blade he must be ! Ah ! how many heroes of the same stamp could I mention, if I durst !

Virgil’s *sic vos non vobis* was daily exemplified in the army. In everything, ingenuity was required for getting forward. At the battle of Eylau, a conscript brought to his captain a Russian pair of colours, which he had found in the snow among a heap of slain. “You stupid fellow !” said he, “do you take this for colours ? why, ’tis nothing but the flag of a company, of no value whatever. I find such as this every day, but should never think of stooping to pick them up.”

A quarter of an hour afterwards the captain was haranguing the marshal. "There," said he, "is a pair of colours, which I have taken from the Russians; it was defended by four men; they are all slain." Next day the captain was *chef de bataillon*.

The word *promotion* takes possession of every military brain at the moment of entering the service, and never quits it till the moment of retiring from the army. It is somewhat like the word *husband* with a young female. She thinks of it every day. "We are going this evening to the ball; I shall, perhaps, find a husband there." So says the one. "We are going to take the field; there will be promotion," says the other. This idea engrosses every individual in the army, from the drummer to the marshal. When we dictated laws to Europe, our generals dreamt every night that the deputies of some neighbouring kingdom came to offer them a crown of gold on a cushion of velvet.

The example of Bernadotte turned all heads: we all fancied that we had a sceptre in the sheath of our sword. A soldier had become a king; each of us thought that he might do the same. Certainly, if, from the beginning of the world, there existed a single example of a man who had not died, we should all believe ourselves destined to form the second exception to the general rule; each individual would be impressed with the internal conviction that he was immortal.

A great deal is said now-a-days about military promotion at the time of the empire, and about the gratitude of the soldiers to the emperor. The term gratitude is truly comical. What a strange abuse of words! In point of fact, did we owe any especial gratitude to his imperial and royal majesty, when he was pleased to bestow the appointments of the dead upon those who survived? And very often he who had won was not permitted to touch the stakes. After every battle, a swarm of officers sent from Paris pounced upon our regiment, to seize the best places that were vacant. The new nobility

was as greedy as the old. Had the empire lasted ten years longer, it would have been mentioned as a remarkable circumstance that a commoner had been promoted to a colonelcy. We were on the point of seeing the highest plebeian ambitions grow old in the obscure honours of the rank of major. The sons of marshals, generals, counts, barons, councillors of state, and prefects, acquired a new rank every fortnight: it was by promoting them in the army for what they had not done, that the emperor encouraged their fathers.

Not that the marshals and generals were deficient in courage: they have proved the contrary on a thousand occasions; but they began to be tired of the profession. When a man possesses a fine mansion in Paris, and a beautiful country-seat in the environs, it is not agreeable to waste his life in the smoke of a bivouac. For ten years, twenty years, one might endure it—but for ever!

It was necessary to dazzle the prefects; it was necessary to render them deaf to the lamentations of mothers, to the voice of conscience, that they might send to the army all who were able to carry a musket. A general said to his soldiers who fled before the enemy: "Idiots, do what you will, you must get promotion; if not to-day, it will come to-morrow." Napoleon seemed to hold the same language to us; but you will say, under him people grew rich. Who grew rich? A superior officer, here and there; but what did the immense majority bring back? Old clothes and glory. Glory! what is glory? A bulletin in which you are mentioned. Who were mentioned after every battle? Ten persons out of three hundred thousand. And yet, every one did his duty; but it was impossible to mention everybody.

I hear it repeated every day that men went to the army to serve the country, to serve the emperor. They went to it, they go to it, and they will go to it so long as there shall be armies, some by compulsion, others to obtain promotion. The country, the emperor, the king—what do they mean but

promotion? I except great political crises, when the passions and the social position sometimes silence personal interest. Men went to the army because they knew that such and such a one, from private soldiers, had become generals, marshals, princes, kings. "Why should not I do as they have done?" said every soldier, strapping the knapsack to his back. We had all of us the commission of marshal of France in our cartouch-box; the only difficulty was to get it out.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE CAMP.

IN the time of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. a camp was very often but a dramatic exhibition, given to the ladies of the court, tired of the pleasures of Versailles. The superior officers were mostly engrossed in their tents with the gossip of the saloons and billet-doux; they left the details of service to the majors and the officers who had their fortune to make. The colonels and the generals made it their business to arrive at the camp in splendid carriages, with a numerous retinue of servants and a good cook, and to keep open table. They ruined themselves in camp, but they made people talk about them. When it was requisite to pay with their persons, these gentlemen were not sparing of them: they fought like men of courage as we have done, and as we shall do again when occasion presents itself; but they had only the roses of the military profession without the thorns, for I do not give the name of thorns to cannon-balls and bagatelles of that kind.

To them the camp was a diversion, a medium for showing themselves off: they had hopes of being remarked by the king or by his mistresses: a word might be said at the *petit*



*coucher*, and this word was worth a regiment. It is prodigious what an officer would then spend in camp in three months. Marshal de Boufflers squandered millions at the camp of Compiègne in 1698; he had couriers who brought him daily the wines of all countries, the rarest species of game, the finest fish: he had the honour to entertain Louis XIV. and the King of England, an honour which cost him very dear. In the poetic life of Versailles, the nobles only spent, they never calculated. "See my steward," said a great man, "settle with him; my business is to spend; the rest is his affair."

In those times, when the generals were tired of a month's campaign, they would agree upon a truce at the advanced posts, and each took up his quarters without apprising the minister. "When it rains, stay at home; we will not stir, it is so disagreeable to get splashed." Now-a-days, we march in all weathers, in all seasons, but the enemy does the same; if we have monster-mortars, or steam-guns, he will have them too. The chance will still be the same, for ten against ten are not more efficient than one against one.

By improving the art of destroying men, we shall perhaps gain one thing—we shall make wars more rare: each will stay quietly in his own chimney-corner, keeping his feet warm. Perhaps we shall even return to the times of the Horatii and the Curiatii; after going all round the circle, we shall arrive again at the starting point. While two or three champions settle the quarrel of their country, the rest will look on with the musket on their arm. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, those three great levers of civilization, will no longer be obstructed in their operations by the follies of certain kings.

Now-a-days, when an army is in the field, it sleeps in bivouac; it is allowed to encamp only during armistices, or when peace is concluded. In cantonments the troops are

too much scattered, it takes too much time to collect them, the soldiers cannot be sufficiently overlooked, discipline suffers. In garrison, it is rarely that regiments enough can be brought together for performing great manœuvres, whereas in camp, have as many as you please, you will always find room for them.

The evolutions of the camp are the school of the colonels and generals ; it is there that they acquire the art of plying and deploying their troops, that they learn to judge of distances and of the fit time for a charge of cavalry, and that they attain that partial precision which is frequently indispensable for great strategic movements.

As soon as there was a suspension of arms between the two armies, we formed camps by divisions. As hostilities might recommence every moment, it was necessary to be ready to assemble and to march, like a single man. There were also circumstances in which, without armistice, without any convention, the two armies, not being prepared to take the field, either owing to the season or to some other cause, formed camps till they should receive orders for attacking. Thus, in the first days of May, 1807, the grand army left the cantonments which it had taken a few days after the battle of Eylau, and formed camps in the environs of Osterode and Doringen : there it remained quiet till the 5th of June, when the Russians, tired of this inaction, attacked the first line, commanded by Marshal Ney. The campaign lasted nine days : on the 14th of June was fought the battle of Friedland, and soon afterwards we again began to form camps around Tilsit.

A camp is a town of wood and straw, sometimes of canvas,\* laid out by line, with its streets, great and small, long and short ; the whole kept extremely clean. A camp is a very

\* At the time of the empire, the troops were strangers to tents ; our armies marched so rapidly that they could not have carried with them all the requisite baggage, without impeding the celerity of their movements.

fine thing, but I maintain that a town is an infinitely preferable abode.

In general, in order to erect our camps we demolished villages. At Tilsit, every regiment had about thirty to pull to pieces; one or two were allotted to each company. We had a great quantity of *found* carts and horses, which served to remove the materials. With such means, it may easily be conceived that our camps were superb; those who have never seen them cannot form any idea of them. The hovels once constructed of uniform dimensions, every one turned his attention to decorating his own in an elegant manner, and soon orders arrived to take such a company of such a regiment as a model for this or that particular thing. The soldiers, vexed at having their work to begin again, invented new decorations, in order to give the innovators a job in their turn. With such a system there is no end to change. It may be said that a camp is never finished: so long as troops are there, they find something to do to it.

A regiment conceived the idea of cutting down several loads of firs in a neighbouring forest, and planting them in the line of the piles of arms, which produced a fine effect, because that tree keeps its green colour for a long time, even after it is cut. On the morrow, an order of the day directed the example set by this regiment to be generally followed; but the imitators, striving to outdo their model, planted a tree at each angle of each shed, which was deemed a great improvement, and in consequence an order was issued to imitate the imitators. Then, with a view to eclipse all, we marked out in front of the colours of our regiment an immense parallelogram, which was levelled and swept, to serve for a parade; and this space was bordered on each side by six rows of trees, which presented the appearance of a magnificent walk. All this was done as if by magic, for when you have two or three thousand hands at your disposal, and they fall to work cheerfully, the business is soon com-

pleted. The other corps soon received orders to take pattern from us; but the neighbouring woods no longer existed. War, you see, is a very fine thing; but floods, hail, fire, are less destructive than an enemy's army: France has, in her turn, had some experience of this.

The two emperors and the King of Prussia came to see our camp, and we executed grand evolutions in their presence. General Mouton, afterwards Count of Lobau, Napoleon's aide-de-camp, commanded in chief. We filed away before the three sovereigns, and before an army of princes, marshals, and generals, of the three nations. Never, I verily believe, was a greater quantity of embroidered dresses collected together upon any point of the globe. Napoleon in his simple uniform of horse-chasseur, was the ruling spirit of this multitude. Alexander and Frederick William galloping behind him, did not allow their horses to keep pace with his. They subsequently made Napoleon pay dearly for the glory with which he crushed them at Tilsit.

The King of Prussia, as he passed our quarters, stopped to converse with us. The letter-box of the regiment, which, in the field, is placed beside the colours, attracted his notice.

“For what purpose is that box?” asked Frederick William.

“Sire, to receive the letters which each of us writes to France.”

“When you are in the field, is your post so organized as to convey the letters of all the soldiers?”

“Yes, sire; it goes out every day, it comes in every day; and we receive the Paris papers in a fortnight.”

“It is admirable! For the rest, gentlemen, it is impossible to construct finer camps than yours; but, you must admit that you make deplorable villages.”

The Queen of Prussia came to Tilsit. Napoleon was very attentive to her. All those assembled sovereigns, going out together every day, eating at the same table, appearing, in

short, like old friends, though, but a few days before, they had been vituperating one another in their official gazettes, weapons more dangerous for kings than cannon, furnished a singular spectacle to an observer. For the rest, this friendship of recent date seemed to be cordial between Alexander and Napoleon; and, if one may ever trust to appearances in politics, it is probable that at Tilsit the parties were sincere. The Queen of Prussia was very handsome, for I saw her; she was said to be very amiable; on that point I can say nothing; but it is certain that she obtained many concessions from Napoleon. This beautiful princess, dining one day with the three sovereigns, filled her glass with champagne, and said, with that grace which she possessed in a supreme degree: "To the health of Napoleon the great! he conquered our dominions, he restores them to us!" The emperor rose, courteously returned the compliment, and replied to the queen: "Do not drink the whole, madam!"

The sojourn in camp is ruinous to the officers; in general they prefer the bivouac, the position of which is changing every day. In the latter case, they live as they can, without having occasion to incur expense; whereas, the listlessness of a camp life causes them to frequent the sutler's coffee-room, or even to visit the neighbouring town, and the arrears of pay are consumed long before they are received.

After the armistice which followed the battle of Znaim, the whole party encamped till the conclusion of peace. We were in the environs of Brunn and Austerlitz, on the old field of battle. Frequently, in digging, fragments of arms and human bones were turned up. Napoleon resolved to give a repetition of the battle of Austerlitz. One fine day in September, the army occupied the same positions and made the same manœuvres as had taken place four years before. Everything passed off extremely well; the regiments which represented Austrian or Russian corps suffered themselves to be vanquished, as had been previously agreed upon, and



nobody was drowned in the famous lake of Sokolnitz, which was not frozen.

The most favourable spot for pitching a camp is always in the vicinity of some handsome mansion, which may serve for head-quarters: the staff once comfortably settled, everything goes on smoothly.

A regiment, encamped, ought to occupy the same space as when under arms. Each company has in general six sheds, in three rows. Opposite to the centre of these sheds, and in rear of them, are placed the kitchens, built of turf, with walls and epaulements so constructed as to prevent sparks of fire from flying upon the straw-roofs. Farther on are the captain's shed and that of the lieutenants; still farther, that of the *chef de bataillon*; and, beyond them all, that of the colonel, placed opposite to the centre of the regiment.

The colonel's barrack is there, but it is usually unoccupied; those gentlemen prefer lodging at the next village, that is to say, when the enemy is at a distance, or when peace is concluded; for, during active hostilities, they are with the men night and day.

In camp, the officers dine either at the sutler's, where an ordinary is kept, or at their own quarters, where several mess together. In each company there is always a soldier who can cook tolerably well; and then, upon occasion, all lend a hand, and the result is frequently a delicious repast.

In the field, the officers are entitled to distributions of provisions. They receive their rations of bread, meat, salt, rice, &c. When eight or ten mess together, and know how to manage, they may live extremely well, provided they obtain a few supplementary articles from the next town.

In camp, the day is spent in visits to the soldiers' messes, inspections, parades, exercises, manœuvres—an extremely agreeable life, certainly, for those who are fond of it. In leisure moments, when the officer has books, he can read; when he has none, he walks about, and then at night he

plays, and drinks mulled wine, amidst the smoke of pipes. This takes place either in the suttler's tent, or in the barrack of each officer in turn.

In some regiments, the colonels forbade play; in many others they tolerated it, because, being gamesters themselves, they wanted somebody to play with.

The usual games were *bouillote*, *imperiale*, and *vingt-et-un*; and at these amusements many a man lost his pay for a year. An officer of dragoons, whom I knew well, never stirred from the tent of the suttler who was most in vogue. Always ready to challenge the first comer to any game whatever, he carried about him a well filled purse, the contents of which he displayed to excite the cupidity of the spectators.

One evening all his louis changed master: though he played extremely well, he lost everything. Fortune is fickle; she is not a female for nothing. The officer, in a thundering voice, called the suttler, and desired her to bring him a knife.

“What do you want it for?”

“That is nothing to you—a knife, quick!”

A knife was accordingly brought, and he cut a great slash on his left side. We ran to him, affrighted, to disarm him.

“What ails you?” cried he, laughing. “Sit down, and let me have my revenge.”

“But you are wounded!”

“Wounded! not such an idiot, faith! I cut my waist-coat, that is all. I was obliged to release these unhappy prisoners.”

In fact, the louis, the napoleons, the frederics d'or, poured in hundreds from the slit which had so terrified us. He played again, and soon won back all that he had lost.

This officer declared that, of all earthly pleasures, play was the greatest. “Men dare not avow that they are fond of

play," said he ; " people have but little esteem for a man who is addicted to it. He loses the confidence of others ; every one cries : ' He is a gambler.' On the other hand, merchants, owners of privateers, are held in estimation ; yet they run great risks, they gamble in reality, and sometimes with the money of others, which is not right. The Emperor Napoleon is the greatest gambler that I know ; more than four times he has staked his all, and he is ever ready to begin afresh. As for me, nothing gives me such a relish for life as the chance of play. If I were not to play, I should be dead in a fortnight. Every morning and every night I say my prayers, like a good Christian, and always conclude with these words : ' O, God, let me be always playing and always winning ! ' "

A philosophical officer observed to him, one day, that play would be a very bad thing, were it only for the loss of time that it occasions. " You are right," replied our dragoon, with admirable coolness, " one does lose a great deal of time in shuffling the cards."

If the officers play for money, the men play for fillips. Nothing is more diverting than to see an old soldier receive them on his nose. Sometimes they are administered by a youngster, but even then the greybeard takes them without complaining, though not without making a very droll grimace. And then, to vary their amusement, they play at what they call *la drogue*, the loser having to carry, for a certain time, at the end of his nose, a pair of wooden pincers, which compress the nostrils. You may frequently have noticed little scenes of this kind in passing a *corps de garde*, or in turning over Charles's designs.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE GARRISON.

THE military exercise is a very diverting thing. After a man has performed it for twenty, thirty years, he must still continue to go through it every day while he is in the service. When he does not know it, he must learn it; that is a matter of course: when he does know it, he must instruct others; this is just: and when the whole regiment manœuvres cleverly, it must still be performed to show its cleverness. Thus the exercise must be incessantly performed. An officer is continually going to or coming from it.

The exercise annoyed me a good deal, but I could conceive why, when one knew it, there was still a necessity for performing it, either to teach others, or not to forget it one's self. But a thing that I never could digest, a thing that was as disagreeable to me on the first day as on the last, was the parade. How, in fact, is it possible to conceive that rational creatures should be obliged to assemble daily at noon in a public place, to see about fifty heroes at thirty-five centimes per day file off for the guard-house, which they are to occupy for the next twenty-four hours! And yet I have known officers to whom the parade was as necessary as food, and who would have felt uncomfortable all day without their ordinary or their grand parade. When over, the general turns about, and says to you:—"Gentlemen, nothing new." Each then goes his way till the hour for exercise.

Next to the exercise and the parade, the *theory* must be classed among the agreeables of the profession. That theory consists in an examination, held daily by an officer, who asks you questions relative to some part of the "Instructions for the Soldier, the Platoon, or the Battalion." You see old officers with grey moustaches, who have been thirty years in the service, saying their lessons like young collegians. The

college and the regiment are, indeed, very much alike; there are the same fears, the same passions, the same rivalries, only on a larger scale in the latter. By dint of reading and repeating this theory, you at last learned it, and knew it as thoroughly as the inventor. In this case, possessing certain patronage, you might be exempted from the periodical examinations: but, from the parade, from the exercise, nothing can release you; there each must pay in person. These occupy four or five hours a day; so you may easily calculate how many well-spent hours during thirty years' service.

In garrison, the coffee-houses, billiards, offer a great resource: there the officer spends almost all the time that is not devoted to the military service. I say almost, because the ladies claim a part, and that part is, certainly, the best employed. But, among the officers of a regiment, you find many who disdain that kind of enjoyment. To make love appears to them too great a trouble; they prefer buying it ready-made: every man to his taste in this world.

The officers meet at the coffee-house before they go to parade, to the exercise, or in returning from them. There are retailed the news of the army, of the regiment, and the gossip of the barracks. They play, they drink, they smoke: an officer is always ready to engage in a game at billiards, to smoke a cigar, to take a *petit verre*. The *petit verre* is a thing which young men who have recently put on the uniform would not dare to refuse; they would be afraid, lest they should pass for milksops. Dram-drinking is an essentially military practice. These habits are prejudicial to health, everybody knows, but everybody likes to do what is done by others. For a long time I drank regularly my three or four drams a day.

These pleasures, if pleasures they be, are the consequence of inoccupation, and they are very costly. It is not uncommon to see officers who spend their month's pay beforehand upon them. I have often been in this predicament: what I



received has not been sufficient to discharge my running account at the coffee-house of the garrison.

When we arrived in a garrison, our first business was to seek a female with whom we could pass our time. As soon as we had found one, our minds were at rest. "Such a one has got his daily bread," was the expression used in the regiment when an officer had suited himself in this way. Sometimes these connexions terminated in a deplorable manner. Quarrels ensued with relatives, with rivals: swords were drawn—a disagreeable thing—because the result, be it what it will, always leaves behind it painful recollections in the mind of an honest man.

One of my friends, when at Ulm, had an adventure, the remembrance of which, even to this day, fills his heart with grief. He was on the most intimate terms with a young lady, whose parents were people of the first consequence in that city. They met at his quarters. After everybody had retired to rest, the lady stole out by the garden-gate, hastened to her lover, staid with him till daybreak, and then returned to her own home. This intrigue had been carried on for some time, and not a creature had the slightest suspicion of it. One morning my friend awoke just when it began to be light. "Make haste, my dear friend," said he; "it is time to go." No answer was returned: he touched her, she felt cold; he examined her, she was dead!

He doted on his mistress; conceive, then, his horror! What was to be done? the situation was dreadful. He rose, dressed, and ran to one of his friends, who was quartered on the parents of the poor girl, to ask his advice. His friend roused the father. "Sir," said he, "I have painful news to tell you—the most painful that you could receive: I have not time to prepare your heart for the stroke that impends over it. You suppose your daughter to be asleep in her own bed. Unhappy father! I am obliged to undeceive you. She is in the bed of one of my friends; she sleeps, but will

never wake more ; in short, she died last night in an attack of apoplexy."

"Gracious God ! what is it you say ?"

"Unfortunately the truth, the literal truth ; but we have no time for lamentation. We must save the honour of your family ; the scandal of such an event must, if possible, be avoided. My friend, whose anguish is equal to yours, knows no more what to do than you ; I alone am capable of acting ; leave the affair to me. I will send for the corpse of your daughter ; she shall be well wrapped up ; a soldier, for whose discretion I will be answerable, shall bring her to me as a bale of military effects, and we will carry her to her own bed, before a creature in your house knows anything of the matter. You must stay up to open the doors for us : should any of your people come down stairs, send them off immediately on some errand or other. Let us lose no time ; I will go, and I answer for the result."

Everything was done as he had planned. The father appeared to know nothing of his daughter's death, till her maid entered her chamber. The whole town believed that she had expired in her own bed, and even her mother never conceived the slightest suspicion of the truth, the knowledge of which would have greatly increased the poignancy of her grief.

When we were to remain long in garrison, we had two grand resources for passing a merry life. If there was a lodge of freemasons, we went thither *en masse*, or we formed one of ourselves. Everybody knows that, while labouring at the great work, the brethren are fond of fun and feasting. In many of the regiments the officers formed a lodge, of which the colonel was master.

One of our comrades made game on all occasions of freemasons and freemasonry. "Our proofs," he said, "were only fit to frighten children," and when he was urged to

apply for admission, he answered with a grin :—" I am too old a boy to play at chapel."

However, as our parties of pleasure were confined to the initiated, he was not only excluded from them, but heard on the morrow a highly exaggerated account of the doings of the preceding day. This piqued his curiosity; he grew tired of amusing himself all alone, and solicited admission into the jovial band. He was then told to prepare himself for the severest trial that had been imposed in the memory of man. He defied us to frighten him for a moment.

The important day at length arrived; all our batteries were prepared. Our candidate had just been consigned to the closet of reflection, when the house in which the lodge was held caught fire. To terminate the day in a manner essentially masonic, a grand dinner was preparing. The kitchen presented a magnificent sight; the fires were blazing, and the scullions running in all directions to execute the orders of the head-cook. A chimney, which for a long time had not been visited by a sweep, caught fire. It communicated to the upper floors; the *generale* was beat, the garrison got under arms, the engines arrived, and poured forth torrents of water to extinguish the flames.

Meanwhile, our candidate was still in the closet of reflection. We had forgotten him at first, and afterwards concluded that the fire would drive him out. He, however, kept his post without flinching. Luckily, the flames did not spread his way, or he would certainly have been burned alive. If he was not roasted, at any rate he was completely drenched, for an engine-pipe, playing right at his head, gave him as fine a ducking as ever cooled the brain of a maniac. "'Tis of no use," he cried; "you will not frighten me with your straw fires; I have seen far different at Hohenlinden, at Austerlitz, at Jena," and so he went on, repeating, amidst the smoke, the catalogue of the battles in which he had been.

The firemen were obliged to turn him out by force, otherwise, I dare say, he would have been there still. "You would never have frightened me with your silly proofs," said he, as he went down stairs, "but you might have stifled me. Who knows but I may catch a fine cold by it! This is beyond a joke, gentlemen; I am as wet as if I had been in the river." It was a long time before they could make him comprehend the truth, and convince him that the fire was not a mere frolic; for we were not accustomed to roast our adepts, in order to make them keep a secret.

Next to freemasonry came the drama, which furnishes an excellent pastime when one is young. At Magdeburg, the playhouse was occupied by a company of bad German actors; they refused to give it up to us, so we metamorphosed a magazine of forage into a theatre. At that time the garrison was twenty-five thousand strong. Each officer contributed a month's pay to defray the expense of lighting, dresses, and decorations. Our theatre was soon organized, provided with machinery and with every requisite. Be it understood, that no money was paid at the door, and that we were always applauded. Tickets were distributed in the city; we had always a full house, that is to say, all the agreeables of the profession without its inconveniences. Add to this that the wives of the officers, the commissaries, and the clerks of the victualling department, who performed along with us, were very amiable women.

The officer-actors never did any duty. As the time which they spent in the theatre was devoted to the pleasures of their comrades, the latter mounted guard for them, commanded the exercise, and all were satisfied. We performed pieces of every class—tragedy, comedy, opera, and farce. The orchestra, selected from the bands of all the regiments, was perfect. Many pieces were as well acted on our stage at Magdeburg, as in the first theatres of France. We received all the new pieces from Paris; they were immediately studied,

and were brought out as soon as at Lyons, Rouen, or Bordeaux. The poor German actors could not stand the competition with comedians who performed gratuitously, and went to seek their fortune elsewhere.

One day, the curtain was raised on the individual account of one of our young actors. He bowed thrice to his audience. "Gentlemen," said he, "I have just had a pair of white cassimere breeches, which cost me forty francs, utterly spoiled; a whole lampful of oil has been spilt over them. You may easily conceive how much this must have ruffled my temper. The idea will, no doubt, annoy me while I am performing my part; I have, therefore, to solicit your indulgence, if I should not play so well as usual."

What bickerings, what rivalries, what gossip, what slander, behind our scenes? If we had been so fortunate as to have a newspaper or two at Magdeburg, their columns would have overflowed with piquant adventures. From all that I have seen in our dramatic company, I might even say from all I have myself done, I have deduced one aphorism, which I advise all husbands to note down in their tablets. It is this: "When a wife plays in private theatricals, the honour of the husband (since honour there is) loses in direct proportion to the pleasure that she takes in them."

The wife of a general, whom I shall not name, had formerly been an actress at the Théâtre Montausier in Paris. Having become a baroness of the empire, she took good care to say nothing about her former profession. All these ladies, who ridiculed the *marquises* of the Faubourg St. Germain, were particularly anxious to imitate them. The baroness, a clever comedian, had copied them pretty closely, and given herself great airs, which were highly displeasing to the lady-captains.

Spiteful people meanwhile whispered to one another the reason why the general had married her; they talked of her conduct before marriage, ay, and afterwards, too: but the



lady was handsome and amiable ; we listened not to their evil tongues, the women alone triumphed over these indiscretions. She took it into her head to act in farce ; she chose her parts (a general's lady had a right to choose), and she performed them admirably. Old habits got the better of her ; she assumed the sceptre at repetitions : the love of rule took possession of her feminine heart ; the barony was forgotten ; and, in the hope of reigning as sovereign on our boards, she confessed that, having acted in Paris, nobody was better qualified than herself to direct our operations. Thenceforward all that the general lost on the side of vanity, she won on that of power, and to women that compensation is always sufficient.

The other ladies consoled themselves by a deluge of epigrams, of which the general's lady, covered with the honours of the management, took no notice. With her, as the arbitress of our pleasures, we all made interest for a part, and some even solicited the grant of two. Creating reputations, her words were decrees, fixed as those of Fate.

Her success in farce induced the baroness to aspire to a higher sphere. She resolved to wear the buskin, personated Phedra, Rodane, &c. : but a wide gulf separates the flimflams of Desaugiers from the pompous speeches of Racine. Nevertheless, those who had never seen tragedy performed in Paris admired the baroness in Phedra.

The Magdeburgers, who were not fond of us, were gratified when we invited them to our representations ; I dare say that their city never was so brilliant as at that time. We also gave balls, and, of all possible balls, those in garrison are certainly the finest. The variety of the military costumes produces a charming effect, especially when there are regiments of all arms. Look at a ball in Paris : the ladies vie with one another in the elegance of their dresses ; they display the most beautiful and the most diversified colours ; there is a profusion of gold, silk, blond, gauze : the gentle-

men, on the contrary, habited in black, and nothing but black, all look as if they had just come from a funeral. We ought, at length, to adopt a different costume for such different circumstances ; but, so long as we take the English for our models, we shall not dare to step out of the beaten track.

The French have a singular mania ; they laugh at the English by the day together ; when they bring an Englishman upon their stage, he is almost always a ludicrous character. John Bull is the burlesque hero of innumerable caricatures ; and yet, the moment a fashion is imported from England, our exquisites and our fine ladies never fail to catch it up. What am I talking of ! we imitate them at dinner, ay, even at dinner ! To what purpose have we raised the gastronomic art to the summit of its glory, to what purpose have we set ourselves up for a model to the whole eating world, if, returning to the point from which we started, we copy the repasts of Ajax and Diomed, by devouring an ox roasted whole ! Return, my dear countrymen, I beseech you, to our delicate little French dishes ; relinquish those substantial viands, worthy of the Greek heroes of the olden time, and of the carmen of the present day !

The fashion ! the fashion ! you will cry, and you are perfectly right. The chief point is not to amuse yourselves, but to make people believe that you are amused. You might have a comfortable party by assembling sixty persons in your saloon : you must invite four hundred to have a rout. Every one of them will be nearly stifled : what signifies that, so the fashion is followed ? We have need of orthodox pleasures ; our pleasures must be deemed pleasures by the fashionable world ; were we to amuse ourselves *in petto*, we should not be amused at all. A lover of good cheer said one day to the most celebrated gastronome of our age : “ I have made an excellent dinner.”—“ That is not so certain,” replied the latter, with admirable coolness ; “ tell me what

you have eaten, and I will tell you whether you have had a good dinner."

But to return to our garrison-balls; they were just like those at Paris—plenty of walking, but very little dancing. From system, we collected as much company as possible, so that the inamoratoes—and they abounded in our regiments—were nearer to their fair ones, and the mammas, separated from their daughters by a wall of uniforms, could not see anything. Billets-doux were interchanged; squeezes of the hand, amorous glances, delicious half-words, usurped the place of the dance, and everybody declared that the ball was charming.

With the women it is precisely the same: the ball is but a pretext, an occasion, for seeing the happy man, whom there is no hope of meeting elsewhere. And besides, in a drawing-room a tender interview would be too much noticed; whereas dancing, music, the bustle, the crowd, effect a useful diversion. At the ball, women appear with all their advantages, to say nothing of those of dress; they can walk, leap, come, go, instead of being chained down to their seats, with bodies upright as heads of asparagus, a tiresome and not over and above graceful position. Look a lady in the face; the next moment, you will see her turn her head, that you may have an opportunity of admiring her profile.

Observe that knot of young ladies in a saloon; they are embroidering, reading, chatting, and as seriously as possible. A young gentleman comes in: all at once they begin to whisper; they seem to be saying the funniest things to one another, for they are giggling heartily. And yet they have said nothing; but their countenances have become animated, and this enhances the brightness of a fine pair of eyes. If, when the visitor entered, the shoulders of these young ladies were covered with a shawl, be sure that in five minutes, without the least fear of catching cold, they will have got

rid of everything that could prevent him from admiring the elegance of their shapes. A hundred times have I made this observation, and as often has the shawl slipped down behind the chair.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### BARRACKS.

THE conscript, whom the lot snatches from the paternal home, leaves it weeping; once at barracks, all is forgotten. Fearing the jeers of his comrades, he has soon dried his tears: a trait of ridicule is more terrible to us Frenchmen than the cut of a sword. When the novice is measured, numbered, clothed from head to foot, you would take him at a distance for one of the heroes of Austerlitz. But, on a closer view, you think differently: his manner is stiff; he knows not what to do with his arms; his legs are in his way; and the bumpkin, when he walks, always has a stick in his hand to keep him in countenance.

Meanwhile the instructor arrives: this is some moustached corporal, a famous talker, who, in the intervals of rest between the hours of exercise, never fails to relate to the youngster all the exploits that formerly shed a lustre upon his name. The conscript listens, open-mouthed, and cannot conceive how it happens that the corporal is not yet a colonel. The neglect of so illustrious a soldier serves to discourage himself.

The conscript, on quitting the plough, conceives that at the barracks he shall encounter all the miseries of human life. "You will be half-starved," he has been told a hundred times. He is quite astonished to have wholesome beef, flanked with a sufficient quantity of potatoes, and his every-

day fare is better than that which he had at his father's on Sundays. His bread is good, and whiter than that eaten in three-fourths of the villages of France.

The soldier is a man possessing his income of twelve hundred francs, net and clear, without bankruptcy, without repairs, without imposts, without protested bills. I have calculated the value of his lodging, his food, his clothes, his fuel, his moveables, which he is constantly using, but which he never renews; and from all my figures I have concluded that many *rentiers* do not live so well, and, above all, so free from care as the soldier. If he is ill, his physicians in ordinary, his surgeons in embroidered clothes, take pleasure in attending him for nothing; the apothecary supplies him gratis with ipecacuanha and bark; leeches, brought at a great expense from Hungary, are in readiness to be placed on all the parts directed by the medical officers.

Our sick-nurses must have, over and above their wages, well filled sugar-boxes, which they are incessantly emptying, bottles of all sorts, broths without end, and still they grumble from morning till night. Nothing is given to the keeper of the infirmary; on the contrary, if the soldier knows how to manage, when he becomes convalescent, he will have the best soup, the pullet's wing, and the half-bottle of choice wine.

And then, in addition to all these advantages, consider the beatitudes of the daily *sou* for pocket-money; the sou which is incessantly coming, incessantly going; a fertile, an inexhaustible mine, supplying all sorts of pleasures, from the glass of brandy to the pipe of tobacco. A new wandering Jew, the soldier continually finds the daily sou at the bottom of his pocket. Let the sou wait patiently for its brethren, which never fail at the appointed rendezvous, and next Sunday, after the parade, a juicy pork-chop, and delicious wine, at six sous per pint, will furnish, beyond the barrier, a regale that will be the more relished the less frequently



it occurs. The soldier always lodges in the best building in the town. Go to St. Denis, ask for the finest edifice—it is the barracks.

At Vincennes, the soldiers inhabit the apartments of our kings; at Avignon, they are installed in the palace of the popes. Well clothed, well warmed, well lodged, well fed—what lacks the soldier? Oh! but a mere trifle, as the dog in the fable said to his companion—liberty. That collar which is riveted about the neck of the soldier is not broken till he is released from the service, either by a discharge or by a cannon-ball. All the time that the soldier passes with the regiment is divided into a hundred different portions, scarcely one of which belongs exclusively to himself. If he sleeps, the drum awakes him; if he wakes, the drum obliges him to sleep. The drum makes him march; it stops him, leads him to exercise, to battle, to mass, to the promenade. “I am hungry.”—“You must be mistaken, my friend; the drum has not yet made that rolling which ought alone to shake the fibres of your stomach. The soup cannot be ready till the drum has said so.”—“If I had but a crust of bread!” “Dolt! the drum has not beat the *breloque*.”\*

In the morning, the soldier, broom in hand, sweeps the barracks within and without; and again the drum calls him to his duty. One day, in Laborie’s week, when, of course, he had to superintend the sweepers, he was very angry with a corporal, because a heap of dirt, for the removal of which he had given positive orders the day before, had not been taken away.

“But, lieutenant, we know not where to put it.”

“Throw it outside.”

“The mayor has already complained, and the colonel forbidden that to be done.”

\* The *breloque* is a beat of the drum, to call together the fatigue-parties, charged to receive the allowances of provisions.

“ Well, then, dig a hole and bury it.”

“ And what shall we do with the mould that comes out of it?”

“ Are you stupid, corporal? you must make it large enough to hold both.”

When the sweeping is finished, the manual exercise succeeds; and then the arms and accoutrements must be cleaned, the cartouch-box polished, the clothes brushed, the shoes blacked, the buttons brightened. Make haste, it is the hour for the parade. It is there you must shine. Come along, my hero, distinguish yourself; the least spot on your frock would draw a prohibition to go out upon the corporal of the week and the sergeant of the week, arrest upon the lieutenant of the week, and you would long feel the effects of the punishment which they had undergone for your sake. These gentlemen are civilly responsible for the appearance of their soldiers. “ If they are not smart,” says the colonel, “ it is you that I shall call to account.”

All these orders of the drum, of the corporal, and of the officers, must always be obeyed instantly, without remark, without reply. When the clock-maker has made a clock, it goes without asking why. Soldier, you must be like the clock; march, turn, halt, and above all not a word!

“ But, captain . . . .”

“ To the *salle de police* for two days.”

“ If you would but listen to me . . . .”

“ For four days.”

“ And yet . . . .”

“ For a week.”

“ It is an injustice!”

“ To prison for a fortnight. If you say another word, beware of the black hole and a court-martial.”

Such is the summary justice of the regiment; men get used to it as to everything else. As soon as a young soldier has had a taste of the *salle de police*, it makes a difference,

and he profits for the future by the lesson. I except those depraved, incorrigible fellows, those gaol-birds, who are doomed at last to drag the cannon-ball, or to be shot.

Nothing short of this severity has been necessarily required, in order that one individual might be master of one hundred thousand armed men. Passive obedience from grade to grade is the condition, *sine quâ non* of the existence of an army. The most absurd, the most stupid, order must be obeyed without a word. What could be done, if each were to arrogate to himself the right to give advice? We all imagine that we possess abundance of good sense; in our own minds we often set down our neighbour for an idiot, and he does the same on his part by us. A military chief, who should consult his officers, who should merely listen to their remonstrances, would never be sure of the execution of an order. This would modify it; that would fancy he was saving the army by doing the contrary.

In 1813, we were in the environs of Berlin: we were effecting our retreat, which was not very agreeable, for, in order to see the Russians, we were obliged to make a half-turn. One evening, the general received a letter to this effect. I must first mention that we were quartered in a village, with two battalions and four pieces of cannon, and that we were face to face with the enemy.

“My dear general, send immediately one of your battalions to the village of ————. The officer who commands it must guard himself militarily, and keep up all night patrols which are to communicate with ours. Give him two of your pieces of cannon.”

Assuredly this order was positive enough; never was there anything less ambiguous. Our general gave orders for the departure of the battalion; he read the letter again and again, mused over it, and then exclaimed: “He does not say what I am to do with the other two pieces of cannon.”

“You must keep them, of course.”

“ His letter does not say so.”

“ Neither does it say what you are to do with the other battalion. You must keep the battalion and the cannon too.”

The general was perhaps vexed to see that I was clearly right. He takes me for a fool? said he to himself. Soho, my fine fellow, who fancy yourself a deal cleverer than I am. I'll make you smart for it! “ Mount your horse, sir; go to the general of division, and ask him the meaning of his letter.”

“ But it seems to me that . . .”

“ Let the order I give you be instantly obeyed.”

“ Be assured, general, that it is useless; that I always do my duty with zeal, but that at this moment . . .”

“ Be gone, sir, I command you.”

“ I was obliged to start, to run all night through fields, along horrible roads with which I was not acquainted: the rain poured in torrents, and I assure you that the ride was none of the most agreeable. I had to pass through all the French sentries: twice or thrice I got in the dark to the enemy's advanced posts, and musket-shots drove me back into my road. The French, hearing me coming from the wrong direction, fired upon me too, long before they cried *Qui vive!* which they are too much in the habit of doing. If I escaped with my life that night, it was entirely owing to the terrible weather, which I heartily cursed at the moment of my departure. At length, I arrived at the quarters of the general of division, at Köpnick.

“ Where is the general? waken the general! I must speak to the general.”

“ What is the matter, then? Are we attacked?” asked the officers of the staff.

“ Waken the general. I am ordered to speak to none but himself.”

The brave ——— was enjoying the sweets of his first

sleep. I entered his chamber, with my sabre trailing along the floor.

“ Ah! you there! Is there fighting in your quarter? Do you come for reinforcement?”

“ I am come to inquire the meaning of your order.”

“ What order?”

“ Our general wishes to know what he is to do with the two pieces of cannon that he has left.”

“ Are you making game of me?”

“ Most certainly I should not take such a liberty. I hope, general, that you think me incapable of doing so.”

“ Then you must be silly.”

“ Permit me, general, to remark that I am not acting on my own account; that I am merely the bearer of a message from another. This other asks, by my voice, what he is to do with the two pieces of cannon.”

“ Are we acting a play? or is it a wager that you are striving to win?”

“ Believe me, general, if I were acting the play, I would not take the liberty to make you an interlocutor without your permission; and, if I had laid a wager, I should not have dared to waken you in the middle of the night to decide the losing or the winning of it. Once more I repeat my question: What are we to do with the two pieces of cannon that we have left?”

“ Go to the devil with them!”

“ So much for myself; but the general?”

“ Well, both of you, together or separately; I care not how: let me alone; I want to sleep.”

My embassy finished, I mounted my horse again, and got back by eight in the morning, at the very moment when the battalion and the two fatal pieces of cannon were on the point of starting. The general was at the head of his troops. I arrived, bowed to him, and waited to be questioned.

“ Have you seen the general of division?”



“ Yes.”

“ What says he ?”

“ Something which I dare not repeat.”

“ I insist on knowing !”

“ Military subordination forbids me to reply.”

“ Military subordination, sir, orders you to obey me !  
What said the general to you ?”

“ He desired me to tell you to go to the devil.”

“ Sir !”

“ General, twenty witnesses heard him, and here are hundreds more to declare that you have ordered me to speak.”

This passive subordination, this necessary obedience, is sometimes most injurious ; but things would be much worse if it did not exist. In the campaign of 1814, when so many excellent veteran troops had been left by the emperor in the fortresses on the Elbe and the Oder, as far as Dantzick, if a general had dared to quit the place committed to his keeping, and then marched to the other towns, collecting the garrisons as he proceeded, what an immense diversion might he not have operated !

The thing was not so difficult as one might imagine. The idea occurred to all the generals, but all of them shrunk from the moral responsibility which they would have incurred. Marshal Davoust might have left Hamburg with twenty thousand men, and marched to Magdeburg, where General Lemarrois would have joined him with twelve thousand, proceeding together to the garrisons on the Elbe and the Oder, those two officers would have picked up, every two or three days, fresh reinforcements. No doubt they would have met with obstacles by the way, but they would have defied them. They were afraid of only one thing—not obeying punctually the orders which they had received.

The greatest efforts of the allies were directed against Napoleon ; all their best troops were in France. The soldiers

of the new levies blockaded the fortresses ; the landwehr and the landsturm were there doing their first duty ; they must have opened their ranks, whether they would or not, to allow our troops a free passage. Conceive the effect which these tidings would have produced in France after the battle of Brienne, or that of Montmirail. Figure to yourself the French army entering Berlin on the same day that the allies entered Paris.

In a discussion between a superior and an inferior, the latter can never be more in the wrong than when he is right.

In the army I have known very clever officers, who practised absolute self-denial, gave way to all sorts of caprices, made themselves the counsellors of high personages, and never let it be supposed that they had suggested good advice. This is the quintessence of the courtier's art : everybody could not attain that point.

Many generals wished to play the part of princes. The uniform of the aides-de-camp was a blue frock, with sky-blue collar and trimmings. Almost all the servants of the generals were dressed in the same manner, only without the epaulette. Thus there was a regular establishment of servants of all grades : captain, lieutenant, valet, groom, &c. These aristocratic manners had succeeded the republican austerity without any gradual transition. I have known aides-de-camp who submitted with admirable grace to all these hierarchical servitudes ; they had precedence of the valet, and that was enough for them. On the other hand, I have known generals who carried reserve to the utmost scrupulousness. Never would they have required of officers under their command a service that was not within the sphere of their military duties.

I arrived one day, with General P——, at an uninhabited house ; a heavy rain was falling, and we were wet through. We lighted a fire and warmed ourselves.

“ Sit down there,” said the general to me.

“What for?”

“I will pull your boots off.”

“You are joking.”

“Not at all; give me hold of your foot.”

“Indeed, general, I could not allow you.”

“Your boots are soaked—your feet are wet; you will catch cold.”

“But I will pull them off myself.”

“I insist on pulling them off for you.”

Whether I would or not, the general pulled off my boots. My astonishment was extreme. When he had finished: “One good turn,” said he, “deserves another; now pull off my boots.”

“With pleasure.”

“In order to acquire the right to ask this service of you, how could I do otherwise?”

Barracks ought to be placed in an elevated situation, that they may not be damp, and that the air may circulate around such a mass of men collected together. There are very fine barracks in Paris, at Courbevoie, at St. Denis, and at Rueil. Some of them have been built expressly for the purpose; others are old convents, where the virgin spouses of the Lord sang the praises of God. If walls have ears, they must find some difference between these songs and those now sung there. The barracks at Avignon, some of the finest in France, were formerly inhabited by the popes. Part of their palace has been transformed into lodgings for soldiers. Never did masons pile stones upon stones with less taste. This palace, to which all the sovereign pontiffs of Avignon contributed without ever finishing it, exhibits a truly singular aspect: towers of prodigious height, immense halls, several churches, enclosed within walls eighteen feet thick—all erected without definite aim or plan. At the time of the wars in Italy, between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, the popes took refuge in Avignon, and for the

seventy years that they resided there, each persisted in adding fresh stones to the stones piled up by his predecessors.

It must not be imagined that the soldier in barracks leads an idle life. His duties employ him in such a manner, that his only recreation consists in change of labour. Fatigue parties for the general cleansing of the building and the courts, the cleaning of arms and of clothes, the exercise, mounting guard, all succeed one another periodically, so that the soldier is never long without something to do.

In barracks the soldier reads a good deal in leisure moments. You are sure to see a circulating library near the spot where a regiment is quartered. Go in, you will easily discover the favourite books by the thick coat of dirt on the back. I was one day with the mistress of the shop, when a young conscript entered, switch in hand.

“Have you Robert, the Chief of Banditti?”

“No, sir, it is out.”

“Have you Rinaldo Rinaldini?”

“No, sir; your comrades are reading it.”

“Have you . . . but I forget the titles; look me out some other book about robbers.”

Five or six, sometimes the whole squad, join to pay for such a set of books, and one of them reads aloud to the rest. It is amusing to see all those worthy troopers, listening, open-mouthed, to the wonderful stories of Cartouche, Mandrin, or La Ramée. Not that the soldiers feel a sort of sympathy for robbers; but the adventurous life of the latter bears some resemblance to the episodes and the dangers of the career of glory. They would rather read the history of robbers than of heroes; the latter they know by heart; they learned the story of all our campaigns, of all our battles, without loosing their purse-strings. In every mess you find a veteran who has seen everything, and who never misses an opportunity of relating his exploits. In each company there is a man of this kind, whose moral influence over his comrades is very

powerful. It is he who criticizes all the operations of the captain. "In my old regiment," he says, "they never did this or that." His old regiment is his stalking-horse; it is the pattern which all ought to follow. When he is removed to another corps, that which he has just left will become the model in its turn, for he cannot set up two, and the last will always be the best.

In the barracks there is always a pavilion for lodging a certain number of officers: so large a flock must have some shepherds. In barracks you find dealers in wine, brandy, tobacco, sometimes billiard-tables, and restaurateurs. The suttler, after carrying the barrel, slung across her shoulder, along the high roads, rests herself in a corner of the ground-floor, pompously called the restaurant. Farther on is the coffee-house; you must not look there for the luxury of gilding, mirrors, and lustres of crystal. What signifies that! it offers to the sub-lieutenants a great advantage, which makes sufficient compensation; they get credit there till the end of the month, and, for some pockets, that is a great accommodation; at least, I have often found it so.

I have known suttlers, who, from one humble pot, have so increased their means as to have forty regular customers, whom they supplied with an excellent dinner. They began with dining four, then five, then ten, and their reputation spreading in the direct ratio of the excellence of their viands, they had, by and by, to provide for all the officers of a regiment.

The dinner-hour is often a very agreeable one. It is at table that you hear the news of the regiment and of the army; there, too, you sometimes settle the destinies of Europe. Each grade has its separate table; otherwise, the familiarity which naturally insinuates itself among persons who eat together would be very prejudicial to subordination. Each of the guests have an account current in the great book of the restaurateur. He is debited with all the extras



with which he indulges himself in the course of the month ; the bill is frequently a very long one, the accessories exceeding the principal item.

And then, at the dessert, the company chat ; and, when their military duties permit, continue a long time at table. These conversations have furnished me with some of the stories that I have related to you.

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## CHAPTER X.

### REVIEWS.

A REVIEW is sometimes an entertaining sight to the spectators, seated or standing in the pit ; but to the actors it is a very different sort of thing. The former may retire whenever they please ; the latter must stay till the conclusion of the piece.

When the Emperor gave orders for a review at noon, the generals inspected the troops at eleven o'clock ; the colonels had their regiments under arms at ten ; *chefs de bataillon*, anxious previously to ascertain if all was right, began at nine ; and so on in a decreasing proportion to the corporal, who had his squad afoot at five in the morning. This frequent getting under arms fatigues the soldier more than a day of battle. He knows that the battle is necessary, and goes to it cheerfully ; as for the other, he sees that it might very well be dispensed with.

When the troops are on the ground, how many marches and counter-marches before each corps is definitively in its place ! how many alignements taken and retaken before the Emperor arrives ! At length the drums give the signal along the whole line : there he is ! His small hat and green horse-chasseur's frock distinguish him amid the crowd of princes and generals, with embroidery on every seam.

People, now-a-days, talk of nothing but the love of the soldiers for Napoleon, of the acclamations, a thousand times repeated, that hailed him as he passed: it is perhaps wrong in me to contradict a thing affirmed by so many illustrious persons, but I must say, and I do say, that these acclamations were very rare. There was plenty of fighting at the grand army, but little shouting, though a great deal of grumbling.

We were in camp, under the walls of Tilsit; there was talk of peace, of an interview between the two emperors, and we walked to the banks of the Niemen, to see what was passing. When we arrived, the conference was over: the two boats, with the sovereigns on board, were proceeding towards the opposite sides of the river. The Emperor Alexander landed first; he was greeted by a general huzza from his troops. Napoleon appeared on our bank; Talleyrand gave him his arm to assist him to land. Not a cry was heard among the soldiers. Some of the officers, however, set the example. We all said to our neighbours, Napoleon ought not to be less cordially received by us than Alexander had been by the Russians; and we heard, here and there, some shouts of *Vive l'empereur!*

"His majesty is coming;" said our colonel at the moment of a review. "I hope he will not be received as he was last time, and that the soldiers will cry *Vive l'empereur!* Look to it, gentlemen; I shall hold you responsible if every man does not shout lustily." We returned to our companies, paraphrasing the colonel's harangue, and the following were among the murmurs that we heard in the ranks:

"Let him give me my discharge, and I'll shout as loud as they please."—"We have no bread; I can't shout upon an empty stomach."—"I was to return in six months, and here have I been twenty years in the army; let them send me home, and I'll shout."—"We are owed six months' pay; why don't we get it?"—"What a simpleton you must be!

why, I'll tell you: all those that get killed in the meantime are paid."

The emperor arrived: the colonel and some of the officers shouted as though they would split their throats; the rest were silent. I never saw the soldiers heartily cry *Vive l'empereur!* but in 1814 and 1815, when they were told to shout *Vive le roi!* I must say that then they shouted till they were hoarse: why?—the soldier is essentially a grumbler, either because he wishes from time to time to make himself some amends for his sheepish obedience, or because he is secretly envious of those who command him, as a servant is of his master, and a scholar of his instructor.

In 1815, a regiment was passing through a town in the South. The soldiers exhorted one another to shout *Vive l'empereur!* all together, and with all their might; the din was such as almost to split the drum of the ear, to break all the windows. After each round, they chuckled to themselves, saying: "Well done! that nettles the townspeople."

How often has it been asserted in print that the soldiers fought for the emperor! This is another of those current phrases, which many people have taken up and repeated without knowing why. The soldiers fought for themselves, to defend themselves; because, in France, a man never hesitates when he sees danger on one side and infamy on the other. They fought, because it was impossible to do otherwise; because it was necessary to fight; because, when they joined the army, they found the fashion of fighting established, and everything tending to keep up that good old practice. They fought under the old monarchy, with Turenne, Villars, and Marshal Saxe; under the republic, with Hoche, Moreau, Kleber, and many others; they will always fight when the country shall call upon them. Show them the Prussians, the Russians, or the Austrians, and whether they are commanded by Napoleon, Charles X., or Louis Philippe, you may be sure that French soldiers will do their duty.

I am aware, at the same time, that the presence of the emperor produced a powerful effect on the army. Every one had the most implicit confidence in him ; every one knew, from experience, that his plans led to victory, and therefore, when he did arrive, our moral force was doubled. But this endless succession of actions and battles wearied many of the old soldiers, of the old officers, of the old generals : they scrupled not to say so ; but not one failed, on this account, to do his duty when occasion presented itself.

During the empire, the soldiers wished for nothing so much as discharge, peace, return to France ; as, at the present day, they are anxious for war, campaigns, bivouacs, and battles. They have returned to France ; they have had peace and their discharge ; what was the consequence ? They regretted former times. Why ? because the heart of man is constantly pushing forward to a future, which, when it has become the present, displeases, since it is no longer encompassed with clouds. How happy, said they, if we had peace ! Now they cry : How happy, if we had war ! Besides, I repeat it, the soldiers are grumblers ; several of them, while enjoying the repose of civil life, were not sorry to appear to regret the tumult of the camp ; each well knew that all these murmurs would not prevent things from pursuing their course, and he gave himself somewhat of the air of a hero in the neighbourhood. Meanwhile the lithographers line the Boulevards of Paris with portraits of old soldiers, with bushy moustaches, shedding tears on reading the word *congé* (discharge) on a placard. The innumerable cockneys of the capital deplored, in elegiac prose, the lot of our brave warriors, who were dismissed without pity, as if in France there were not at all times vacant places of private soldiers at the disposal of amateurs.

I was talking one day on this subject with a publisher of lithographic prints, and was beginning to prove what I am here advancing. " You preach to one who is already con-

verted," said he at the first word : " I am well aware that all this is not true, but such things sell. In trade, ' such things sell ' is an unanswerable argument. I lately published a lithographic print, representing ten of our grenadiers obliging two English battalions to lay down their arms. The names, the time, the place of action, are all of my invention. What signifies that ! the thing was thought superb, and every day I sell hundreds of impressions. Go to a theatre, take notice of the couplets that are most applauded ; they are those in which *Français* rhymes with *succès*, *gloire* with *victoire*, *guerriers* with *lauriers*. Observe the shopmen, exciting one another to applaud with a sort of frenzy ; and yet, if you were to make inquiry, how many would you not find among these heroes of the pit, who had hid themselves in 1814 to avoid joining the army, and whom the Restoration relieved from the penalties incurred by refractory conscripts ! "

The French have performed prodigies of valour, and, to use an expression of Napoleon's, they have made litter of glory ; but it would not be amiss to let others say so ; we ought not every day to give ourselves bloody noses by swinging the censer against them.

Napoleon was, without doubt, a consummate general ; his campaigns in Italy border on the marvellous, for he had not then at his disposal the immense resources which he subsequently possessed. The battles of the empire made more noise, but they will never efface the glory of those which preceded them. Victory was the result in both cases, you may say. True, but merit is usually measured by the difficulty surmounted ; and the glory of Bonaparte will never be eclipsed by that of Napoleon ; for the means of the emperor were more vast than ever general had at his disposal. When a ruler drains a country like France of her last man and her last crown, when he renders an account to no one, it is not surprising that, with a well-organized head, he should ac-



compish great things ; the contrary would be much more astonishing. Suppose Napoleon, with a representative government, such as we have at present ; he would probably have been very quickly arrested in his victorious career. Now, eighty thousand conscripts are raised annually ; but the statements for each department are published in the newspapers, and the total corresponds exactly with the number fixed by the law. During the empire, when one hundred thousand men were ostensibly demanded, three hundred thousand were actually raised ; and among all the prefects this furnished a perpetual subject of emulation for attaining a seat in the council of state.

Now, what would Napoleon have done with a paltry conscription of one hundred thousand men ? We will suppose that this number left France ; eighty thousand at most would join the armies ; half of these would, as usual, be in the hospitals in a week ; forty thousand only could be brought into line, and forty thousand men would have been a mere trifle at a time when human life was so prodigally expended. They would scarcely have sufficed to defray the demands of a single battle : more than one might be mentioned which cost still dearer.

Suppose there had existed in Napoleon's time two free Chambers, and all the operations of the government checked, one by one, by a conscientious opposition. Suppose the ministers obliged to be perpetually thinking how to retain a majority in the Chambers, consequently devoting but half their time to the administration ; suppose an innumerable multitude of newspapers acquainting the enemy with the indiscretions of the bureaux, the position of the troops, their marches, their *matériel*, the number of their cannon, of their baggage-waggons, of their men, of their drums ; I doubt very much whether Napoleon would have been exalted by victory to the height that he was. But then the thirst of conquest would have been naturally allayed by the force of

circumstances ; and he, as well as we, in short, the whole world, would have been all the better for it. The liberty of the press is certainly an excellent thing ; but more patriotism ought to prevail in the use that is daily made of it ; we ought not to tell our neighbours what it is so important to them to know. The enemy formerly kept spies among us ; he now obtains his intelligence at a much cheaper rate—he subscribes to our journals.

But I perceive that I am getting into politics, and I assure you that this was not my intention. Still, as I have begun to make suppositions, I will communicate to you an idea which frequently ambles through my head. At the time of the consulate, Louis XVIII. wrote to General Bonaparte to persuade him to give up the throne to him. "Choose," said he, "such places as you think fit for yourself and your friends." I frequently amuse myself with calculating what had been the consequence, had Napoleon complied with this proposal. Suppose Monsieur le Marquis de Bonaparte captain of the *gardes-du-corps*. Would the officers of the other companies have deigned to admit him ?—they would not dine with Molière. When a gentleman had committed a fault, he would have been placed in Bonaparte's company.

What taunts would have been levelled at the vulgarity, the awkwardness, of the upstart, of the soldier of fortune ! The lowest clown, nay, the lowest valet of the *grand seigneur*, would have deemed himself placed much higher in the court hierarchy : for be assured that the valet of a nobleman thinks himself far above an untitled person ; the more cringing he is to an embroidered coat, the more insolent he behaves to a commoner dressed in black.

I picture my Bonaparte galloping by the side of the King's carriage from the Tuileries to Versailles, from St. Cloud to Rambouillet ; I see him annoyed by the jeers of the right noble courtiers ; I figure to myself the latter blasted

by a flash of his eye, turning on their red heels, and saying : "What an ill-bred fellow!" Would he have had the red ribbon? I doubt it. I laugh when I think of the catastrophe that would necessarily have terminated the fifth act of this comedy. One fine day, our fresh-dubbed marquis would have marched up a few companies of his old Egyptians, and then—room there! every one take care of himself!—the whole system would have vanished like a dream. It is really a pity that we did not see this—we who have seen so many extraordinary things.

At every review the Emperor appointed to vacant places, and conferred crosses of the Legion of Honour, baronies, counties, *majorats*. It was an especial luck for a regiment to be received by the Emperor. But this practice was egregiously unjust. I could mention regiments which saw the Emperor four or five times in the course of a campaign; their officers were promoted every month; whereas, other regiments, detached to the distance of a couple of leagues, received no token whatever of the imperial munificence.

Napoleon sometimes took it into his head to question the officers, and when they answered without hesitation he appeared highly pleased. After the battle of Ratisbon, he stopped before an officer of my regiment.

"How many men present under arms?"

"Sire, eighty-four."

"How many conscripts of this year?"

"Twenty-two."

"How many soldiers who have served four years?"

"Sixty-five."

"How many wounded yesterday?"

"Eighteen."

"And killed?"

"Ten."

"With the bayonet?"

"Yes, sire."

“ Good.”

In order to be regularly killed, it was necessary to be killed with the bayonet : a coward may fall at a distance, struck by a bullet or a cannon-ball ; whereas he who dies by the thrust of a bayonet must of course be a brave man. The Emperor showed especial tenderness for those who perished in this manner. He would continue his questions a long time on all sorts of petty details, and scarcely listen to the answers, the figures in which were often far from agreeing with previous statements : the main point was to give them off-hand, and without hesitation.

The Emperor Paul, of Russia, whom I am far from comparing with Napoleon, when he held a review, was accustomed to put to his officers the strangest and most absurd questions, which it was impossible for them to answer seriously. Several officers of one regiment, puzzled by these questions, had been put to a nonplus ; and from that time the Emperor always said that those gentlemen belonged to his *know-nothing* regiment.

One day, riding on horseback over one of the bridges in St. Petersburg, Paul I. was met by an officer, who stopped and saluted him with due respect. The Emperor recognized the uniform. “ This man belongs to my *know-nothing* regiment,” said he to his courtiers.

“ Ah, sire !” replied the officer, “ but I know everything.”

“ Soho ! you know everything, do you ? we shall see. How many nails did it take to fasten the planks of this bridge ?”

“ Fifty-three million, nine hundred and seventy-nine thousand, one hundred and twelve.”

“ Not amiss ! And how many fish are there in the Neva from this bridge to Cronstadt ?”

“ Six hundred and forty-two billion, eight hundred and one million, four hundred and thirty-two thousand, three hundred and seventy-nine.”

“Are you quite sure of that?”

“Quite sure, or I should not tell your majesty so.”

“Well, so I thought. I like to have answers to questions; an officer ought to know everything.”

“Certainly; and the Emperor?”

“He is never at a loss.”

“Will your Majesty deign to allow me one question?”

“Speak.”

“What is my name?”

“Count de Balowski.”

“My rank?”

“Captain in my guards.”

“Many thanks to your Majesty.”

I had this anecdote from a French emigrant, an eye-witness of the circumstance, and acquainted with the sub-lieutenant Krasanow, who thus became, through sheer effrontery and the caprice of the sovereign, count and captain in the Russian imperial guard.

The Emperor Napoleon was often known to take off his cross of the Legion of Honour, and place it with his own hands on the bosom of a brave man. Louis XIV. would first have inquired if this brave man was noble. Napoleon asked if the noble was brave. A sergeant, who had performed prodigies of valour in a battle, was brought before Louis XIV. “I grant you a pension of twelve hundred livres,” said the King.—“Sire, I should prefer the cross of St. Louis.”—“I dare say you would, but you shall not have it.” Napoleon would have hugged this sergeant; Louis XIV. turned his back on him: what a difference between the two periods!

In 1815, a high and mighty noble belonging to the court was nominated grand-cordon of the Legion of Honour. He considered this as an insult. Twenty conventicles were held in the noble faubourg, to decide whether he should refuse it. The party durst not affront Louis XVIII., but a middle



course was steered. It was resolved that Bonaparte's ribbon should be worn on high days only, when etiquette absolutely required it. This decision was entirely in the spirit of Louis XIV.

Napoleon had a superb head, and eyes which flashed lightning; his attitude was noble and severe. One day, however, I saw the great man in the convulsions of inextinguishable laughter, for an emperor can laugh like any other man. Sovereigns, indeed, would be greatly to be pitied, if at times they had not those occasions for laughter which do one so much good.

The fact was this. We were at Courbevoie. The Emperor was reviewing a regiment of the young guard, which had recently been reinforced by numerous conscripts. His Majesty questioned one of these young men. "And you, where do you come from?" said Napoleon to the left-hand neighbour of a friend of mine, then sub-lieutenant, now receiver-general. "Sire," replied the conscript, "I come from Pezenas, and my father had the honour to shave your Eminence, when you passed through our place."

At these words the Emperor became man, decorum was forgotten, and I do not think that Napoleon ever laughed so heartily, even while at the school of Brienne. Laughter is contagious; the review terminated merrily; the expression flew from rank to rank; from right to left, every one was bursting; and the native of Pezenas was proud of having been the maker of so much mirth.

All sovereigns are fond of reviews. Frederick II. of Prussia sent tickets of invitation, and each had his precise place, good or bad, allotted to him by the King. Napoleon made less ceremony: all who chose came, and found places where they could. Certainly one of the finest reviews ever held in this world was that which the Emperor got up at Tilsit; where Alexander and Frederick-William figured by the side of Napoleon.

The Queen of Prussia was present at this review. Some years afterwards Canova chiselled her statue lying upon her tomb at Charlottenburg. I saw the lovely Queen Louisa at two different periods; the first time on horseback, radiant with health and youth; the second, extended on a superb sarcophagus, with marble drapery, marble hair; she was still very beautiful. If the living prove their affection for the dead by a magnificent tomb, certainly the King of Prussia has done for his consort all that it was possible to do. You cannot imagine an edifice in a purer style; it is a masterpiece of its kind.

That of the great Frederick at Potsdam is more simple, nay, it may be said, quite plain. In fact, the name of Frederick II., inscribed upon a tomb, says all that needs be known. What signifies it whether this inscription be engraven on marble or on gold? The name of Napoleon on a stone in St. Helena will outlast the pyramids of Egypt, which enclose unknown corses.

But here I have led you, before I was aware of it, from the plains of Tilsit to the vaults of Potsdam. Since we are there, and we have time, I will relate to you the history of the man who showed me the latter. He had formerly been an hussar; he assured me that he had lived familiarly with Frederick; if he spoke of that great man with admiration, I replied with enthusiasm, for the purpose of drawing out my cicerone, who was not backward to gratify my curiosity.

My hussar had fought in the field of Rosbach, and that name was incessantly occurring in his narrative: whenever he uttered it, an arch smile moved his old white moustaches, and a sidelong glance which he gave me betrayed gratified vanity. This name of Rosbach was his general date, his point of departure. Such a circumstance happened a year before Rosbach, two years after Rosbach: you would have thought, that this word, repeated so often before the tomb of Frederick, must have compensated his manes for the pre-

sence of a soldier of Napoleon's. While chatting, I happened to say that Rosbach was not very far from Jena, but I was sorry for it, for my poor hussar was quite disconcerted by the remark.

"You see this tomb," said he: "every day I mourn him who lies in it. Well, sir, if this great king were yet living, I should be still in prison—and would to God he were alive!—I should wish it even at the price of my liberty, of my life."

"And why should you be in prison?"

"Because I was shut up in the fortress of Spandau four years by his orders. I was not released till the accession of his nephew in 1786. Ah! would to God that I were yet between four walls, and could see through the bars of my window my good Fritz on his white charger, giving chase in the distance to your . . . . Napoleon!"

He made a pause before he pronounced that name: he was on the point of prefixing to it some abusive epithet; the first syllable of the word *verfluchten* (cursed) even escaped him, but he stopped short.

"What had you done," said I, "to cause the King to confine you in Spandau?"

"I will tell you. Frederick had for his particular service an hussar, who lived in a small room situated under his closet. It was his duty to carry the King's letters at any minute of the night or day: a bell placed near the King's bed summoned him to receive orders. This hussar was selected from among the old soldiers, who were incapable of farther military service, and an excellent place he had. The King gave him nothing: he preferred making those to whom he wrote pay the portorage of his letter.\* Each of

\* All letters and petitions addressed to Frederick, to his ministers, and to persons in office, were required to be sent by post, and the postage paid: this produced at least one hundred thousand dollars per annum—a hint to ministers, present and future.

them was worth eight good groschen" (about a shilling) "to the hussar: that was the rate, and he durst not take more. Either from distrust, or some other reason, Frederick had made it a first consideration that this hussar should not be able to read.

"I had been severely wounded in the last campaign in Silesia; this was fifteen years after the battle of Rosbach, where, you know, we gave the French such a drubbing. The King knew me: he knew the name of every soldier in his army. At one of his reviews, when he was distributing rewards, he perceived me: my colonel spoke for me, and I was appointed his messenger. The King first asked me if I could read. Aware of the condition, yet wishing for the place, I answered No. You will hear what was the consequence of this untruth.

"While I was in the King's service, I saved a great deal of money; sometimes I had to deliver a hundred letters a day; for you must know that Frederick himself invited the people of distinction to his reviews, and assigned to each the place he was to occupy. I received so many eight good groschen pieces, that I grew rich; I had thoughts of obtaining my discharge and marrying. My duty began to seem irksome to me: when I was not trotting about the town, I was required to be in attendance, listening for the bell; and when a man knows that he has scraped together enough to keep him, he only wishes for opportunity to enjoy it. I had, therefore, a sweetheart; and we were waiting for a favourable occasion to ask the King's permission to marry—for old Fritz was not to be spoken to at all times.

"One day, when the King was to have gone out, I had agreed to meet my mistress: he was taken suddenly ill, and issued counter-orders. I sat down to write to my intended, and to apprise her of the circumstance. I had just begun my letter, when something or other called me away from my room. The King rang his bell; no hussar: he rang again,

still no hussar. Upon this, old Fritz, in his morning-gown, sallies from his closet, comes down stairs all alone with the assistance of his crutch-stick, enters my room, finds my letter begun, and reads it. What I had written was this: such things one never forgets: ‘My dear friend, I cannot call to see you this evening, because the old bear is ill . . .’

“Frederick went back to his cabinet. Presently afterwards he rang, and I attended the summons.

“‘Hark ye,’ said he, ‘I want a discreet person, who may be entirely relied on; can I depend on you?’

“‘Yes, sire, what are your commands?’

“‘I want somebody to write a letter of the utmost importance, and wish that party to whom it will be addressed not to know from whom it comes. Everybody is acquainted with the handwriting of my secretaries; nobody knows yours; sit down, I will dictate to you.’

“‘Your majesty forgets that I cannot write.’

“‘Ah, yes; so you said to get your place—one of those white lies, which benefit the one, without injuring the other.’

“‘Sire . . . . I assure you . . . .’

“‘That you told a lie, then, and are telling one now.’

“‘Indeed . . . .’

“‘Not another word! here, take this pen, and write.’

“‘Since your majesty insists upon it.’

“‘*My dear friend.*’

“‘*My dear friend,*’ said I, when I had written it. A shudder began to come over me.

“‘*I cannot call to see you this evening.*’

“At these words I turned pale, I trembled; I had not a drop of blood in my veins. The king repeated: ‘*I cannot call to see you this evening.* Have you done?’

“‘Yes, sire.’

“‘*Because the old bear is ill*’—and the king laid particular emphasis on ‘*the old bear.*’



“‘Forgive me, sire, forgive me!’ said I, throwing myself at his feet.

“‘Go on,’ said he, ordering me to return to my seat; ‘because the old bear is ill, and I am at Spandau.’

“I was obliged to write, sign, seal, and address the letter, and was immediately taken to my prison. There I should be still if the king had not died, for he was not very forgiving. I had deserved my punishment, and I did not complain. After four years’ confinement, it was a grievous stroke to me to learn that I was going to recover my liberty because Frederick was no more. I loved him with all my soul, though I had taken the liberty to call him *the old bear*; it was a name that my sweetheart and I gave him between ourselves, though I would gladly have sacrificed my own life to lengthen his. Now that I am old, I show strangers the tomb in which that great king lies. I never enter these vaults without shedding tears; and the only ambition that I feel, an ambition that cannot be gratified, is to have a place here when I am dead.”

Thus spoke my hussar of Rosbach. On leaving him, I slipped into his hand an eight good groschen piece. It called up recollections which moistened his eyes; and in the evening, on returning to Berlin, the first thing I did was to commit this anecdote to my tablets, from which I have here transcribed it.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### MILITARY EXECUTIONS.

THE military laws are extremely severe: they must be so, otherwise how could a general enforce obedience from one hundred thousand men, each of whom individually is as strong as himself? A mere misdemeanour, which, in civil

life, is punished with a few days' imprisonment, entails the penalty of death on the soldier. The least violence to a superior, the most trifling thing stolen from an enemy, costs the life of a man. The latter offence was punished only by flogging and starts: for a fortnight or three weeks, the soldiers were allowed to rob as they pleased, because there were no provisions to distribute. If a few waggon-loads of bread or biscuit arrived, an order of the day immediately forbade every kind of pillage, and the first wretched wight taken in the fact suffered for all. I have seen many of these petty robbers shot for stealing a shirt or a pair of boots from a peasant; but never was a robber on a large financial scale visited with the slightest punishment. Sometimes the emperor made them disgorge, but they were never shot.

Military executions were only for the small fry. The laws are like spiders' webs; the fly is caught, the humble-bee breaks through them. The day before the battle of Wagram, twelve clerks of the victualling department were taken in the fact selling the rations of the imperial guard; they were shot a few hours afterwards.

These worthy clerks of the victualling department were really the prebendaries of the army. While the military portion of it fought and bivouacked in the mud, these gentry strutted about in the nearest villages, paying court to the ladies, at the same time that they stowed away in the magazines the flour furnished by the requisitions. They had in general more money than they knew what to do with. They could not send it to France by post, but in small quantity. If the sum had been too large, it would have attracted notice, and given rise to conjectures. The minister-at-war, on calculating that with a salary of one hundred louis it was not possible to save ten thousand francs per annum, would have dismissed the thief. They durst not leave the hoard at their quarters, for doors may be opened or forced. To keep it constantly about their persons was inconvenient, trouble-

some. Poor fellows! all of them took this latter course. I have seen some who carried an enormous weight around their waists, and whose garments were a cuirass of gold, placed between the cloth and the lining.

Differing in this respect from the usurers of Paris, who make young men accept bills for twice the amount that they give them, these *employés* offered a premium of 30 or 40 per cent. for the bills of officers who had wealthy relatives. Officers of my acquaintance have received 1500 francs in gold for a bill of exchange for 1000, payable in six months in France. The main point for these people was to secure their money: such a premium was to them of no real consequence: in three days they had made up for it.

He was certainly no fool who first conceived the idea of placing glory in the profession of arms: without this vehicle not a creature would follow it; nay, it is astonishing that any one will at that price. Suppose a man, organized as we are, were to come from the moon, and to be told: "Yonder are one hundred thousand men, who are going to fight at the command of an individual for interests which they know nothing about, and which not one of them cares about. Some go by force, others voluntarily; but all take a pride in running into the greatest possible dangers. They will get themselves killed, perhaps mutilated, crippled, which is frequently worse than death. They will endure all privations, all fatigues, all the inclemency of the weather. If any of these men disobeys his commander, he will be put to death; nay, more, his comrades will be his executioners. While these hundred thousand men are out of their country, striving to pick a quarrel with their neighbours, those who are left at home have to work to support them, to clothe them, and above all to supply the enormous waste for which war always furnishes a pretext. The hundred thousand men will come back wounded, racked with pains, in rags; and, by way of reward, they will be permitted to admire the statue of their general erected in some public place."

What would the man from the moon say to this? why, he would laugh outright in your face, and declare that it was impossible. A whole population would reply: "And yet it is nothing but the truth." Compelled to believe, he would then imagine that this general must possess such prodigious bodily strength as to fill all with terror. But what would he say on beholding a man bedizened with ribbons, who would not be a match at fisticuffs for the lowest drum-boy? He would say, I verily believe he would say, that the inhabitants of the earth are fools, and that their sovereigns are arrant knaves.

On seeing so many brave fellows knocking one another on the head, I could not help saying sometimes to myself: After all, this contempt of life under certain circumstances is a most singular thing in man. How happens it that those fellows who yesterday grumbled, cursed, swore, while executing a very simple order, the consequences of which were at most to make them go a league or two farther than there was occasion for—how happens it that they do not grumble to-day, when their lives are to be staked at odd or even? Because dishonour has been placed very far from grumbling, and very near to cowardice. Who then first took it into his head to mark these limits? He who had the strongest arm and the hardest fist: he beat the others; he insisted on their honouring him. "It is very agreeable to be honoured," said these others; "we have been beaten; let us beat our neighbours, and force them in their turn to pay us respect."

In some Arabian tale or other, we are told that a prince possessed an enchanted ring, which rendered the wearer invisible when it was turned. What would be the consequence, thought I, if, on a day of battle, each of us, Frenchman, Prussian, or Russian, had such a ring on his finger? I verily believe that at the first cannon-shot every one of us would turn his ring. I am there because you are there, and because you know that I am and ought to be there; but

devil take me if I would stay there if you knew nothing about it!

When there is fighting in the night, people are not so particular; in the first place, because they see nothing themselves, and in the next, because they are not seen. Do you suppose that the brave Bianchelli, who led the assault of Tarragona, would have displayed such intrepidity if he had not been certain to attract the notice of a whole army?

A regiment is on march: the men are chatting, laughing aloud, singing jovial songs, keeping up a rolling fire of jokes and gibes. An aide-de-camp comes up: he speaks to the colonel, who gives orders to halt, and to load arms. Presently they resume their march; the jokes have ceased; not a word is spoken: each makes his reflections *in petto* on what is about to happen: there, man is alone with himself. The enemy makes his appearance; every one cries, Forward! every one is for dashing on at a run: there is man in contact with man. Are you for doing this? so will I—are you for running? well, I will get before you; but if you stop and seat yourself, I should like nothing better than to lie down.

I observed just now that it is only flies that are caught in cobwebs. At the time of the retreat from Portugal, General D——— ordered a poor fellow to be shot for eating a bunch of grapes. “How horrible!” some will cry. “It is impossible!” exclaim others. It is most true, I reply; nay more, it was just. The dysentery was raging in the army; the soldiers were dying by dozens. The men were forbidden to eat grapes, that fruit being solely the cause of the disease. The first soldier caught in the fact paid for all the others. A council of war assembled by the way; a quarter of an hour afterwards the culprit had ceased to live.

What was the consequence? no more grapes were eaten, all recovered their health; by the sacrifice of one life several thousands were saved: the Commander-in-chief was right. It matters not whether D——— had a right to issue this



order, or whether he had not; this excessive severity was approved by all, for it saved perhaps half the army. Had some of those orators, with grandiloquent phrases, been there, certainly they would have had a wide field for the display of their eloquence; they would have obtained the pardon of the wretched wight; they would have caused the death of the body by sparing a limb. The death of the grape-eater was a necessity for all; it was requisite that every one should clearly perceive that the order of the day was not an empty threat; the moment each was convinced of this, the effect ceased from the cessation of the cause.

Had the like promptness been shown in enforcing the laws against the great robbers, the war in Spain would not have lasted so long. How many saints of gold and silver, how many pyxes and cups, were transformed into ingots, to be afterwards exchanged for hotels in Paris! How many diamonds and rubies, after adorning for ages the pompous and poetic ceremonies of the Roman Church, were utterly astonished to find themselves on the bare bosom of an operadancer!

The magnificent pictures which decorated the churches of Spain almost all found their way to France; they now adorn the galleries of the wealthy of our capital. In my time, there were scarcely any to be seen; we were shown the vacant places, covered by a piece of ignoble black serge; nothing was left but wretched representations of auto-da-fés, executed by the daubers of the Inquisition.

Had some of our amateurs of the fine arts, who protected them so efficiently in their baggage-waggons by a strong escort, been picked out, and shot, the war would not have become national; but then it would have been requisite that many persons should have given orders for their own execution.

These dilapidations were the cause of the war to the death which the Spaniards waged against us: thousands of soldiers were hanged because certain persons had plundered the

churches and the convents. The priests and monks, seeing themselves robbed in a day of what they had been centuries in amassing, everywhere excited the people to insurrection; they made it the most sacred of duties; they devoted to everlasting flames all those who should not arm against the common enemy, and promised all the joys of paradise to such as should die in arms. In a country, where the minister of religion is always believed on his word, such a crusade, preached with the crucifix in one hand and a dagger in the other, could not fail to produce terrible results; and hence we ought not to be surprised at the prodigies which attended the siege of Saragossa.

But what I have ever disapproved, what was always a great affliction to me, was the severity with which pillage was punished one day, after it had been tacitly authorised for a month. From the moment the order was issued, wo betide him who disobeyed it! next day he was no more. When we arrived at Wismar, some soldiers went on a plundering excursion to the neighbouring villages; a peasant was killed: the maurauders were suddenly surrounded; two hundred were taken and confined in a church. General L—— immediately summoned a council of war, to try the murderer, who was to be shot next morning, before the departure of the division.

One of my friends, appointed reporter to the council, repaired to the church, followed by all the peasants: none of them could recognise the culprit, who probably had taken good care not to be caught. Our reporter hastened to the general, and stated the case.

“No matter,” said General L——; “settle the matter as you please; the crime must be punished.”

“Certainly! but who is to suffer?”

“That is your affair.”

“The peasants all agree in declaring that the murderer has red epaulets—of course he must be a grenadier: now we

have forty grenadiers among the prisoners ; I ordered them to be separated from the others, but not one of them could be pointed out as the murderer."

"Put the names of all the grenadiers in a bag, and let him whose name is first drawn out, be shot to-morrow."

"General, I *cannot* undertake such an operation."

"I order you."

"I *will* not."

"Give me your sword."

"There it is."

"Take this captain to prison."

General L—— was at table. He rose in a rage, called the corporal of the guard, and ordered him to seize the captain-reporter. But, next morning, Philip fasting returned the sword, and nobody was shot.

In the vicinity of Bautzen, a voltigeur of my regiment was executed for robbing a woman of her black apron to make himself a cravat of it. The officers of his company besought General P—— to grant a reprieve till his pardon could be solicited of the Emperor : all was to no purpose ; the poor fellow was shot. While the troops were coming upon the ground to attend the execution, some of the soldiers caught a leveret. The general went to them, and desired them to give him the animal. "Oh ! what a pretty little creature ! 'twere a pity to kill it!—so young too !" To save the poor thing from being strangled by the soldiers, the general galloped off, deposited the leveret in a place of safety, and then coolly returned to superintend the execution of his voltigeur.

A strange anomaly this to the observer. Here was a man scampering across rye-fields to seek an asylum for a leveret, who, a few minutes before, had been unmoved by the tears of an old captain begging the life of an old voltigeur. I have met here and there with persons whom Nature had endowed with a truly exquisite kind of sensibility.

A military execution is a terrible sight. I never witnessed a civil execution; I know nothing of the guillotine except from engravings; but my duty has frequently nailed me opposite to a wretched fellow-creature who was going to be shot. What the state of his pulse was I know not, but certainly his heart did not throb with greater violence than mine.

The troops form three sides of a square; the fourth is left vacant for the passage of the balls. Great military show is purposely made, and certainly with good reason; for since a terrible example is to be made, it ought to be rendered impressive to those who are left behind. The culprit arrives, accompanied by a priest. The drums all at once beat a march till the sufferer is in the centre of the troops. They then beat a *ban*, as that beat is called which precedes and follows every kind of proclamation. The captain-reporter reads the sentence, the drums close the *ban*; the culprit is made to kneel down; he is blindfolded, and twelve corporals, commanded by an adjutant-subaltern, fire at the wretched man at the distance of ten paces.

To diminish if possible, the agony, of the sufferer, the words of command are not uttered; the adjutant makes signals instead of them with his cane. In case the man is not killed outright, as it sometimes happens, a reserve platoon, composed of four men, is ready to despatch him by clapping the muzzles of their pieces to his head.

It is with an oppressed heart that I describe these horrors. Melancholy recollections crowd upon me: the wretched creatures, whom I have seen on their knees at this fatal moment, flit past me like phantoms: and yet, at all these executions, when they happened to take place near a town, some of the fair ladies belonging to it never failed to be present. With their delicate nerves, they made interest to obtain a place where they could have a good view; and then, next day, they were ill if a pullet was killed in their presence.

After the execution of the sentence, all the troops defile before the corpse. They then return to their quarters; the circumstance is talked of for two or three days, and very soon forgotten.

I have seen many of those unfortunate men die with admirable fortitude. I have seen some of them address the regiment, and give the command to fire, while not a syllable denoted the slightest emotion in them. But the man who, in this predicament, displayed the most astonishing courage was Malet. On being conducted, with twelve of his accomplices, to the plain of Grenelle, he, as the chief of the conspirators, asked permission to give the command to fire.

“Carry . . . . arms!” cried he, in a voice of thunder. “That won’t do; we must begin again. Your piece on the arm, all of you! Carry . . . . arms! Good—Platoon . . . . arms! Present! Fire!” All fell excepting Malet; he was left standing alone. “And why not me, *sacré nom de Dieu!* . . . . Reserve platoon, forward! . . . . Right! Carry . . . . arms! Platoon . . . . arms! Present! Fire! . . . .”

THE END.

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## EVELYN'S "TRUE RELIGION."

tures of society in the age wherein he lived, which throw out into singular prominence his own temperate, peaceful, gentle, and gentlemanly spirit. He shows us, first, the scenes that surrounded him in his youth. Day by day he saw society shaken to its foundations. Laws and establishments were subverted, princes were murdered, and churches robbed, by a party claiming to be godly; perjury was justified and rewarded, places of Christian worship were turned into stables, the universities were threatened, hypocrisy ruled in high places and in low, bishops and priests were pronounced anti-Christian, kingship was banished out of Israel, and the "soberest pretenders" countermined one another for possession of the supreme power. Such was England when Evelyn knew it first; and for all this, he adds naively, "everything prospered which these men did." But he lived to have other experiences, and to exhibit the reverse of the picture. He lived to see Charles the Second brought back "in so stupendous a manner, as next to that of the Jews from Babylon, there is not to be found in history, sacred or profane, a more wonderful deliverance;" and then what followed? He tells us what he witnessed himself. He saw a people freed from hypocrisy only to become openly sensual, revengeful, and not so much as regarding a form of religion. He saw princes and great men, who ought to have been examples of virtue to others, abandoned to all manner of debauchery. He saw open and avowed adultery seated where sober hypocrisy had been, and, in place of "everything prospering which these men did," he saw on all sides national shame revenging the national vices. He saw bishops and priests restored only to be despised, and, by their cowardly fear of denouncing such enormities, richly deserving the contempt that overwhelmed them. Such is the deliberate view of the Restoration taken by an enthusiastic friend of Royalty and the Church. Nor was it simply that "the gentry were dissolute, the theatres profane, the people libertine, and no face of sincere religion amongst us," but that there suddenly came up a man of great name, Mr. Hobbes of Malmesbury, who had the assurance to draw a grave philosophy out of all this, to deliberately make scepticism tolerable by making it decent, to encourage "raw and fantastical wits" in the delight of making sober mockery of the most venerable truths, to degrade religion into a mere engine of government while he affected to uphold its necessity, and to render it finally a greater reproach to *be* a Christian than not to be *called* one. Our grave, good Evelyn seems to have doubted at length whether his own footing would remain sure in the midst of this universal backsliding; and whether, seeing the great and polite ones of the world believed nothing at all of it, "what had been taught us concerning God, and religion, and honour, and conscience, were not in truth mere chimeras and impostures contrived by our forefathers—crafty men in their generation." To reassure himself against such doubts, and to extricate his spirit from many similar perplexities weighing upon it in that infidel age, he sat down to the composition of his "True Religion."

The fact of the existence of Evelyn's manuscript was not a secret to those who had examined his lists of published and unpublished works; but it is due to Mr. Colburn to relate, that it was mainly owing to his suggestions that the manuscript was carefully examined, and found to be a work of considerable learning and research. It is a specimen of the good old orthodoxy of our ancestors, represented by one of the noblest of English worthies.—*Examiner*.

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