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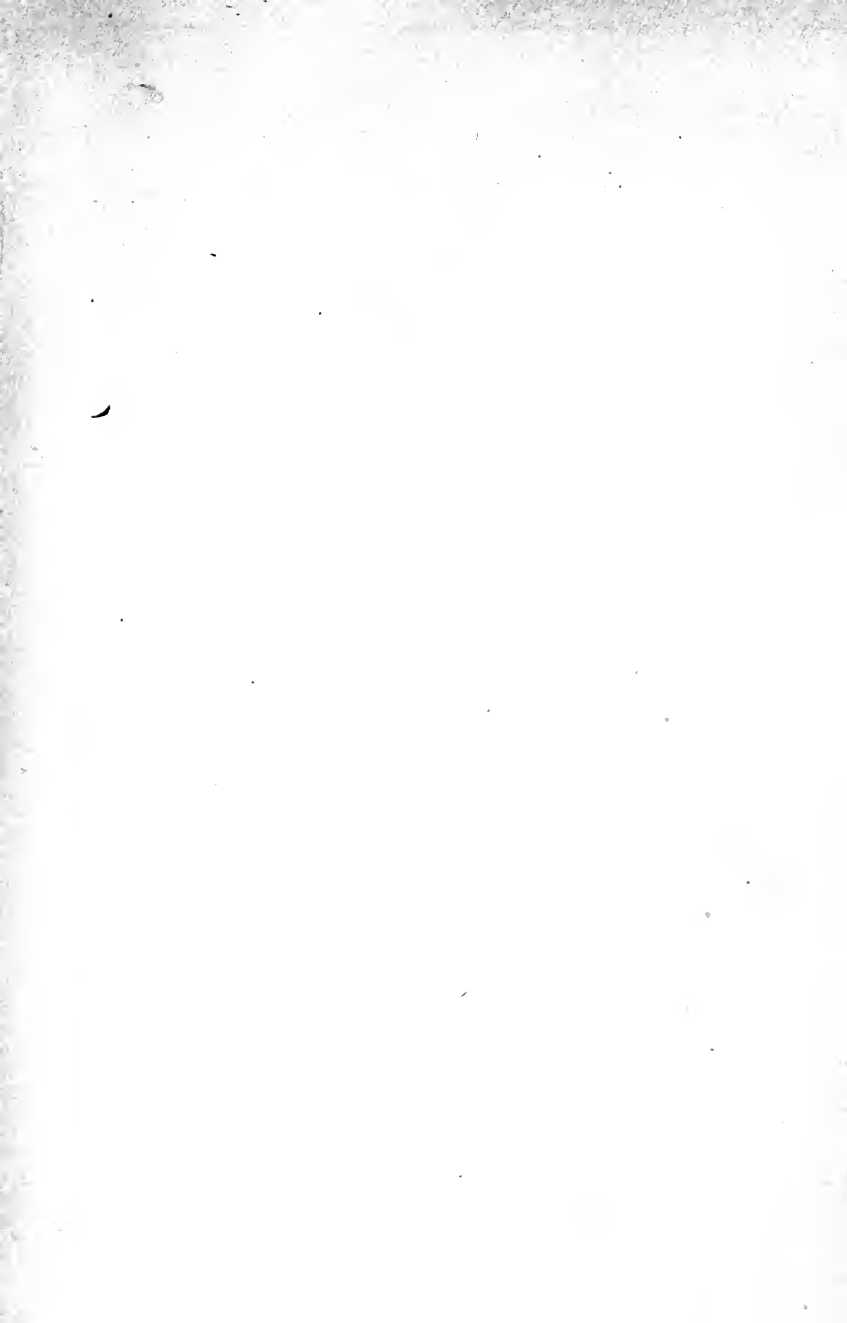
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MADAME  
RECAMIER  
AND HER  
FRIENDS



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MADAME RECAMIER

*from the original painting by J. L. David in the Louvre*

Madame Récamier  
and  
Her Friends

*Translated from the French of Madame Lenormant*

by

Isaphene M. Luyster

New Illustrated Edition



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~~READING ROOM~~

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BY ROBERTS BROTHERS

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UNIVERSITY PRESS · JOHN WILSON  
AND SON, CAMBRIDGE, U. S. A.



## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

---

WHEN an English translation of Madame Récamier's "Memoirs" was given to the American public, in 1866, it occasioned the same feeling of disappointment as the original work had previously created in France upon its first publication, in 1859. The cause of this dissatisfaction was obvious, for, though the book was in the highest degree interesting, it failed to give a life-like and satisfactory image of Madame Récamier herself.

This was the more disappointing, as few lives have excited a more lively curiosity. If it be true, as Carlyle somewhere says, that were it possible to obtain a faithful record of even the most humble and commonplace life, with all its thoughts and emotions, hopes and fears, it would be more thrilling than the most startling romance, how much greater the interest such a life as Mme. Récamier's would excite, if we could get at the whole truth concerning so strange and eventful a career, know the true story of the men who loved her,

the women who suffered by her ; how she really felt toward Prince Augustus, and what were her own pangs and heart-trials ; if we could penetrate beneath the surface of that most courteous and polished of *salons*, where friend and foe met on neutral ground, and antipathies were carefully concealed or ignored ! Did Chateaubriand and Balanche really like each other ? And Ampère, did he do more than simply tolerate the egotistical author of the “Genius of Christianity ?” How was it that Madame de Staël, who could not even bear to hear of the marriage of any of her male friends, cordially welcomed to her heart and home so formidable a rival ? Did she never feel a jealous pang at seeing her whilom admirers at the feet of this lovely Juliette ? And Monsieur Récamier, was he always content to be known as the merely nominal husband of the most beautiful woman in Europe ?

Such questions inevitably suggest themselves ; and though, doubtless, many of them are vain and unreasonable, — out of the power even of a very Boswell to answer satisfactorily, — still, as Madame Récamier was strictly a social celebrity, it is reasonable to desire fuller information concerning her than these “Memoirs” furnished ; to read her letters, to see her in the freedom and intimacy of her own fireside, at hours when the famous *salon* was silent

and empty; to be able, in fine, to understand, if not the secrets of her life, at least her personal character and her ends and aims.

This knowledge the present volume, of twelve years later date, in a measure supplies. If it does not explain the mysteries of Madame Récamier's life, it helps us to understand better her character; and from the new material it furnishes, including over forty of her own notes and letters, it is a valuable supplement to the more voluminous "Memoirs."

Though not so rich in anecdote and incident as its predecessor, it is better planned and executed. It has also the merit of presenting its author as well as her subject in a more just as it is certainly a more favorable light. This is the more noteworthy, as in the "Memoirs," unfortunately, Madame Lenormant failed to inspire that confidence in herself which it is so essential that all writers of biography should inspire in their readers.

Burdened with her great mass of material, and hampered, moreover, by an earnest desire to keep her own personality entirely out of sight, Madame Lenormant was led to do injustice to herself as well as to her subject. Experience and the criticisms her first book called forth have evidently taught her much. Overcoming her natural reluctance to speak of herself, she, in a modest and

circumstantial narrative, tells the story of her own relations with Madame Récamier, — a story which not only induces a higher esteem for the famous woman whose virtues it illustrates, but reflects most favorably upon the narrator herself.

Madame Récamier's letters to her niece confirm the narrative of the latter. Insignificant in other respects, they are valuable as indications of character. We are struck with the little their writer exacts from the woman whose mind she had moulded, and whose happiness she had taken such pains to secure. Unlike too many benefactors, she claims nothing on the score of gratitude.

And yet the burden that Madame Récamier imposed upon herself when she undertook the care of her husband's little niece was no light one. That this "spoiled child of fortune," as Camille Jordan calls her, should, at the age of forty, when habits are generally fixed, keep so closely to her side and rear thus carefully a daughter by adoption, is certainly not a little remarkable. It is pleasant to find that she had her reward in the life-long love and gratitude of one in whose arms she died, and by whom she has evidently been most sincerely lamented.

But while these personal details respecting the family life of Madame Récamier are undoubtedly the most interesting and important part of the

book, they are by no means the only ones which throw light upon her character. By a judicious arrangement we are enabled to trace the development and growth of her intrinsically fine and unique nature. We see her successively surrounded by the friends of her early life and of her riper years. We read her letters, we note how the coquetry of her youth gives place to nobler aims and more serious occupations. It is no longer simply as the great beauty, the queen of society, that we learn to regard her, but as a lovely and gracious woman who rose superior to the temptations of her strange lot, and who, with every excuse for being vain, frivolous, and selfish, was, in an eminent degree, unaffected, serious, and disinterested.

The grace and tact which gave Madame Récamier her social influence amounted almost to genius, while she seems to have been by no means deficient in literary taste and ability. At fifty-two she writes, "I have been looking up historical facts for M. de Chateaubriand, which has given me quite a taste for history. I have read Thiers and Mignet, and I am now reading Tacitus;" and when she had reached the age of seventy she assisted Ampère to prepare a volume of extracts from the works of Ballanche. "Give me," writes Camille Jordan, early in the reign of Louis XVIII., "your impression of this new *régime*, and your estimate

of public opinion, for you know the value I attach to it, and how I delight to hear you, with your pure and discriminating mind, talk on all subjects even the most serious."

This tribute has the more weight as Camille Jordan was not a man to indulge in unmeaning compliments. Among the group of distinguished men who surround Madame Récamier, he stands pre-eminent for his manliness of character and thorough independence. Unlike most of her friends, it does not appear that he at any time assumed the *rôle* of a lover; and while his letters testify to his great admiration and respect for her, they also unmistakably show that his wife and children always held the first place in his heart.

Still stronger evidence, if possible, of Madame Récamier's power of inspiring and retaining affection is to be found in the amusing letters from Madame de Boigne. A few words in regard to this brilliant woman will not be amiss here.

Madame de Boigne was the daughter of the Marquis d'Osmond, who with his family was driven from France by the Revolution of 1789. She was married in England to General de Boigne, who had acquired distinction and wealth in India. He was much older than his wife, and as they were, in other respects, uncongenial, they soon agreed to live apart. There was no public rupture and no

scandal. Madame de Boigne continued to reside with her parents, though paying her husband a short annual visit in Savoy. Brilliant as well as beautiful, she became, upon the return of the family from exile, a power in society. In Paris she presided over her father's house with grace and elegance; and when he was appointed successively ambassador to Turin and to London, she accompanied him, and by her tact and address contributed largely to the success of his missions.

An old and warm friend of Marie-Amélie, Madame de Boigne was among the first of the old aristocracy to render allegiance to Louis Philippe, and as she was very intimate with Pasquier, her *salon*, under the new *régime*, became a political centre. According to Sainte-Beuve, no reproach was ever attached to her name. This eminent critic and sly gossip, who knew so well how to insinuate blame, while seeming intent on praising, has no qualifying words in his eulogy of Madame de Boigne. He writes:—

“If she had been a man, the Countess de Boigne would have been one of the most eminent and useful politicians of her day, and the government would have had the services of one minister the more. Nor did the possession of these solid qualities obscure in her the womanly graces; she was elegance itself. Praise from her had a high value, because she was not prodigal in

bestowing it. A word of approbation from her was a reward. She talked extremely well, — to perfection, in fact, — using terms at once elegant and precise. There was no vagueness in her style. I fancy that the highly extolled Maréchale de Luxembourg must have expressed herself in much the same fashion. The last few years, so full of change for her, the late revolutions, of which she had seen so many, found her calm, tranquil, not surprised, and always just. In spite of her impaired health, she still retained her love of society, her interest in the drama of politics, the integrity and firmness of her intellect. She had the good sense to perceive that some concessions must be made to the times. She still kept her old friends, her private preferences, but little by little she renewed her *salon*. New-comers found it pleasant to be there, and learned to appreciate her." . . .

Madame de Boigne died on the 10th of May, 1866, at the age of eighty-six. Three years younger than Madame Récamier, she survived her eighteen. The friendship between them was formed in early youth, and apparently never suffered any eclipse. This is, perhaps, the more remarkable, as their respective careers offer many points of resemblance. Both were beauties and belles, with a number of acquaintances in common. Both sought and obtained social distinction, and both, through their friends, exercised political influence. But Madame Récamier's interest and influence in politics ended with M. de Chateaubriand's retirement



from political life upon the fall of Charles X. ; whereas it was during the reign of Louis Philippe that Madame de Boigne's *salon* became a centre of influence.

But though both Madame de Boigne and Camille Jordan occupy a prominent place in the following pages, neither the one nor the other is the friend *par excellence*. This honor belongs to J.-J. Ampère. He is the central figure of Madame Lenormant's second volume of reminiscences, as Chateaubriand is of the first. The two men are in striking contrast. The one, vain and sentimental, egotistical and selfish, is always demanding sacrifices and making none ; the other, frank and natural, affectionate and disinterested, is ever serving others and forgetting himself. Ampère's devotion for thirty years to Madame Récamier is even more exceptional than that of Ballanche, who, philosopher and good man as he was, had no social graces, and few temptations to lure him away from his snug corner at Madame Récamier's fireside ; whereas Ampère, young, witty, and in every way attractive, was universally courted, — a favorite with men as well as with women. Alexis de Tocqueville, for example, whose letters are an interesting feature of this volume, had a peculiarly strong friendship for Ampère.

Strong and life-long friendships, however, are

very characteristic of the French, and in this respect Ampère is a typical Frenchman. One secret of these enduring attachments it is not difficult to discover ; it lies partly in the inborn courtesy of the nation which makes them shrink from saying disagreeable things, and partly in their habit of saying kind and gracious ones. They are not afraid of being demonstrative. Of this, the letters published by Madame Lenormant offer a striking illustration. No one can read them without being impressed with their uniformly kind and affectionate tone. An Englishman or an American would, perhaps, hesitate to write such loving letters to one of his own sex, as De Tocqueville writes to Ampère ; and yet there is little doubt that such frank and hearty expressions of interest and affection bound the two more closely together and cemented their friendship.

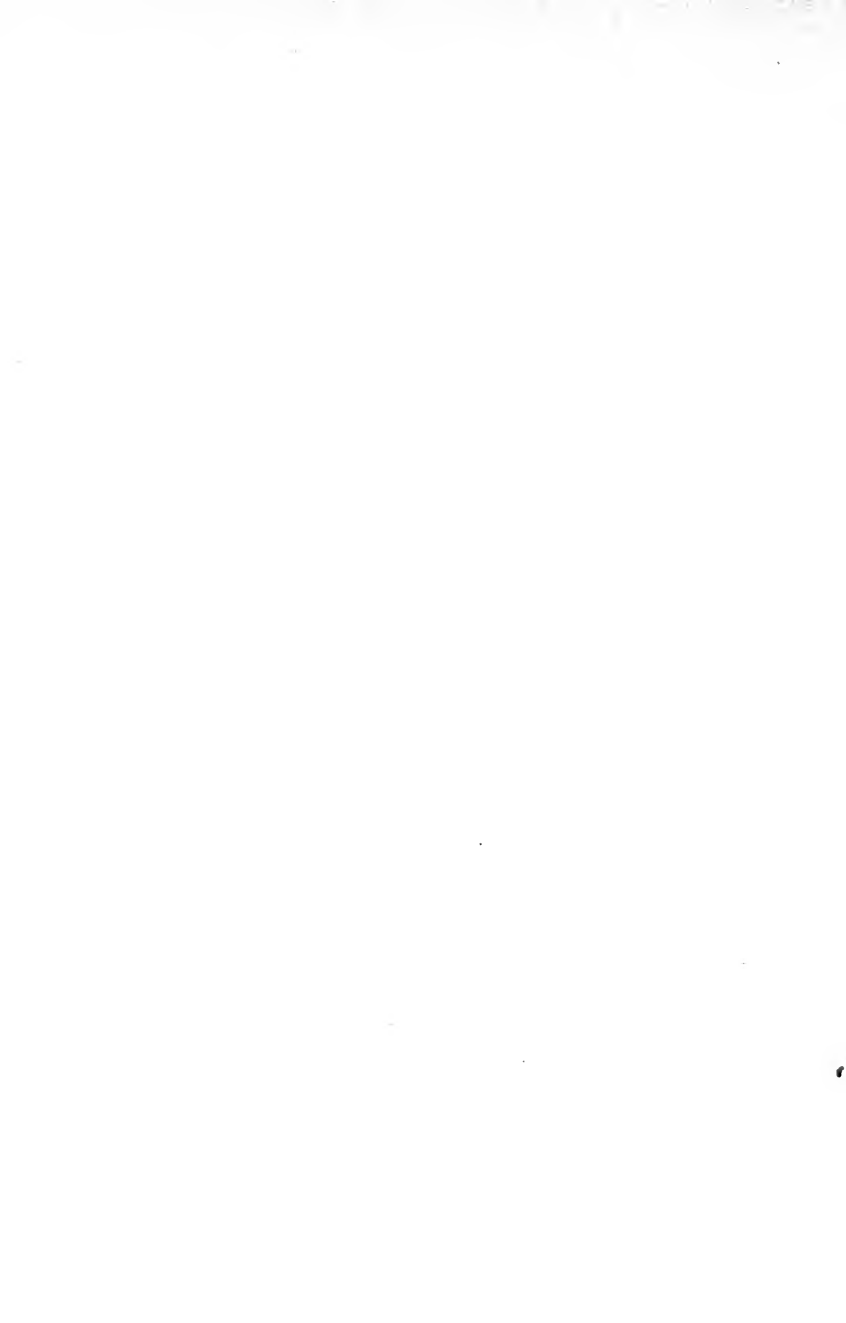
Another fine national trait which the character of Ampère strikingly illustrates is filial respect and devotion. The loyalty, the beauty of this relationship is the one thing, above all others, which sweetens and sanctifies French homes. So far is this allegiance of the child to the parent and the parent to the child carried, and so highly is it estimated, that one might almost be justified in styling it the national religion. As a sentiment, it pervades all their literature ; sometimes, perhaps, in their novels

and plays degenerating into a morbid sentimentality.

But it is neither to their fictitious literature, and still less to the metropolitan life of Paris, that we must look for a correct idea of the best phases of French life and character. If we are to appreciate more justly the domestic virtues of this enigmatical people, — a people of genius, and heir, therefore, to all the follies as well as great capabilities of genius, — we must know more of the lives of the nobles in the provinces, of the homes of the *bourgeoisie*; we must go to such books as the memoirs of Madame de Montague and Madame de Lafayette; such journals as those of Eugénie de Guérin, of André-Marie Ampère. And among works of this class, few are more suggestive than the present volume.

I. M. W.

May, 1875.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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WHEN in publishing, twelve years ago, the "Memoirs and Correspondence of Mme. Récamier," I attempted to draw a faithful portrait of that noble and incomparable person, I was well aware that the picture would have been more striking, more life-like, if, instead of printing the letters which were addressed to her, I had given those she herself wrote.

The letters of her friends were only the mirror in which her soul and features were reflected, whilst her own letters would have set before us the woman herself. But I had then at my disposal only my own correspondence with Mme. Récamier; these letters, few in number, — for we were rarely separated, — were of too private a nature for me not to feel reluctant to publish them.

Twenty-two years, alas! have run their course since she passed away, — that finished type of grace and purity, whose seductiveness was due as

much to goodness of heart, strength and sincerity of character, as to dazzling beauty.

Of the brilliant circle of devoted friends who composed her train — we may say her court — very few survive ; death has cut down almost all who once frequented the *salon* of the Abbaye-aux-Bois, and it is to this sad circumstance that I owe the letters of Mme. Récamier which have since come into my hands.

Their publication to-day, together with many other letters also hitherto unpublished, will make better known and more and more appreciated that vanished world, that charming circle, of which nothing in the society of to-day can give any idea, and where noble thoughts, refined tastes, and entire independence of character, found expression in a language full of elegance and courtesy.

In publishing these letters, some definite plan was necessary ; I have chosen that which seemed to me the most natural, and have disposed in chronological order the several intimacies of Mme. Récamier, so as to exhibit her surrounded in turn by the friends of her youth and those of her riper years.

Unless a reason were given for the omission, my readers might properly be surprised at finding no letters nor any personal details in this volume, other than those already published, of the man who, so

long as his life lasted, was bound to Mme. Récamier by the deepest attachment, and a devotion as exalted as it was disinterested; namely, the philosopher Ballanche. Certain it is, that his entire self-abnegation made him the willing slave of her who was to him the personification of all that is beautiful and noble upon earth, and humanity alone was the rival of Mme. Récamier in the heart of Ballanche. In return, she accorded him a confidence without limit; and the place he occupied in her life was a large one. M. Victor de Laprade, the friend and disciple of Ballanche, is preparing a complete edition of the works of the Lyonese philosopher, which will contain, besides his unpublished writings, a volume of correspondence. I have gladly furnished him with all the letters in my possession.

With regard to the correspondence carried on under the first Empire, the reader will doubtless be struck by the degree of repression the vexatious tyranny of the Imperial police succeeded in exerting upon even the boldest spirits. The certainty that every word would be read and commented upon with a jealous and paltry suspicion, caused every one to be extremely reserved even with their most intimate friends. The word *exile* is rarely pronounced by those who had braved the peril and were paying the penalty; they seldom, if ever,

speak of political events. M. de Montmorency, actively and ardently devoted as he was to the cause of the imprisoned Sovereign Pontiff, makes not a single allusion to the situation of Pius VII.

Such facts as these make it easier to understand Mme. de Staël's passionate longing to escape beyond the reach of this pneumatical administrative machine, under which a hand of iron reduced all to silence.



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## PART I.

### MADAME RÉCAMIER AND THE FRIENDS OF HER YOUTH.

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PROMINENT among Mme. Récamier's early friends were two natives of Lyons, — Camille Jordan and Pierre Edouard Lemontey. Both were men of distinguished ability, though totally unlike in character. Both, also, were members of the Council of Five Hundred when, in 1797, they were admitted to the house of M. Récamier, whose eminently hospitable doors opened with eager cordiality to his fellow-townsmen of Lyons. Camille Jordan probably owed his introduction to Degérando; the two had been like brothers from childhood, and their life-long friendship neither time nor absence, nor marked divergencies of opinion and conduct, had ever power to chill.

Lemontey had many fine qualities. He was a steadfast friend, and perfectly trustworthy in all the relations of life; but, though a man of superior mind and incontestable talent, he was imbued with a scepticism little in harmony with the confiding and enthusiastic temper of the young and beautiful girl now four years married to

M. Récamier. Political convictions he had none, nor any religious belief; men and events he judged with a mocking irony, which, while it gave great piquancy to his words, did not prevent him from being always very ready to serve his friends. His avarice had passed into a proverb, and he had no elegance either of manner or appearance. In conversation his language often offended against good taste, sometimes even degenerating into coarseness; but his judgment in regard to literary matters was keen and correct, and his advice on such subjects always sound. Mme. de Staël welcomed him gladly to her house, and was fond of consulting him; and in several of her letters to Mme. Récamier it will be observed that she begs the latter to urge him to visit her both at Coppet and Auxerre. During all my childhood I used to see Lemontey every Saturday, as he came regularly to dine with my uncle, M. Récamier. This habit, to which he faithfully adhered until his death in 1826, dates back to the remote period when he came to Paris to take his seat in the Council of the Five Hundred.

Mme. Récamier had a sincere regard for Lemontey, but the affection she felt for Camille Jordan was much stronger. I do not purpose to relate here the life of the eloquent and intrepid patriot, whom the history of our social and parliamentary struggles "will never find in the ranks of the victors." I would rather refer the reader to Ballanche's noble eulogy; also to the brilliant article which M. Sainte-Beuve devoted to him in the "*Revue des Deux Mondes*," still vividly remembered by the public. In this article the able

critic not only appreciates, with his usual acuteness, the charming originality of the translator of Klopstock, and the talent of the political orator; but — what we had, perhaps, less right to expect — he also does full justice to the independence and patriotism of this champion of liberty.

Barely escaping arrest, through the devotion of his friends, at the *coup d'état* of Fructidor, Camille Jordan succeeded in reaching Switzerland in company with M. Degérando, with whom he afterward visited Germany. It was during this forced emigration that he formed a friendship with Matthieu de Montmorency. Returning to France in 1800, after a sojourn in England, he met again in Paris Mme. Récamier, with whom he had been greatly charmed three years before, and who was now more brilliant and more sought after than ever. Henceforth a close intimacy was established between Mme. de Staël, Matthieu and Adrien de Montmorency, and Camille Jordan, who, with M. and Mme. Degérando, formed part of the intimate circle of friends that gathered daily around Mme. Récamier, whether at Clichy, Saint-Brice, or Paris. It was now, too, that letters and notes began to be exchanged between her and Camille Jordan, of which a few only have escaped destruction.

Mme. Récamier felt a very deep friendship for Camille Jordan; he inspired her with both esteem and confidence. Like Matthieu de Montmorency, though in a less degree, he acted toward her the part of a Mentor; striving to counteract the influence of the

intoxicating homage paid her in society, and to cure her of that imperious desire to please which she had from her birth, together with all the natural gifts which made pleasing so easy to her.

Few men with the great qualities and rigid virtues of Camille Jordan have been so charming and engaging in the ordinary intercourse of life. His original turn of mind, his enthusiasm, his energy, the shrewdness of his remarks, a certain simplicity and candor, — in short, every thing about him was attractive, even to the somewhat provincial awkwardness which he never quite overcame. M. Sainte-Beuve has very justly noticed a peculiarity common to all the natives of Lyons, — a flavor of the soil, so to say, — which we find in all Camille Jordan's contemporaries, however unlike in other respects. M. Sainte-Beuve defines it thus: "A certain stock of beliefs, of sentiments, of moral habits, of local patriotism, of religiosity and *affectuosity*, which holds its own amid the general dwindling away and shrivelling up of men's souls."

In inserting here two notes from Mme. Récamier to Camille Jordan, written in the early days of their intimacy, it seems proper to forestall the surprise which, doubtless, some readers will experience, on seeing a very young woman address by his Christian name one who is not a relative, while he replies in the same style. This use of the Christian name was adopted by the whole circle, and occurs in conjunction with forms implying the most profound deference and respect. Mme. de Staël never speaks of M. de Montmorency nor



addresses him except by the name of *Matthieu*. Mme. de Boigne does the same in the case of Adrien de Montmorency, who, in his turn, calls her *Adèle*. All the guests at Coppet speak of and to Mme. Récamier as *Juliette*. So with Camille Jordan, whom they all call *Camille*; it is the same with Benjamin Constant and Prosper de Barante, and yet assuredly, in spite of this custom, now out of fashion, the language of this select circle was neither familiar nor trivial.<sup>1</sup>

MME. RÉCAMIER TO CAMILLE JORDAN.

“1801.

“DEAR CAMILLE, — I very much regret not seeing you to-day. I am obliged to accompany mamma to Cambacérès’s, and afterward I go into the country.

“If I do not see you in a day or two, I shall go to look for you at Meudon.<sup>2</sup> A thousand affectionate remembrances and regards to you and your friends.”

---

“1801.

“DEAR CAMILLE, — I send you the invitations, which I did not know how to address. I fear it may be too late: do the best you can. I shall see you this evening, but I shall see you in the midst of a crowd.

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<sup>1</sup> In this connection it is well to call attention to the fact (necessarily lost sight of in an English translation) that though this circle of friends call each other by their Christian names, they never employ the affectionate and familiar “*tu*,” but always “*vous*.” Among Mme. Récamier’s correspondents, the only one who uses the “*tu*” in addressing her is M. Récamier. — TR.

<sup>2</sup> At the Degérandos’.

I liked much better my little room at Meudon, and the rambles among the ruins.”

Allusion is here made, as we see, to one of those *fêtes* which Mme. Récamier was in the habit of giving, and to which the fashionable world, now just re-organized, and with a thirst for pleasure unquenched by the saturnalias of the Directory, came in eager crowds. The peace of Lunéville, followed by that of Amiens, had reopened France to foreigners, multitudes of whom flocked thither during the winters of 1801 and 1802.

A proof of this we find in the following note from Camille Jordan to his brilliant friend:—

“A certain Baron von Arnim, a Prussian, has been recommended to me, whom I should like to have go to the Demidoff ball to-morrow. You, who reign over all the Russias, can you manage to get him in?”

“Degérando and Annette charge me with most loving messages, and beg you to send your orphan boy to the school.

“I hoped to see you and waited for you day before yesterday at Lady Foster’s.<sup>1</sup>

“CAMILLE.”

Mme. de Staël passed the whole winter of 1801 in Paris; and from this time her relations with Mme. Récamier took the character of a close intimacy. Return-

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<sup>1</sup> Lady Elizabeth Foster, sister of the Earl of Bristol. Her second husband was the Duke of Devonshire.

ing to Coppet in the spring, she wrote to her friend on the 9th of September:—

“Do you ever think, beautiful Juliette, of a person whom you loaded with marks of interest last winter, and who hopes to make you renew them next winter? How do you sway the empire of beauty? We accord you this empire with pleasure, because you are eminently good; and it seems only natural that so sweet a soul should be expressed by so charming a face. Of all your adorers, you know I prefer Adrien de Montmorency. I have received letters from him remarkable for wit and grace, and I believe in the steadfastness of his affections, in spite of the charm of his manners. And, besides, this word ‘steadfastness’ is more becoming for me, who pretend only to a very secondary place in his heart. But you, who inspire all the sentiments, you are exposed to the grand events out of which we make tragedies and romances. Mine<sup>1</sup> is making progress here at the foot of the Alps. I hope you will read it with interest. I rather like this occupation. In speaking of your adorers, I did not mean to include M. de Narbonne;<sup>2</sup> it seems to me he has ranged himself in the ranks of the friends; if it were not so, I could not have said that I preferred any one to him.

“Amid all these successes, you are, and you will ever remain, an angel of purity and goodness, worshipped

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<sup>1</sup> Her romance of “Delphine,” which appeared in 1802.

<sup>2</sup> Formerly minister of Louis XVI., aide-de-camp of the Emperor Napoleon.

by the devout as well as by worldlings. What do your devout ones say concerning the new treaty with the Pope?<sup>1</sup> Is it quite orthodox? We outside heretics find it hard to understand all this. Throw some light on this rather singular medley. Have you again seen the author of 'Atala'? Are you still at Clichy? I ask, in short, for all particulars respecting yourself; I like to know what you are doing, to make a picture to myself of the places you inhabit; must not all memories of you resolve themselves into pictures? I join to this very natural enthusiasm for your rare personal advantages a great fondness for your society. Kindly accept, I beg of you, all I offer, and promise me that we shall see each other often next winter."

To the year 1803, and evidently after the first order of exile, must be assigned these few lines of Mme. Récamier to Mme. de Staël, which M. Sainte-Beuve discovered among the papers of Camille Jordan, and which are here inserted as given by him:—

"Just as I received the note announcing your departure, another was handed me from Junot, who writes: 'I have this morning seen the Consul; he said that he consented to *her* staying in France; he was even willing that *she* should reside at Dijon, if that be agreeable to her; he even said to me, in a low voice, "that if nothing new should occur hereafter." . . . I

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<sup>1</sup> The Concordat signed July 17th, 1800, between Pius VII. and the French Government.

trust that, through her own prudence and our earnest solicitations, the sentence will be completed.'

"You, doubtless, know all this. As for me, the hope of soon seeing you again is very necessary to console me a little for your absence. Do, as a favor, let me know your plans. I will not forget the affair of M. . . .

"It is very hard to get accustomed to not seeing you, after having had the pleasure of passing a few days with you. I am waiting to hear from you with anxious impatience.

"Sunday evening."

"JULIETTE R."

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CAMILLE JORDAN TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

"SAINT-OUEN, 1803.

"DEAR JULIETTE, — I left you ill, and I am anxious about your health; send me word, I beg of you, by return of messenger. I should have called to inquire yesterday, but I returned home at too late an hour; I shall come to-morrow the first moment I am at liberty; provided, indeed, that my visit do not bore you, for the doubt you felt of the pleasure your last letter would give me fills me with a better-founded distrust. Oh, that doubt! it went to my heart. It will be long before I forgive you. But, no, I am sure of interesting you, for I shall speak to you of Adrien,<sup>1</sup> of the visit that I made him; I will describe my dinner with Fox, where mention was made of you. I enclose the hospital

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<sup>1</sup> Adrien de Montmorency.

papers, which I carried off through inadvertence; I hope you will not forget the little girls, and the charming project so worthy of your good heart.

“What has become of the beautiful Aline, and the *Portuguese* romance? Please say something pleasant to her from me. Tell her that we beg her to prepare her sweet voice for singing a ronnaut of the sixteenth century, quite unknown, and with which we are delighted. Annette and Degérando beg to be remembered to you. Adieu, dear Juliette; I love you still, but not as much as I did before our last conversation. “C.”

Camille Jordan had returned to Lyons when Bonaparte held there the Cisalpine Council, and the First Consul tried to attach him to his new government, but, as Ballanche tells us, “he could not overcome the repugnance of this man, whose chief characteristic was his perfect uprightness, and who, by the purity of his patriotism, was rendered distrustful.”

So long as Bonaparte was in power, whether as Consul or as Emperor, Camille Jordan preferred to remain in the obscurity of a life of study. Of a nature fitted for the family affections, he married, and announced his intention to Mme. Récamier in the following terms:—

“25 Ventose, year xii.

“(March 15, 1804.)

“DEAR JULIETTE,—What will be your astonishment! The irresolute is resolved, the fickle one is chained! I am about to marry. I wed a young lady



CAMILLE JORDAN

*from a painting by Mlle. Godefroi, engraved by Müller*





of Lyons. I make one of those marriages recommended by relatives, but which the heart approves, — reasonable, but, at the same time, attractive. Unfortunately, in a romantic point of view, there is money, and the match is a suitable one. But, on the other hand, the lady is young, sensible, virtuous, charming. She seems to be very fond of me, and, unimpressionable as I am, I let myself be touched by it. Your inquisitive friendship would like, no doubt, further details. You shall not have them; you must come yourself and get them. I sigh more ardently than ever for your coming. I have the greatest desire that you should know and love her. As for her, I am very sure that she will love you; that our hearts, which accord so well, will agree about Juliette, — will cherish together such ineffable goodness and grace. Please announce my marriage for me to your husband; for I feel very sure of the friendly interest his kind heart will take in it. Tell him that it is Mlle. Magnieunin, of Lyons; but probably he does not know her.

“I beg of you also to inform your mother, father, and all your family, at the same time remembering me kindly to them all. Write to me soon. “C. J.”

The marriage of Camille Jordan, and the domestic happiness it brought him, did not prevent his coming occasionally to Paris. He was there in 1806, during the summer which Mme. de Staël passed chiefly at the chateau of Vincelles, near Auxerre. All the friends of the noble exile made a pilgrimage to Vincelles.

Matthieu de Montmorency, who was among the first comers, wrote to hasten the arrival of Madame Récamier, who was impatiently expected.

“VINCELLES, NEAR AUXERRE,

“Saturday evening, May 10.

“There must be few persons less accustomed than the amiable Juliette to see the letters they write remain for days unanswered. Pardon me if I have not immediately replied to yours, which was very kind, though very hasty. Pardon, not me, who truly am not to blame, but the singular and very disagreeable habit of the post of delaying all our letters for Auxerre by one mail. It is to be desired, at least, that the bureau for the examination and reading of letters should be a little more prompt in the performance of their functions; and if they read this I hope they will profit by the advice. Yours did not reach me until this very day at four o'clock. Though you have been kind enough to forget the date,—an omission which might sometimes upset the calculations of poor country folk,—yet, according to mine, judging by what they told me of your letter, you must have written it on Wednesday; and here we are already at the very end of that week which you proposed to spend in the peaceable and lonely retreat of Vincelles. The inhabitants would be too sorry if any thing should happen to frustrate your good intentions. There is a little Albertine here whose face lights up with joy at the thought of seeing you. The lady of the house counts greatly upon it, and would tell you to

come at any time when most convenient to yourself rather than not come at all. But, on account of a visit which I purpose making the first of the week to a family in the neighborhood,—an invalid relation in whom you are interested, as in all unhappy ones,—and a little business errand in the direction of Briare which she has in view, we would propose to you to arrive on Saturday morning at the latest, in company with the young Albert,<sup>1</sup> who so well remembered all your kindnesses, and was most eager to go and claim them when he went to Paris, and who will be equally proud to escort you here, and inconsolable to lose any of your visit. His Mentor,<sup>2</sup> who will have the honor of seeing you, is a very intellectual and distinguished German, who will also be at your service. I see that you also ask me to reply to your question respecting another gentleman of my acquaintance.<sup>3</sup> I am very much embarrassed; for nothing would give me greater pleasure than to see him, and be with him here among such agreeable and intimate friends. Our friend wishes it very much. She has already tried to bring me over to her views; and maintains that the company of the young man and his Mentor renders the visit more easy and more proper. But I still fear that it cannot be. My better judgment prevails over my own inclination, and, in spite of myself, I conscientiously find there are objec-

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<sup>1</sup> Albert, second son of Mme. de Staël.

<sup>2</sup> Schlegel.

<sup>3</sup> Adrien de Montmorency, who asked leave to come to Vincelles.

tions, between which and his own inclinations I leave Adrien's own delicacy to be the judge. I fear, above all, the small gossip of the public, and especially of the Hôtel de Luynes. Pardon, *aimable* Juliette, this frank severity, which, so it seems to me, is obligatory upon a friend of whom one asks advice. I fear that Adrien will take it very ill of me. Tell him I do not dare to write him for this reason; that we often speak of him; and that I love him with all my heart.

"I perceive that I have not yet spoken of the first piece of news in your letter. It was not new to us; we had it directly through the prefect. But what concern you show in announcing it! You will indeed be concerned when you see with your own eyes what grief this persistence in ill-will causes our friend. Ah! no one is so worthy as you to be the friend of misfortune! Adieu! I am doubly and most sincerely gratified to hear of madame your mother's improvement, since it allows us to look forward to such happy moments. Let me count upon them as certain; and therefore insist upon your leaving Paris on Friday, so as to arrive here as early as possible on Saturday. Why not bring Camille with you? All at Vincelles tender you their loving homage. Can you not let us know something about the answer, whatever it was, to the demand for liquidation?"<sup>1</sup>

Mme. de Staël, wishing to join her entreaties to those

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the claim of Mme. de Staël for the two millions advanced to the government by M. Necker.

of Matthieu de Montmorency, added to his letter this little note:—

“AUXERRE, May 10, 1806.

“DEAR JULIETTE,—Your kindness to me is inexhaustible; but will you not give me the unspeakable pleasure of seeing you? I send you my youngest son, who is quite in love with you, like the rest of his family. I rely upon you to treat M. Schlegel well, who is much more my friend than the tutor of my children. I have permission to stay here, but I cannot stay long, for it is the saddest life imaginable. There are no advantages here whatsoever for the education of the children; not a musician; nothing in the world but the river and the plain; and I have too melancholy an imagination to endure it. Get me out of it if you can. Is not Murat still in Paris? Cannot you interest him in my behalf? I know your powers of intercession. I prefer the indirect through you than the direct by myself. Adieu! beautiful Juliette; I finish as I began,—let me see you.”

Mme. Récamier arrived at Vincelles at the time appointed, and Camille Jordan some weeks later, on his way to Lyons, and after M. de Montmorency had returned to Paris. He announced his coming in the following note:—

“Thursday.

“DEAR JULIETTE,—I have just seen Matthieu, and have been much interested in hearing of you and Madame de Staël; but he confounds me by saying that you think of leaving on Monday. You must certainly

stay another day, unless you wish to give me the greatest pain, for this is my itinerary. I cannot leave on Saturday, as I had hoped to do, but I shall start on Sunday morning, and shall reach Auxerre at one o'clock. I shall be at your house by five, remain there the rest of the day, and leave again on Tuesday. You can imagine how hard it would be not to see you there at least for one evening. I ask for this little delay with the more confidence as I know your mother is better. I know it through Mme. Michel, who sent her physician to her, and only an hour since had a good account of her.

"If Mme. de Staël has a cabriolet disengaged, she will do me a favor if she will send it to meet me at two o'clock at the 'Leopard' inn. If not, I have no doubt that I shall be able easily to get a carriage. Mme. de Staël will certainly be grateful to me for endeavoring to prolong the very sweet consolation she finds in your society. I should also be glad if my visit could be of any interest to her. At all events, she will meet again one of those who most deeply feel her sufferings. Adieu, dear Juliette! grant my request; add this mark of affection to the many others I have received from you."

A few lines from Matthieu de Montmorency to their common friend seconded the entreaties of Camille Jordan:—

"Thursday, five o'clock.

"Permit me, *aimable* Juliette, to write a few hasty lines which will at least prove to you how much pleas-

ure I have taken in executing your commissions, and how much satisfaction it would give me to be able to procure for you a little tranquillity in so touching a sentiment. I went this very day, at three o'clock, with Adrien to see madame your mother, who was able to receive us. She had two or three ladies with her. She is better to-day, and had taken quite a long airing in a sedan chair. She is feeble and very pale, but surely no worse than when you left. She will be delighted to see you again, but she is glad of your journey, as she thinks it is doing you good. Consequently, I did not give her any reason to expect you before the middle of next week. You can, therefore, grant the humble petition of Camille, who cannot arrive before Monday to dinner, and who entreats you to wait for him. You will not say him nay; and by doing him this kindness you will be able to lavish a few more attentions upon your unhappy friend; I fully appreciate how charming and kind you have been to her. I have much to tell and to ask upon your return. Your little notes have been delivered according to your orders. I am yours, with the most affectionate respect."

Lemontey also made the journey to Auxerre, and announced his coming by a note, bearing no date except the day of the week: —

"Saturday.

"So it does not suffice you, *aimable* heroine, to embellish the places where you are, you must needs sadden those where you are not.

“I set out on Monday by dawn and by diligence, and on Tuesday, at eight o’clock in the morning, I shall be at Auxerre. I shall go to-morrow to say good-by to your mother, so that I may bring you the freshest news of her.

“Do me the favor to lay my respects at the feet of the illustrious exile. It is sweet to inspire so general an interest; it is a treasure-house of consolation upon which Mme. de Staël can draw largely without fear of seeing it exhausted. I will say the same of the sentiments I have vowed to you for life.

“L.”

The failure of the banking-house of M. Récamier, which took place this same year, could not be a matter of indifference to Camille Jordan. He hastened to express his sympathy to the brave woman who bore without flinching this first stroke of misfortune:—

“LYONS, Oct. 28, 1806.

“DEAR JULIETTE,—I have no words to tell you how deeply I am affected by your misfortunes and those of your husband. When they who least know you are moved by them, judge how he must feel who is bound to you by so many ties. I heard the news only two days ago, and have not yet recovered from the shock. My thoughts never leave you; I wander in spirit through that house; I go from your husband to yourself; I mingle my tears with yours. Ah! in spite of the distance and my new ties, I should certainly have hastened to you at once had I thought my presence of



use; had I not known that you were surrounded with sympathizing friends. But I hear that every consolation that friendship and respect can offer is lavished upon you to the utmost. And just it is, that they who were always doing good, who were so generous in prosperity, so compassionate toward every species of misfortune, should excite an interest so universal and so profound. I am told especially that you, Juliette, are a model of courage, resignation, and disinterestedness; that it is you who console and sustain your husband. I admire, but I am not surprised. I recognize her whose elevation and nobility of character, under a light-hearted exterior, have always impressed me, and upon whom it was reserved for misfortune to set the final seal of perfection. Degérando writes to me about it with deep feeling. You will no doubt see a great deal of my other self. Let him be my interpreter with you; let his attentions shadow forth those I would fain pay you; let his friendship make you think of mine.

“I venture to add that you would afford me, so far away from you at this time, a much-needed consolation by informing me yourself how you are, and assuring me that I am one of the friends upon whom your heart reposes with some little comfort, and with perfect confidence.

“Remember me to your excellent husband. Do not fail to tell him how deeply I feel for him in this misfortune. Assure him from me of the high estimation (I know it well) in which he stands in Lyons. No one could be more beloved, more respected, more pitied than he is:

it is one unanimous concert of praise and regret; and every one is convinced that, whatever may be the situation of his affairs, if he does not allow himself to be cast down, but resumes himself their management, he will, with his activity, serenity, and accustomed skill, very soon restore them to a flourishing condition. Adieu! I do not cease to think of you, and compass you about with the best wishes the tenderest friendship can bestow."

Mme. Récamier was not long in replying to this affectionate letter:—

"Dear Camille," she writes, "in the midst of all my troubles your letter has been a very great comfort to me. I read it to M. Récamier, who is very much touched by your interest. The attachment of my friends sustains my courage. However unexpected my misfortunes, I have been able to bear them with resignation, and I have had the satisfaction of consoling and alleviating the sufferings of my husband and family. And should I not also, dear Camille, return thanks to Heaven, who, in reserving for me such bitter trials, has given me friends to aid me in bearing them? I am very sure that you have regretted not being near me during this unhappy time. But must we give up all hope of seeing you this winter? Think what a consolation for me it would be to see you here. "J. R."

Misfortune seemed bent upon pursuing the brilliant woman whose lot had been so often the object of envy.

After her husband's failure, Mme. Récamier had a far deeper grief to bear in the death of a mother whom she adored. Mme. Bernard, still young and still beautiful, had struggled for more than a year with a very painful malady, to which, in spite of every care and the tender love of her daughter, she succumbed at the end of January, 1807.

"Dear Juliette," wrote Camille Jordan to Mme. Récamier, on the third of February, "I have heard with much pain of the loss you have sustained. Though so long anticipated, and softened in a measure by the thought of what cruel suffering a beloved being has escaped, I fully understand what a blow this is to you, and how such a trial, added to other misfortunes, leaves a sad and dreary void in your heart. May the deep interest of all those about you give you at least some consolation! Very true friends remain to you, and your sorrows seem to give new strength to the affection which binds them to you. I dare trust that you still count mine among that small number of tried hearts upon which you repose with perfect confidence and with some satisfaction. I beg you to remember me to M. Récamier, also to your cousin and Mme. de Catellan. You have not answered a letter of mine written some months ago, which seemed to call for a reply. I expect nothing from you at present; but, at least, let me hear of you through Mme. de Catellan, that I may learn that you are not too unhappy, and that you remember one of your most faithful friends."

The new and deep grief which her mother's death caused to Mme. Récamier greatly impaired her health, and at midsummer her family and physician united in recommending a change of air. Her strong desire to see Mme. de Staël moved her to depart. She proposed to make the tour of Switzerland, and set out for Coppet in July, in company with Count Elzéar de Sabran, also an intimate and very devoted friend of the illustrious exile. They travelled post, in the carriage and with the servants of Mme. Récamier.

They had nearly reached their destination without accident when, near Moret, where the road winds along the edge of a high precipice, the carriage, through the carelessness of the postilion, was overturned, and, with its occupants, precipitated over the brink.

Out of four horses two were killed; the postilion was injured; while the servant, who was seated on the box, had just time to jump off into the road, shouting at the top of his voice. As for the travellers shut up inside, — Mme. Récamier, her maid, and the Count de Sabran, — all were more or less bruised by the terrible fall, but none seriously hurt, though Mme. Récamier sprained her foot. This accident caused great excitement in Paris as well as at Coppet.

M. de Montmorency wrote from Paris, the 19th of July: "I thank God with all my heart for having preserved you, *belle* and *aimable* Juliette, from that frightful danger which made us all shudder. For the cross that, with very proper feeling, you wish to

erect in that terrible spot, I shall have great respect; I think I shall make a pilgrimage to it some day. It was some noble sentiment like this, which God never allows to pass unnoticed, that obtained for you His protection in that moment of peril. Your impatience to provide holy consolation for the interesting invalid<sup>1</sup> at Pau has already been rewarded. The Abbé Fousset has just sent to me from Orleans the copy of a letter which he had written to him, in which he gives an account of his general confession, of his resignation, and of all the consolations religion has given him. The good abbé desires that you should be informed of this letter.

“Alphonse had suffered much, but in that respect was a little better, — one dares say no more, but let us pray earnestly for him. His brother has gone at last.

“Adrien will have heard with concern, at Aix-la-Chapelle, this news from Moret. I have not yet heard of his arrival.

“You can judge whether my wishes and regrets do not follow you to that kindly and hospitable abode of friendship where it would have been so pleasant to go this summer. For a moment I thought it possible, but I no longer indulge the flattering hope. A thousand affectionate regards, my compliments to your fellow-

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<sup>1</sup> Prince Alphonse Pignatelli, who, young and handsome, was dying of consumption; through Mme. Récamier's influence he had been brought to a state of religious resignation which assuaged his last moments.

traveller, whose opportunity of serving you we must all envy."

Lemontey also wrote as follows: —

"July 13, 1807.

"M. Récamier has just left me, after reading to me your letter; never did reading seem longer and more terrible. M. Récamier exhibited an emotion with which I deeply sympathized, and that it pleased me to see him show. One will never love you feebly; it is a common law which all the world takes pleasure in obeying.

"But stay; are you not endeavoring to allay our apprehensions? Is it really true that a simple sprain is the only result of so frightful an accident? If your letter had not been so explicit, and, above all, if M. de Sabran's had not announced so positively your departure for Geneva, I should have directly proposed to M. Récamier to go to you myself, and take with me the skilful Richerand; but as there seems to be no doubt that you are now within reach of every succor that friendship and skill can afford, we must be contented to await with impatience the confirmation of your entire recovery. I dare no longer encourage you to make the tour of Switzerland, as you proposed. The very idea of your carriage among the mountains makes me shudder. I take pleasure, however, in imagining that this terrible accident will be the end of that ill-fortune which has pursued you for two years. It seems to me that your first life is ended, and that Providence, in miraculously preserving you, has given

you a new one which will console you for past misfortunes.

“Adieu, *aimable* Juliette; dispose of me as though I belonged to you. Pray assure Mme. de Staël of my deep interest. I cannot commiserate M. de Sabran for his share in an accident which I envy him, but please offer him my congratulations upon its result. Give us news of the faithful Joseph.<sup>1</sup> I shall write this very moment to your cousin.<sup>2</sup> I trust that you have had reassuring reports from the Pyrenees.”<sup>3</sup>

It is not necessary to recapitulate here all the entertainments, all the social successes which awaited at Coppet her who was there styled *la belle amie*. They have been sufficiently detailed already in the “Memoirs and Correspondence.” The summer of 1807, owing to the presence of Mme. Récamier, was a particularly gay one at this chateau, where the influence of Mme. de Staël’s genius diffused around her an atmosphere which her guests found delightful to both mind and heart.\*

Mme. Récamier was unwilling to quit the shores of Lake Geneva without seeing Camille Jordan, whose arrival had been expected in vain. She wrote to him, therefore, announcing her project of stopping at Lyons on her way to Paris. We have only Camille’s reply:—

<sup>1</sup> The domestic who accompanied Madame Récamier.

<sup>2</sup> Madame de Dalmassy.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.*, from Prince Alphonse Pignatelli.

“LYONS, Sept. 7, 1807.

“DEAR JULIETTE, — Upon returning from a trip to Grenoble, I find your letter of the 27th of August. I regret that my reply has been unavoidably retarded for a few days, and I lose not a moment to say to you how much I am touched by your persistent determination to return by way of Lyons, and the kind motives which have actuated you. It is very lucky that you have advised me of it, for I was on the point of starting for our country place at Bresse, which is ten leagues from Lyons. If necessary, I can postpone my departure for a week, when I must absolutely pass a fortnight there on urgent business. So try to come immediately, or else defer your coming for three weeks. My Julie, who fully responds to the liking you seem to have for her, shares my eagerness to see you; and if to love you very much, to surround you with every affectionate attention, be a welcome that will suffice and please you, you will surely be content with ours. Besides, you must know how much pleasure you will give to all your family, and how charmed they were and still are with the young and ingenuous boarding-school girl, notwithstanding some rather suspicious intimacies, which made grave relatives shake their heads. As for me, your accomplice, I congratulate you upon being at Coppet, and envy you, too. I would certainly have got away from Grenoble if I could. How was it that when you were at the Grande-Chartreuse you did not go down into the town, where an entire tribe of my family would have welcomed you, worshipped you, and



perhaps have made you pass a few pleasant moments? You say nothing now about your health, but I have had a report from the Baron de Vogt on the subject, which pleases me much.

“Please say to the dear Baron that I shall send him to-morrow the ribbon he asked me for; to Matthieu, if he is still with you, that I received his letter at Grenoble, and am very sorry he does not return by way of Lyons; to Mme. de Staël, that I will write to her soon, and that I think of her often; to all those who are with her, and especially to my dear Augustus, kind regards.”

Some days later, Camille Jordan, writing now to Mme. de Staël, explains the causes of his failure to appear at Coppet:—

“LYONS, Sept. 10, 1807.

“You would never think, in the midst of your whirl of excitement, of inquiring why I have not seen you this Autumn; but I feel I must tell you why. Just as I was ready to start on this pleasant trip to Paris, Grenoble, and Geneva, on which I had counted for refreshment for both mind and heart, a new obstacle presented itself: I had to take the place of a sick brother, and go South beyond Montpellier on business. I hurried home only a few days before the expected confinement of my wife. Shortly after, the *agreeable* lawsuit, of which I have spoken to you, began again, and thus the days go by.

“But will you not come here, as you have led us to hope? Will you not, at least, accompany Juliette upon

her return? Has Coppet, which you have made others love so much, at last won your affections? We hear of nothing but the enchantments you have contrived to transport thither. But all that will not, I fear, satisfy the cravings of the heart which created Corinne.

“*Apropos* of Corinne, I think you will be interested if I send you this extract from a letter I have just received from Mme. de Shardt.<sup>1</sup> It will tell you of her admiration, and also of a criticism by Wieland. Goethe, however, appears to criticise nothing; and in another part of her letter she simply says that he is enthusiastic. Pray impress upon the lovely Juliette how much we desire to see her at Lyons. Say to her that I doubt not that she very cordially recommended me to her relative the judge; that I thank her heartily for her good intentions, but that never were intentions followed by less effect; that, far from finding favor in his eyes, my family have not even obtained justice at his hands; that, in the discharge of functions where it was his duty to confine himself to weighing impartially the evidence, he manifested toward us an amount of prejudice and ill-will which was the scandal of all who witnessed it.

“What has become of your proposed essay on conversation, and of Benjamin’s work on religions, and Schlegel’s dissertation on Phèdre?

“Do not fail, I beg of you, to remember me to your

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<sup>1</sup> Lady of honor to the Grand-Duchess of Saxe-Weimar.

children and cousin. Believe in my attachment, all the more true for its reticence of expression."

Mme. Récamier did, in fact, return home by way of Lyons, whence — owing to her man-servant meeting with an accident — she continued her route to Paris, accompanied only by her maid. Camille Jordan, a little apprehensive, wrote to her as follows: —

“LYONS, Oct. 4, 1807.

“With what impatience, dear Juliette, I await the letter you promised me; I already begin to wonder why I do not receive it! How is it possible not to have some anxiety about this journey, rashly undertaken, without a man-servant, in your delicate health, and in such unfavorable weather?

“All your friends here are very uneasy; I confess, however, that I am a little less so than others, for I know that the three Graces who always accompany you are not, in travelling, a useless *cortège*; they will win for you, wherever you appear, the most attentive service. From post to post, in my mind's eye I see you the idol of the postilions, the dearest friend of the landladies; and it is, I am very sure, the undefined consciousness you have of your universal empire which gives you in travelling so much boldness in spite of your timidity, and that made you set at defiance all our prudent counsels.

“I would tell you again of my pleasure in seeing you, of how my heart ached in parting from you, of my tender affection. But, as I have said before, I feel it is

almost useless to express such feelings to you, when I think what a spoiled child of love and friendship you are, and how tame my simple and affectionate expressions must seem after the deep sighs of the Baron,<sup>1</sup> the sobs of the Baroness,<sup>2</sup> and the transports of Milady.<sup>3</sup> It is true, nevertheless, that if you laid less stress upon this outside worship, you would find few of your friends that vie with me in constant and real affection; and in these two flying visits I have learnt, if that were possible, to love you even better. You were so perfect in your behavior to me; you revealed dispositions of soul which touched me so deeply; I have been so delighted to see you leaving off, day by day, something of your coquetry, and attaching yourself more and more to serious and sacred things! It was an old wish of mine, your growth in perfection and your well-being; and it is very gratifying to me to see my wish so near accomplishment. But why did we talk so little of this interesting reformation? Why was it that importunate people were always disturbing our private conversations? Why was I myself so sadly and cruelly preoccupied? But, *apropos* of this preoccupation, I make haste to tell you that your short visit, like a good angel's, seems to have brought me a blessing: my child is rapidly getting better, requiring now only care, and causing no further anxiety. We have also news

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<sup>1</sup> De Vogt.

<sup>2</sup> Baroness de Staël.

<sup>3</sup> Lady Webb, a beautiful Englishwoman, sentimental and rather frivolous, whom the continental blockade had detained in France.

of Degérando, who is improving, though slowly. So I breathe again; and you will find me, I trust, in the spring looking less sad, and wholly given up to the pleasure of seeing you, waiting upon you, and inflexible in dragging you to our museums and our *valleys*, and making you, by main force, admire every foot of your birthplace. You ought to do so, at all events, out of sheer gratitude, — for it is marvellous how, in those few days, and without apparent effort on your part, you have added new conquests to the old. I hear that the Delphins<sup>1</sup> chant in chorus your praises; I am witness to two vanquished mothers-in-law confessing that their daughters' husbands were right. I see that you have completely fascinated my Julie; and even my little daughter, affectionately asking to see again the beautiful lady, proves how it runs in my blood to love you. There is only Milady of whom I cannot give you late news. I called upon her once, but did not find her at home.

“I hope you will not forget the letter for the Degérandos, and the message for Antoinette.

“I wrote to the Baroness the very day you left, and, — forgive me, — having caught the infection of tattling, I could not help telling her of your mad freak in setting out alone with your maid.

“Remember me, I beg of you, to your husband, and to all our common friends. Above all, tell Matthieu how much I am rejoiced at the renewal of your affec-

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<sup>1</sup> Brother-in-law and sister of M. Récamier.

tion, and how kindly we have spoken of him here. Adieu, dear, very dear Juliette! My Julie asks to be remembered, and shares all my sentiments towards you."

Camille Jordan wrote at the same time to Mme. de Staël, relating to her this incident in the journey of her beautiful friend; and Mme. de Staël, in her turn, sent the letter to Mme. Récamier.

"How much," she writes to her, "has this solitary journey distressed me! How I bewailed the fate which severed me from the pleasant life which I should now enjoy had we never parted! I send you a letter of Camille Jordan, because I wish to give you the pleasure of seeing yourself as others see you."

CAMILLE JORDAN TO MME. DE STAËL.

"LYONS, Oct. 5, 1807.

"I now proceed to render an account to you of my precious charge. She left yesterday at one o'clock, and I accompanied her a short distance. You had a share in all our last words. She made me promise not to tell you of a piece of rashness on her part; but how shall I keep it from you? We had, with much trouble, finally persuaded her to take a man-servant. I had found an excellent one for her, when she arranged to take a young cousin with her in her carriage. This appeared to me even better; but what happens? At the very last moment this absurd cousin changes his plans. I wish to postpone her departure in order to fall back upon the

man-servant; she will not consent, being madly bent upon going alone, and lo! there she is on the great highways. I was in despair; but, however, I confess I am not as anxious as you would have been, when I consider that she does not travel at all by night, that she stops half-way, that the roads are safe and frequented, and how, at the sight of that sweet face, everybody is ready to oblige and eager to serve her.

“We kept her, as you perceive, only three days. She found me in the saddest state of mind, for I had a child very ill, and had just heard that Degérando had had a relapse. But she came like an angel of consolation. I scarcely quitted her, but, in fact, saw little of her in any satisfactory way, so taken up was she by family duties, the attentions of strangers, and a sort of passion that Lady Webb has conceived for her. In all this whirl we could scarcely secure a few moments alone together for private conversation. I perceived with joy how much your common friendship has been revived and ennobled; how her mind has become more serious, more religious, more loving, and a new charm, indefinable, but most touching, been added to all her old fascinations. I condole with you upon losing her, but I congratulate you upon having won and inspired such an affection. I am relieved also in regard to her health; every thing shows that it is better; and it was a pleasant sight to see her, after a very fatiguing day in the country, dancing a *gavotte* in the evening at Lady Webb's with all her old lightness and grace. Unfortunately she made a visit the next day to the

hospitals, which excited her feelings too acutely; she slept very little the night before her departure, and was therefore ill prepared for travelling, and I long to have tidings of the journey.

“The Baron<sup>1</sup> was an object of pity when he said good-by to her. How he loves her! It is making him more worthy of being loved. Tell him that we regret having seen so little of him. My child is better, but my friend’s health and situation still give me anxiety.

“Remember me to my dear Augustus, to Messieurs Schlegel, de Sabran, and Sismondi.”

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CAMILLE JORDAN TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

“LYONS, Jan. 8, 1808.

“I do not write you so regularly, but I think of you very often. I recall our last conversations; I form a thousand wishes for the fulfilment of all good purposes; I see with emotion the time of journeys and delicious interviews approaching. Matthieu has, doubtless, during my silence served as an intermediary between us. He must often have assured you of my affection. You have had to console him lately in bitter anxieties,<sup>2</sup> and I envy you the attentions you have been able to pay to this excellent friend.

“I have also heard of you several times, indirectly.

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<sup>1</sup> The Baron de Vogt, who had accompanied the fair traveller from Geneva to Lyons.

<sup>2</sup> Matthieu de Montmorency was threatened with the loss of his father.



I was for a little while alarmed about your health, but was speedily reassured. I long, however, to hear of you at last from yourself.

“Upon my return from the country I was myself indisposed for some time, but now I am better. I have again been anxious about the health of our friends the travellers,<sup>1</sup> and of their child, but we get at last excellent accounts of them. They talk more than ever of their return, which I earnestly desire.

“I have been for six weeks expecting another flying visit from another friend,<sup>2</sup> and I am surprised, and even begin to be anxious, at the delay, fearing it may be owing to some serious obstacle. I have written to ask an explanation. It may, however, be nothing but her natural irresolution, increased by her recent mental sufferings, which, I am told, have been extreme, and which I pity profoundly. The latest news I have of her was given me by the Baron.<sup>3</sup> He had much to say of you, and with his usual affection; he remarked, however, upon your long silence, and muttered something about your being, perhaps, occupied with some new flirtation. Can this be really possible? And that regenerated heart, which was dreaming of the ideal and the infinite, could it again stoop to such childish sports? I repel such a suspicion.

“Everybody here remembers you faithfully and affectionately. Even Milady’s violent fancy for you does

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<sup>1</sup> The Degérandos, who were in Italy; M. Degérando was commissary for the French government.

<sup>2</sup> Mme. de Staël.

<sup>3</sup> Baron de Vogt.

not seem extinguished by absence. We met the other day at last for the first time since you left us. She was most interesting to me when she talked about the great fancy she had taken to you. But no one remembers you with more affection than my angel of love and goodness, my Julie; she also often asks when you are coming again.

“I have no need to tell you that my little Caroline continues to delight me by a prettiness and sensibility beyond her years.”

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CAMILLE JORDAN TO MME. RÉCAMIER AT AIX, IN SAVOY.

“LYONS, June 6, 1810.

“DEAR JULIETTE, — I have received your kind note, and delivered immediately those enclosed in it. The news of your safe arrival has been joyfully received, but you have been well scolded for forgetting that letter of Matthieu, who was in great distress about it. It seemed a strange piece of thoughtlessness. However, the same day came other letters from him, and very sad ones, announcing that he was detained by the serious illness of his father. You may well imagine how much we regret this delay and its cause. Our friend more especially had great need of his consoling presence, for since your departure she has relapsed into deep dejection. Schlegel arrived yesterday; Talma continues to occupy all our time; we either go to see him or we talk about him. I am obliged to quit them for four days to go to Bresse on business, but I shall

still have two or three days to pass with them on my return; then they go to Aix. I fear I shall miss Adrien; but he will find your letter. I have strongly represented to our friend, in accordance with what you say in your letter, that this journey would give you the greatest pleasure; that you are not deterred from it by any selfish considerations, but by a painful deference to another's objections; but I must frankly tell you—I know not if it be owing to the power of her eloquence—that she has convinced me that if there were any thing objectionable in your former journey, or, rather, in the circumstances connected with it, there are no objections to the excursion at present contemplated, as your journey has evidently a different object; and this mere *détour* would not be noticed.

“But I especially insist that you make us a long visit on your return, as a compensation for that hasty one, though that sufficed to make my Julie feel all your charm; henceforth she shares all my eagerness to see you again; and I think that even my mother-in-law herself would be almost cured of her *migraine* by the sight of you.

“About that visit you say to me things which are both kind and cruel. No doubt you then learnt something of the state of my heart toward you; but what! Did you not know it until then? and is not loving you an old and dear habit of mine? I hope that you have begun at last to take the waters, and conscientiously. Say to the Baron that my regard for him would, if that were possible, be increased by the perfect care he takes

of you. I beg of him not to forget a notice he promised me, and the two leaves of a note-book.

“He must have understood how pleased I have been at seeing the painful question which divided us decided by authority.

“Excuse my hasty scrawl, written just as I am about to start. Let it convey to you at least the assurance of my tender regard.”

As we see by the preceding letter, *Mme. Récamier* was at the baths of Aix, where, in the summer of 1810, a very brilliant company was assembled. Besides *Mme. Récamier*, there were among the guests *Mme. de Boigne*, *Adrien de Montmorency*, *Monsieur Sosthène de Larochevoucauld* and his wife, who was the daughter of *Matthieu de Montmorency*; and also the *Baron de Vogt*, whose name has already occurred several times in the correspondence of *Camille Jordan*, and about whom it may not be useless to say a few words. He was an intelligent German, whom a common philanthropy had brought into close and friendly relations with *Degérando* and *Camille Jordan*; and who owned in the environs of Hamburg a large estate, where he devoted his time and intelligence to the moral improvement of the peasants and to the advancement of agriculture. He had been presented by *Mme. Récamier* to *Mme. de Staël*, and, being naturally very enthusiastic and a worshipper of celebrities, was very much flattered by the kind reception accorded him at *Coppet*. But if the Baron paid court to those whose eminent talent

gave them a wide reputation, he was no less disposed to side always with those in power. The enthusiasm which marked several of his letters to Mme. Récamier was sensibly cooled when, toward the end of the year 1810, the Emperor Napoleon adopted harsher measures against Mme. de Staël, — suppressing her book, “De l’Allemagne,” and exiling in turn Matthieu de Montmorency and Mme. Récamier in 1811.

The Baron’s letters from Geneva furnish some interesting details of Mme. de Staël’s *salon*, and on that account a few extracts from them are here inserted:—

THE BARON DE VOGT TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

“SÉCHERONS, Sept. 23, 1810.

“It is to you I owe the very gracious reception which has been accorded me at Coppet. It is, without doubt, to the recommendation of being your friend that I owe my intimate acquaintance with that remarkable woman. Without you I would probably have met her; some indifferent acquaintance might, perhaps, have introduced me at her house, but with my habit, which you know, of avoiding celebrities, I never should have penetrated the inmost recesses of that beautiful and sublime soul. I should never have known how much superior she is even to her great reputation. *She is an angel sent from heaven to be a revelation of goodness upon earth.* To make her irresistible, a pure ray of celestial light adorns her mind, rendering her in every respect charming.

“Both profound and light, whether she be search-

ing out some mysterious secret of the soul, or seizing the subtlest shade of sentiment, her wit sparkles but does not dazzle, and when the moment of greatest effulgence is passed, leaves a mild radiance behind it. It is once more the pure daylight which illumines goodness. Doubtless some errors, some weaknesses veil at times the celestial vision: the initiated themselves must, perhaps, grieve over those eclipses which the astronomers of Geneva take so much pains to calculate and predict.

“My travels since I last wrote have been confined to journeys to Lausanne and Coppet, where I often pass three or four days. The life there suits me perfectly,—the society still better. I delight in the wit of Constant, the erudition of Schlegel, the amiability of Sabran, the talent and character of Sismondi, the naturalness and truth, the good judgment of Augustus, the sweet and *spirituelle* loveliness of Albertine. I was forgetting the good, the excellent Bonstetten, full of varied learning, affable in mind and disposition, every way calculated to inspire esteem and confidence.

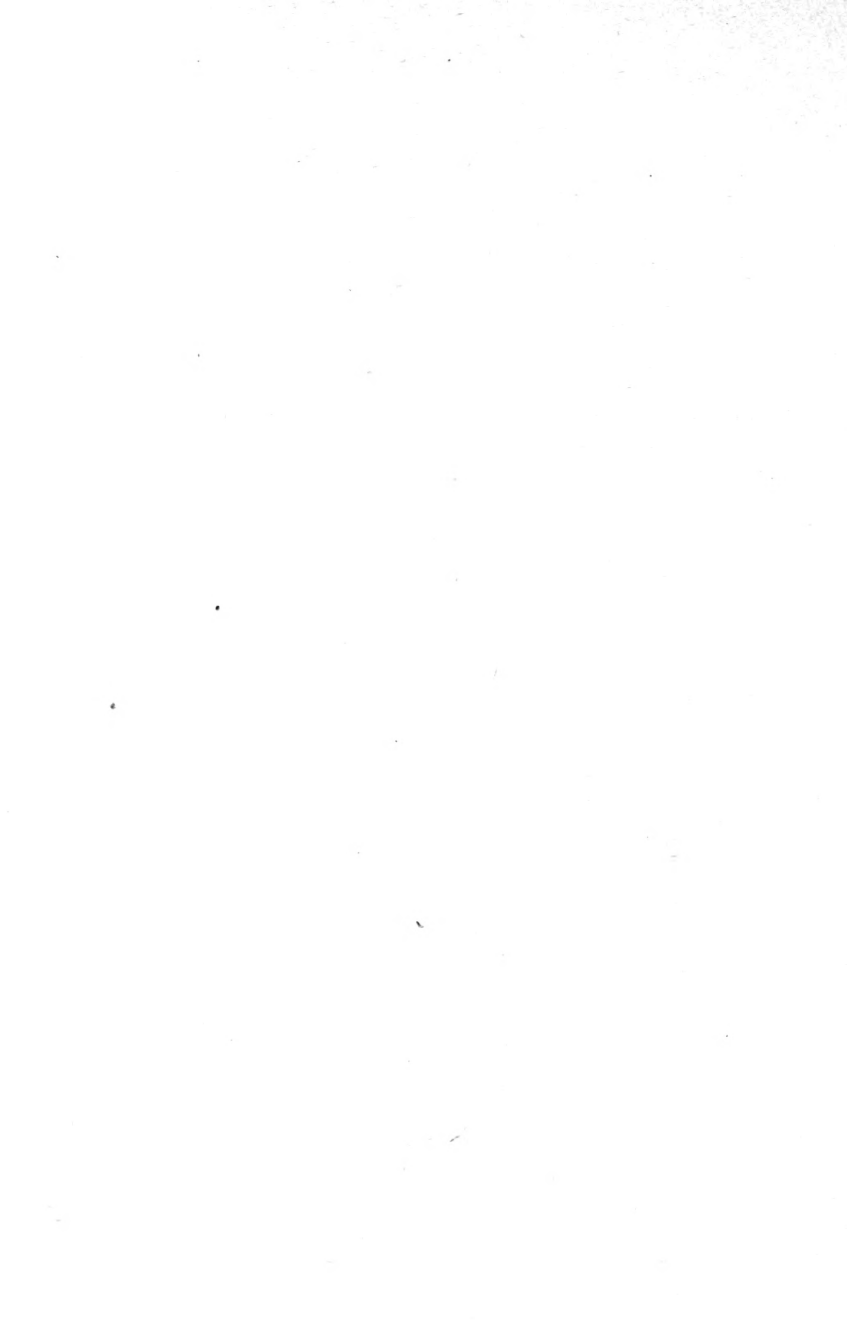
“Your sublime friend oversees, animates, vivifies the whole. She puts mind into every one about her. In every corner there is somebody engaged in composing something. Corinne is writing her delightful letters on Germany, which will be, without doubt, her finest work.

“‘La Veuve de Sunam,’ an oriental melodrama which she has just finished, will be played in October; it is very effective. Coppet will be flooded with tears. Constant and Augustus are each writing a tragedy;



BENJAMIN CONSTANT

*from a painting by Philippoteaux, engraved by Wolff*





Sabran is composing his opera-comique ; Sismondi, his history ; Schlegel, his translation ; Bonstetten, his philosophy ; and I, my letter to Juliette."

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"SÉCHERONS, Oct. 18, 1810.

"Since my last letter, Mme. de Staël has read to us several chapters of her work. It bears throughout the stamp of her talent. I wish I could induce her to strike out every thing relating to politics, and every metaphor which may impair the perspicuity, simplicity, and correctness of its style. I would give to the work a harmless character, as it were, that should disarm criticism and disappoint malevolence. She has no need to give proof of republicanism and imagination, but of prudence and moderation. Upon my return to Coppet I found there Mme. de V——, who passed several days with us, and who loves Mme. de Staël with the enthusiasm she cannot fail to inspire in all who are capable of appreciating her.

"Mlle. de Jenner took part in a tragedy of Werner,<sup>1</sup> which was played last Friday before an audience of twenty persons. The three actors, including Werner and Schlegel, played to perfection.

"The plot of the piece is excessively tragic. An obscure family, made criminal by the same fatality which was so disastrous to the Atridæ, furnishes an Orestes in humble life, or, as Mme. de Staël said, a rustic Œdipus.

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<sup>1</sup> Werner's sinister drama, entitled "The 24th of February."

A profound knowledge of the human heart, all the gloom with which religion can invest itself in the heart of a mystic who, though guilty, is without sin, joined to elegant versification, renders this beautiful horror deeply and painfully effective. I was overpowered by it.

“You will probably not be curious to know more about a play in which, with only three actors, there are three murders and an assassination. We breathed again during the performance of some proverbs of M. de Châteaueux,<sup>1</sup> in which M. de Sabran and Augustus distinguished themselves.”

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“October 28.

“The arrival of M. Cuvier in Switzerland has been a happy diversion for Mme. de Staël; she saw him for two days in Geneva, and they were very well pleased with each other. Upon her return to Coppet, she found Middleton there; and in listening to his troubles she, in a measure, forgot her own; since yesterday she has resumed her work.

“The poet whose mystical and gloomy genius has caused us such profound emotions leaves in a few days for Italy.

“M. de Sabran, Middleton, and Augustus go to Paris in December, to enlarge the interesting circle which gathers around you.”

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<sup>1</sup> Lullin de Châteaueux, a man of eminent abilities, author of the “Manuscrit de l’Ile d’Elbe,” which made so great a sensation in 1814.

“COPPET, Nov. 12.

“Werner left us at the beginning of the month; he is going to Rome, if the fear he has of *every thing* will allow him to get there. There is a singular kind of folly and inaptitude in these imaginative people. It is paying even for genius more than it is worth.

“I accompanied Corinne to Massot’s.<sup>1</sup> To make the sitting less tiresome, they managed to give us some pleasant music. A young lady by the name of Romilly played very agreeably on the harp; the studio was the temple of the Muses. The portrait will be a likeness without that exaggerated air of inspiration which, among other things, mars the portrait by Mme. Lebrun.

“Bonstetten has given us two readings from a memorial upon the Alps of the North; part of it was very good, and then came *ennui*.

“Mme. de Staël has resumed her readings; there is no longer now any *ennui*. It is prodigious what she must have read, and thoroughly, too, to master the ideas about which she says such charming things. It is very easy not to be of her opinion, but it is impossible not to admire her talent.”

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“GENEVA, Dec. 22.

“Here we all are at Geneva; Les Balances has become another Coppet. I have a delightful lodging overlooking trellised vineyards, and a broad view of the

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<sup>1</sup> A portrait-painter.

valleys of Savoy between the Alps and the Jura. I see from my windows the mountains we cross at Les Echelles. Last evening the resemblance to Coppet was perfect. I had been with Mme. de Staël to call upon Mme. Rilliet, who is so attractive in her home; upon our return, I played chess with Sismondi, while Mme. de Staël, Mlle. Randall, and Mlle. Jenner sat on the sofa and talked with Bonstetten and the young Barante. It was our old daily life over again, — that by-gone time that I shall never cease to regret. The young Rocca has something very amiable about him. In him, a gentle disposition and a delicate constitution are united to valor and courage. He is so small that one cannot conceive how he finds room for all his wounds; he loves his profession, and his father's tears will not keep him here."

The foregoing extracts are the last from the letters of Baron de Vogt which relate to Coppet, as in 1811 he ceased visiting Mme. de Staël, and quitted Switzerland.

This somewhat sudden rupture surprised the friends of Mme. Récamier, who, at her recommendation, had received the Baron with great kindness. She asked an explanation. His reply does not show him in a very heroic light, and is another instance of the demoralizing effect of despotism upon character: —

"Friends who were alarmed for themselves and for me," he writes, "persons in authority, who implored me not to compromise myself and those who are interested in me, and not to injure the *person* who, through

me, might seem to be guilty of a new offence, have forced me to quit the place which I had hoped to make a second home; and have, with still more reason, forbidden me to see the *person* who has rendered this sacrifice necessary. My only remaining hope was to obtain that person's own approval of my determination. I intrusted this commission to two of my friends; their efforts have met with as much success as I could hope for.

"This is the explanation you have requested, and which you had the right to expect from me."

Once more, in 1810, Mme. de Staël and Mme. Récamier met on the banks of the Loire, at the chateau of Chaumont, where they enjoyed for some time the pleasure of being together.

During this sojourn in Touraine the book on Germany, to which Mme. de Staël had devoted two years of assiduous labor, was seized and suppressed. We have spoken elsewhere of the despair Napoleon's renewed severity caused to the noble woman who, almost alone, withstood the imperial despotism. Upon her return to Coppet, she had thenceforth but one idea, — to quit France, to escape from a government which fettered both heart and mind. Her letters, growing more and more sad, portrayed the state of her mind, and confirmed Mme. Récamier in her determination to see again the friend rendered more dear to her by misfortune. But before doing so, she wished to pay a visit in the environs of Paris to Mme. de Boigne, a person

whose society was extremely agreeable to her, and who alone of all the friends of Mme. Récamier's youth survived her. But she found at the chateau Beauregard only her friend's parents, the Marquis and Marchioness d'Osmont, their daughter being in Savoy with General de Boigne. The following letter expresses Mme. de Boigne's regret at not seeing her:—

THE COUNTESS DE BOIGNE TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

“ BUISSONROND, June 24, 1811.

“ You have been to Beauregard, where you were amiable and charming. — You have spoken of me with interest and friendship. They have told me all about it; and I cannot resist the desire to thank you for this obliging visit, which I take to myself a little. Alas! how I wish I were not so far away! I will not speak of the life I lead here; you know it by heart, and I do not think you will forget it very soon. Everybody talks to me of you, regrets your absence, and longs for your return.

“ I went the other day on what was called a pleasure excursion to a certain chateau de la Batie, to which you have to be drawn by oxen. There were fifty of us; we had a detestable and, moreover, interminable dinner, healths, cannons, brass bands, monograms formed of tricolored cockades (the *fête* was for the prefect); surprises that everybody was fully prepared for, — every thing, in fact, that is comprised in as strong a dose of *ennui* as one could swallow in eight hours' time, — for the festivities lasted until night. The next day, Rain-

ulphe<sup>1</sup> yawning, I said to him, 'What is the matter?' — 'I am bored.' — 'With what?' — 'With yesterday.' This nonsense made us laugh.

"Another day I went to Aix; my first visit was to the *maison* Capellini; after making that pilgrimage, I called upon Mme. Périer, who talked a great deal more about you than about M. and Mme. Sosthène; I thought her very ungrateful. I have engaged the house where we saw Mme. Hainguerlot; it is at present occupied by Mme. de Talleyrand; but I am told that she is to leave immediately, and I expect to be settled at Aix in a fortnight. I shall take my cook with me. The establishment at Mme. Périer's is endurable only when one is there in force, as we were two years ago; and I know nobody who is going to Aix this year. They say that Mme. Doumerc will be there; I shall be happy to meet her; we can talk together about you.

"So the marriage of Mlle. de Catellan is settled; I am very glad of it; it seems to me every way wise and free from objections, which is all that can be attained in a marriage *de convenance*.

"I have received a very kind letter from M. de Balk, and have sent him an answer, to which he has replied; but as I do not wish to draw him into a correspondence which in the end he would tire of, and which I think him too polite to be the first to break off, I beg you, Madame, to put on your most gracious manner, and say to him that I have received his letter, that I thank

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<sup>1</sup> The Count Rainulphe d'Osmond, her brother.

him for it, and that discretion alone prevents my replying. I saw the place of your fall in the Jura. I shuddered to think of the danger you ran; I think it is the only place between Moret and Les Rousses where one can be overturned without being dashed to pieces. I have seen Mme. de Staël; she was delightfully kind to me. I have seen Brétigny, who alarmed me very much about Mme. de Chevreuse; he thinks her lungs are affected; she is summoning all her courage to meet death; it seems easier for her to give up life than Paris. If she has no other chagrin than that of exile, I cannot understand her. To me it is only heart-sorrows which can make one so weary of life. Good-by, dear Madame; I did not mean to write you until I was at Aix, but I wanted to thank you for your kind remembrance of my poor Beauregard."

Able at last to carry out the project which she had been nourishing for six months, Mme. Récamier left Paris on the 23d of August, 1811, with a passport *visé* for Aix in Savoy, fully resolved, indeed, to go thither to take the waters, but still more fully resolved to stop first at Coppet. She counted upon meeting at Mme. de Staël's Matthieu and Adrien de Montmorency, for the two cousins had gone in company to Switzerland. When she left Paris, Mme. Récamier was not aware that Matthieu de Montmorency had already been ordered into exile. The following letter from him, which miscarried, and was not received until long afterward, announces the painful event in terms so ambig-



ous that she perhaps would have had difficulty in understanding it:—

“ August 28, 1811.

“ I need not tell you, *aimable amie*, what our feelings are at this moment; the worst of all is the state our poor friend is in; through excessive sensitiveness she blames herself for it all, and that makes this petty persecution, which otherwise I might easily endure, really very hard to bear. Nevertheless, I will confess that I must avoid thinking of you at this moment if I would be strong. Still, good and generous as you are, shall we not find some means of seeing each other before very long? But at present, if you follow the dictates of your heart and come here, I verily think that you will do harm to our friend. Choose between a short and secret journey or a stay at Fribourg, where we could go to see you.”

It was not, therefore, until Mme. Récamier arrived at Coppet that she heard of the persecution of which her noble friend was the object. Some hours later, a letter from M. Récamier acquainted her with the fate she had brought upon herself by her self-sacrificing friendship.

“ PARIS, September 3, 1811.

“ To-day, *ma bonne amie*, is the tenth since your departure: I have received neither letter nor news from you, direct or indirect. All the family and our many friends share my surprise, which amounts almost to anxiety, at so speedy a negligence on your part, and one

so much at variance with all the promises you made to us in parting.

“As for me, I have written to you very punctually; first, last Thursday a long letter, and since then I have forwarded all which has come to me for you, under cover of Messrs. Mentsch & Co. I shall continue to do so until you yourself give me new directions in regard to our correspondence, which ought henceforward to be conducted with system and regularity, owing to the delicate and critical situation in which we find ourselves, and which I will now explain to you.

“You know that I am not always possessed of that firmness of character which I admire in certain men, but which, unfortunately, one cannot bestow upon one’s self. I had so little of it as to be very much alarmed last Sunday morning at ten o’clock, at receiving a summons from the Councillor of State Prefect of Police, to present myself at noon the next day at his office, upon *urgent business which concerned myself*. Though the letter was couched in the most polite terms, it annoyed me infinitely all day and night; and the next day I was there precisely at the hour. I was immediately ushered into the private office of the prefect, who advanced toward me, and said, ‘I am very sorry that I have a disagreeable commission to discharge relating to Mme. Récamier. I have an order from the Emperor’—he was holding it in his hand—‘to notify her to withdraw to forty leagues from Paris. I thought it right to beg you to call upon me that I might acquaint you with this order privately, rather than have the notifica-

tion pass through my office. It will be necessary for you to acknowledge my letter, and notify me that you have communicated the order without delay to Mme. Récamier. Where is she at the present time?' I expressed my great surprise at such an order, and remarked that doubtless the Emperor was not aware of your estimable qualities in the first place, or of your admiration for his person. I told him that you left ten days ago to go to Aix, and since then I had not heard from you either directly or indirectly, but that I should the next day take means to inform you of the intentions of the government. I begged him to let me know the reason of the order, which he was still holding in his hand. He replied that such orders contained neither reasons nor explanations; he read to me simply: 'Mme. Récamier, *née* Juliette Bernard, will withdraw to forty leagues from Paris.' At this enumeration of your names, I recognized at once that they must have been taken at the prefecture of police from the minutes of your passport, which was applied for in the same terms. I asked him if it had any thing to do with your relations with Mme. de Staël. He replied that you must be aware how unfavorably every thing connected with her was judged by the government. 'But,' I said, 'what course must I take to avert such a calamity?' 'It will be best,' he said, 'to let some little time pass without making any protest, which would be without effect. The Emperor has now left Paris; upon his return we can determine what will be best to do. If Mme. Récamier is with Mme. de Staël, she can stay

there for the present ; but, wherever she is, let her be careful of her conduct and movements, so as not to increase the unfavorable impressions the government must have had in issuing the order of exile.' I give you, *ma bonne amie*, almost word for word the conversation I had with the prefect, so that you may understand perfectly your position, and govern yourself accordingly. To the same end, I also subjoin a copy of the letter which I addressed to him this morning, in compliance with his request.

"There is not an individual of the family or household, or any of the few friends whom I have taken into confidence, who has not exclaimed, 'I foresaw and foretold what has happened ; if I had had any authority over Mme. Récamier, I should have strongly opposed this fatal journey.'

"For my part, I make no observations, for we have already talked over the subject together, and I have always made it the rule and happiness of my life to respect your wishes, tastes, affections, and supposed religious obligations to friendship. Besides, the thing is done. It would be useless to dwell upon regrets which, under the circumstances, are gratuitous and superfluous. The only question now is, how to alleviate your situation, and, above all, not to aggravate it by any new imprudence, that might have the most disastrous consequences, — for myself, in the first place, since, in my position, I am in need of good-will, and ought to try to inspire a favorable opinion rather than the reverse ; and, in the second place, it would be fatal

to the prospects of every member of the family, supposing it were to happen that the Emperor should take a dislike to our name and your father's. Accordingly, I think I need not prescribe to you any course of conduct for the present, nor for the future, in case this exile, contrary to my expectations, should be prolonged. Only I conjure you to take no counsel but of your own prudence and sagacity. I know you have so much of both that I can wholly trust to what you think you ought to do at this critical moment. Especially be on your guard against the attraction and the influence of those about you; and if you wish to consult me as to your future residence, I will try to select one which will satisfy all requirements, — your own, of course, included, — and where I shall have the satisfaction of being able to join you as often as possible; for the idea of a protracted separation, a divided household, the loss of that completeness in our home-life in which you took some pleasure, has already given rise in my mind to very sad and sombre thoughts which I cannot resist.

“Upon coming away from my interview with the police, I went directly to the *Droits Réunis*,<sup>1</sup> to see your father, in order to relieve his anxiety in regard to the injunction of the previous day, as I had promised, and also that he might inform M. Simonard, who had gone to Lyons that morning in company with his

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<sup>1</sup> *Droits Réunis*. This was the name given under the first Empire to the imposts which are now called *contributions indirectes*, — the excise office. — Tr.

daughter-in-law, with this weight on his mind. Thence I went to call upon the Duke d'Abrantès; he had just left to pay his court at Compiègne. Then I thought I would try to find M. de Catellan; he had gone the day before to Contréxeville. I shall write to Madame, at Angervilliers, and to M. Dalmassy, at Richecourt; but I do not speak of this event to any one else unless it be to very dear friends. I am going, with this view, to M. Degérando and Lemontey. My brother and sister-in-law are in great distress."

In this conversation between M. Récamier and the prefect of police, it will be remarked how the latter, who was a person of unvarying moderation of character, strove to soften the odium of the duty he was obliged to discharge by the most perfect politeness of manner; no less striking is the reply to the inquiry—certainly a very modest one—respecting the grounds upon which the order of exile was based. "Orders of this kind," was the answer, "never contain any statement of reasons, or any explanations." In our turn, we ask, "Is it not paying too dear for glory if it be purchased at the price of submission to such a government of mutes?"

The thunder-stricken guests at the chateau of Coppet scattered in all directions. Matthieu de Montmorency turned his steps toward Lyons; Adrien accompanied him thither, and then proceeded northward; while Mme. Récamier, yielding to the entreaties of Mme. de Staël,—who still flattered herself that the order

of exile would be revoked,— returned in haste to Paris. She wished to embrace her aged father, to consult with M. Récamier concerning the business arrangements rendered necessary by the painful position in which she was placed, and to choose, with his assistance, the city— forty leagues from Paris— in which she should take up her residence. She saw no one outside of her family, and maintained the strictest *incognito*; but the police watched too narrowly the persons they considered objects of suspicion not to be aware of the exile's presence in Paris. Forty-eight hours after her arrival, a few lines from the prefect of police signified to her plainly that no time was to be lost in obeying the order already received. The note was addressed to M. Récamier, and was in these terms:—

“ 1st Division.

“ 1st Bureau.

PARIS, September 17, 1811.

“ I beg you, Sir, to have the kindness to let me know, *on receipt of this*, and to the end that the order with which I made you acquainted on the 2d of this month may be carried into execution, where Mme. Récamier is *at this moment*.

“ I have the honor to salute you,

“ Councillor of State, Prefect of Police,

“ Baron of the Empire,

“ PASQUIER.”

The next day, accompanied only by M. Récamier's great-niece, — a child of six years, — and by her maid,

the poor exile sorrowfully set out for Châlons-sur-Marne, without uttering a complaint, without allowing any of her friends to take the slightest step, or say the least word, to obtain a mitigation of her lot.<sup>1</sup>

Mme. Récamier passed ten months in the town of Châlons, where she found very few resources, in spite of the attentions, as delicate as they were polite, paid to her by the prefect, M. de Jessaint, and his wife. Under a despotic government, persons in disgrace are

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<sup>1</sup> After having laid before our readers all the documents relating to the exile of Mme. Récamier, it will not be without interest to see what the Duke de Rovigo says on the subject in his "Memoirs." It is a fine specimen of the lies he retails in that work:—

"A great outcry was also raised against the exile of Mme. Récamier. People generally talk at random about every thing, without well knowing what they say. All the world knew of the business misfortunes of the house of Récamier, in consequence of which Mme. Récamier went to live in the provinces; that was very honorable, but she should not have passed herself off for a victim of tyranny, nor written nonsense of that sort to everybody. It would have been more honest to say simply that she had lost her fortune through unlucky speculations, rather than accuse the Emperor. Mme. Récamier remained in the provinces from prudential motives, and used to say to her admirers, when they entreated her to return to Paris, that it did not depend upon her, thereby wishing it to be understood that it was the Emperor who prevented her, while, in fact, he never thought of her. It was on this account that he gave orders if she did return to Paris she should no longer be allowed to collect around her that circle of grumblers to whom she was in the habit of pouring out her imaginary griefs. And, to speak frankly, I wrote to her that I desired that she should not think of coming to Paris immediately. She had no intention of returning, but was very well satisfied to be an exile; it made it easy for her to answer a crowd of importunate people, and gave her a position in their eyes."



shunned as one shuns the plague; and Mme. Récamier, whose steps had always been followed by an admiring crowd, had more than once occasion to bear witness to the terror that may be caused by the presence of an exile. A note from Mme. de Staël, written after Mme. Récamier's departure from Coppet, — a departure which she had herself absolutely insisted upon, — shows how intense was the grief she felt at the persecution to which her friends were subjected, and which she accused herself of bringing upon them: —

“I cannot speak to you; I throw myself at your feet; I conjure you not to hate me. In the name of Heaven, show some zeal for yourself if you would have me live. Extricate yourself from this. Oh, if I could only know that you were happy, — that your admirable generosity had not ruined you! Ah, *mon Dieu!* I am out of my head, but I adore you. Believe it, and show me that you feel it by thinking of yourself, for I shall have no peace until you are released from this exile. Adieu, adieu. When shall I see you again? Not in this world.”

We take pleasure in inserting here a letter of Lemontey, which shows his fidelity to his friends in misfortune: —

“I learn with much pleasure that you have given up your intention of travelling. Aside from some other objections connected with present circumstances, this moving about seems to be an indication of restlessness

and weakness. You should leave such excitements to your scatter-brain acquaintance. With your pure heart and cultivated mind, you will be astonished at the resources you will find within yourself, and how much solitude will quicken your imagination. I should like very much to see your retreat for one moment, that the memory of it might always be present with me, and my thoughts know always where to find you, for since your departure you have never been absent from my mind. I love every thing which recalls you; I am touched even to tears by the friendship of Mme. de Catellan, and by the frank and tender interest of M. Récamier. I am enraged with all those imbeciles by profession — the book-makers — for not having brought out a single work that I can send you with the certainty that it will interest you.

“Most to be pitied is the poor cousin;<sup>1</sup> she as well as I is exiled from you; and I thoroughly sympathize with her in a grief which I share. You cannot doubt the impatience with which I shall constantly look forward to hearing from you, and the gratitude I shall feel for all the good that Providence or man bestows upon you. *Love ever you.*<sup>2</sup>

“EDOUARD.”

M. de Montmorency had shared the hopes, or rather the illusions, of Mme. de Staël on the subject of their common friend. By a letter from his daughter, Mme. de Larochevoucauld, he learnt at Lyons that he could

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<sup>1</sup> Mme. Dalmassy.

<sup>2</sup> Written in English. — TR.

no longer flatter himself that there would be any mitigation of her sentence. It was with very strong emotion, therefore, he wrote to her on the tenth of September:—

“I have not yet thanked you for your kind little word at parting. I was waiting to send by Adrien, who urges me to make haste. It is very sad to part from him; but a great deal more so is what my daughter tells me, but which I hear from her alone, of an accident to your health similar to my own.<sup>1</sup> I will not yet believe it. I am not so selfish as not to be very much affected by it. Is it that Providence would bring us still nearer together by this little martyrdom that we suffer in common for friendship’s sake? I fear the consequences for our friend. Let me know promptly the truth, and let me know what your plans are. Let us sometimes pray together, though far off, and keep for me my precious place in your friendship. Let M. Récamier forward your letter with his own correspondence, under cover of Camille, who is thinking a great deal about you.”

In these painful circumstances, Mme. Récamier also received expressions of sympathy from another friend, Mme. de Boigne, who, as soon as the news reached her, wrote from Paris:—

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<sup>1</sup> With what precaution it was customary to speak of the harsh measures of the Imperial rule, is shown by the circumlocutions employed by M. de Montmorency to avoid using the word “exile.”

“October 15, 1811.

“I hope to have, through Mme. de Catellan,<sup>1</sup> an opportunity of writing to you by private hand. I profit by it with the more eagerness as I have long desired one, and the fear only of displeasing you has prevented me writing simply by the post, not to tell you what I think, but to ask about yourself. I expect to see Mme. de Catellan to-day; she will give me news of you, and will tell me, I hope, what your plans are, and, above all, your hopes. I would talk to you of my regrets and my tender interest if they were any thing remarkable, but I see my sentiments shared by all the world; there seems to be no difference of opinion in regard to you; even the people who know you least are distressed at your absence. You are receiving now the fruit of that kind benevolence, that gift of Heaven of which I have often spoken to you, which accompanies you everywhere, — everywhere making partisans for you, admirers and faithful friends. I saw Adrien last evening; I overwhelmed him with questions; but you know how very unsatisfactory his replies are, how absent-minded he is, even with regard to things which interest him most. I shall know more about your situation after talking ten minutes with Mme. de Catellan than

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<sup>1</sup> The Marchioness de Catellan, whose name occurs often in this correspondence, had torn herself away from the luxurious life which her large fortune enabled her to lead, to share with Mme. Récamier, for several weeks, the solitude and *ennui* of Châlons; upon her return to Paris she became the medium of communication with her exiled friend.

Adrien told me in two hours. I like Mme. de Catellan for her devotion to you; to know so well how to appreciate you is in itself a merit. The one whom I should pity with all my heart is your friend,<sup>1</sup> were it not that the versatility of her imagination spares her the pain of reflection. I will not tell you that I predicted the result; you know it well, and you also foresaw it, but your angelic goodness led you on. I, who am not so good, should not have been carried away. Unfortunately one cannot alter what is past. But among the many powerful friends whose influence you have used for the sake of others, is there not one who can say to the Emperor, what is very true, that you do not deserve the distinction he accords you? I know no one more faithful in friendship than you, or less pertinacious in your opinions. It seems to me that this is the way the matter should be represented, and it is so true that I think all that is needed is an opportunity to say it.

“I have also my little tribulations, but they are of too domestic a nature to be worth mentioning. As a compensation, I have the extreme satisfaction of finding my mother much better than when I left her. She charges me with a thousand kind messages. My father and brother are your humble servants.

“Tell me frankly if you would like to hear from me from time to time. I will not write to you of your situation, or about affairs, but I will give you news of

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<sup>1</sup> Mme. de Staël.

society which may divert you. If you see no objections to it, I shall be very happy to talk to you of my tender friendship.”

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ADRIEN DE MONTMORENCY TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

“ Thursday, October 10, 1811.

“ It is twice twenty-four hours since I wrote you, and began a letter which Félicité<sup>1</sup> finished. But as I had taken her by surprise, and she did not expect me, she had addressed to me here a letter for you to be forwarded immediately. She is much more occupied with you than with herself. And I also, it is your woes which weigh upon my heart. For hers I am hard-hearted. I consider her on a bed of roses; but you, dear friend, poor innocent, and so inoffensive, driven so far away, alone, without family, with no other consolation than your noble heart, — it is for you, and her who is the innocent cause of all these woes, that I reserve and have compassionate tears. Do not say again that you do not wish to see me; it is a useless prohibition; I will not obey. Only I must know your plans. If you pass all the month of November at Châlons, I will choose some time in the middle of the month for my visit on my way to Montmirail. I am naturally, through my *heart* and through a sense of *honor*, a brother to those who suffer. But you, whose

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<sup>1</sup> Félicité was one of the baptismal names of Matthieu de Montmorency; during his exile his cousin Adrien often thus designated him.

friend I have been in the days of your prosperity, — all through your most charming and intoxicating youth, — shall I abandon you while I still retain my independence?

“Have you seen our good Sosthène?<sup>1</sup> I have received a very kind but heart-rending letter from poor Mme. Olive.<sup>2</sup> A thousand and thousand tender homages, which spring from the bottom of my heart. I beg you to write to me, and tell me how you employ your time. Who is with you? Are you not going to Lyons? Do you know that M. de Montrond, who was at Antwerp, has been transferred to the fortress of Ham?”

Camille Jordan could not be insensible to the situation of Mme. Récamier: he wrote to her from Lyons:—

“December 4, 1811.

“While I was feeling hurt and surprised to find that, in your solitude, you remembered me only to use me as a medium of communication with others, I learn from the Baron de Vogt that you yourself are complaining of me, and say that you have had no letters from me since your exile. Well, there is nothing but misunderstanding in this poor human life. So you have not received a letter which I wrote you in the very

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<sup>1</sup> Sosthène de Larochevoucauld, son of the Duke de Doudeauville, and son-in-law of Matthieu de Montmorency. From the chateau de Montmirail, where he lived with his father, he paid frequent visits to Châlons.

<sup>2</sup> Mme. de Staël, designated under the name of her maid.

beginning, under cover of Mme. de Catellan! Can it be possible that such inoffensive expressions of the most legitimate interest have not been allowed to pass free? or must I accuse Mme. de Catellan of negligence? Indeed I am very much tempted to do so, for I have written to her three times within a year without receiving any sign of life from her. But, in default of my letter, did you not know my heart, and could you doubt of my sensibility to your troubles? I, who loved you when you were happy and surrounded by friends, — what must I feel for you, now that you are solitary, and sad, perhaps? I cannot, it is true, always rival the German enthusiasm of the Baron, who sees in you not the slightest fault, whose letters about you are hymns of praise. But is my more clear-sighted friendship less tender? and has not its very frankness been a constant guarantee of its fidelity? It was said that you were coming to Lyons; you would have seen whether I would have cared for you! I have since learnt that we must renounce this hope. I have heard several times indirectly of you, and how you are living. I am assured that you are a model for exiles in resignation, patience, prudence, consideration toward friends, delicacy in act and thought. In this I recognize that nobility of nature I have always loved in you. It would appear, moreover, that you will not for long be required to set an example of these virtues, and that the great heart of a great prince, who cannot have any serious hostility to you, will ere long put an end to this passing trial. Have you Mme. de Catellan still with



you? Has one of your companions in misfortune passed your way? Do you sometimes receive news from the stormy lake Lemane? It is centuries since I have had any. You know, perhaps, what a long sojourn the Baron has made here, and how much I have enjoyed his society. I announced to you, I think, in the letter you have not received, the approaching confinement of my wife; you have heard probably that she has given me a son. I have tasted for the third time the joys of paternity. Mother and children are at this moment as well as possible. Caroline, whom you seemed to notice especially, is, indeed, it appears to me, remarkably engaging and intelligent. My wife charges me particularly to tell you how well she remembers you, and how much she is interested in your fate.

“Regny, Milady, and a host of others remember you faithfully and tenderly. Adieu, dear Juliette; and do not, you who were always so good and perfect to me in your happy days, take advantage any longer of the privilege of your troubles to neglect me, to maltreat me, but let me hear once again, and very soon, that you love me still.”

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ADRIEN DE MONTMORENCY TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

“November 10, 1811.

“Your very faithful friend and admirer<sup>1</sup> has brought me a letter from you, full of lofty sentiments, of courage,

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<sup>1</sup> Sosthène de Larocheffoucauld.

and of friendship for me. But he has talked to me of you — of your loneliness and your melancholy thoughts — with an interest which has moved and distressed me. Poor friend! you are very sad, your days are very long and empty, and the dreariest thing in the situation is that one can see no end to it.

“ I should like a letter from you, telling me of the employment of your time, of your daily habits, of your acquaintances, and your evening amusements; something, in short, which will help me to find you whenever my thoughts turn in search of you. This is what I would fain know; for as to making me comprehend all your nobility of character, your disinterestedness, your resignation under misfortune, which you are resolved never to sully by any false step, — these are noble secrets of your heart, which I know as well and better than you do yourself.

“ I will deliver to Mme. de Boigne all your gracious messages. She is still in the country with her brother. Find for him a young wife with estimable qualities and fortune, and all the family will thank and bless you. But why should I forget to tell you of the legacy left me by M. de Robecq, — the reversion of a pretty estate in Holland, much depreciated by the revolution, but which, before that time, was a small sovereignty, where I should have begged you to come and reign? To-day the income is reduced to twelve or fifteen thousand francs, upon which I have heavy dues to pay, and of which I do not come into possession until the death of the princess. I have just been passing a week *en*



MATTHIEU DE MONTMORENCY  
*from a rare engraving*



*famille* with Félicité, — one of the persons, I imagine, whom you love and esteem most on earth. I am jealous of your preferences.”

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MATTHIEU DE MONTMORENCY TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

“ BEAUNE, Monday, November 16, 1811.

“Just as I am about quitting my good cousin’s hospitable chateau to repair to that where my daughter is awaiting me so impatiently,<sup>1</sup> but where you think I ought not to go, I receive a letter from you, in which you speak very kindly of these family affairs. I am equally touched by the interest you take in my ulterior projects, and struck by the very simple and noble manner in which you judge, from a high point of view, all those little miserable calculations of timid prudence which influence so many others. In truth, I must say that in this last matter I have encountered less opposition than I anticipated, and those whose opinion ought to influence me have very kindly begged me to adhere to my first resolution. Being, moreover, reassured in another quarter, I have neither wished nor thought it necessary to subject myself as well as my daughter to so severe a trial as a prolonged separation would be during the very months we had arranged to pass together. I shall remain with her, therefore, until the month of January; and then I hope, though I say

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<sup>1</sup> He was going to the chateau de Montmirail, only seventeen leagues distant from Châlons.

nothing about it to any one, to give to friendship a proof of my gratitude as well as of my faithful zeal in doing all that is possible to bring us together. I say nothing of a certain degree of courage being required ; it seems impossible that you should be wanting in that, and there is nothing in our common lot, common in appearance, at least, to make us blush. Do you not already know why I have not been sooner to see you, and find out for myself what I wish so much to know ? I have particularly thought of it when I have imagined I saw causes for anxiety. I was thinking of going by way of Burgundy, and joining you from there, when my mother proposed a *rendezvous* of a few days at Orleans : it is really a very kind offer, and one impossible for me to refuse. I am slowly on my way thither, following the course of the Loire. I intended to go afterward, about the 15th, to see you at Châlons, but they tell me you think of leaving that place and going to Lyons, to be with some of your family. Of the propriety of such a choice there is nothing to be said ; I have left there one man at least who will be greatly pleased. But I should have liked it better if you were not in such a hurry ; and I think it very hard that I learn only through others your plans and arrangements.

“ My journey condemns me to painful ignorance on another subject, — the movements of our friend, and her plans for the future. I hope her son will not leave me uninformed. Adieu, *aimable amie* ; you will do very wrong not to yield, not to believe in the purity and sincerity of my wishes for your happiness.”

MATTHIEU DE MONTMORENCY TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

"MONTMIRAIL, Nov. 22, 1811 (evening).

"I can no longer delay thanking you, *aimable amie*, for the letter brought me by Sosthène, which has interested me deeply. Why do you speak of displeasing me? How could such an expression, which has no longer any meaning between us, be ever applicable when you open to me your heart with a confidence which touches me, honors me, and of which I accept with gratitude the touching privilege? Sosthène has come away deeply penetrated with esteem, I should say respect rather, for your interesting situation. I see you always with your two little girls<sup>1</sup> either going to church or making certain other visits to which your good heart prompts you. Do not spoil this precious beginning, but persevere in your generous disposition; give me from time to time these revelations of your inner life due only to friendship. You are very good to ask with so much interest for similar revelations concerning the life I am leading here. It is almost the same as last year; and as I should be here at this time of my own choice, I am able to delude myself into forgetting that I have not as much freedom as ever.

"I enjoy greatly this family meeting, which would be almost complete were my mother here, and Adrien, who will join us the beginning of next month. We have nothing to be compared to the animation, the incredible variety of our friend's conversation; but is

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<sup>1</sup> Her niece, Amélie, and her cousin, Mlle. de Dalmassy.

she not unique? As you say, it is much better here than at Dampierre; one breathes a certain atmosphere of virtue which does the soul good. M. de Doudeauville is admirable in this quiet home-life, which would be a trial to any other man; and when I see him offering up to God the prayers of all this family assembled around an altar consecrated by their grief,<sup>1</sup> I am penetrated by a sentiment that cannot be without fruit, and that you, more than any one else, would feel. Why cannot we have you here for a while? Let us profit at least by our proximity to mingle unceasingly our thoughts and feelings. Adieu! I have also been working again a little, and am profiting by this fine weather to take walks. I shall not cease to be anxious about our friend until I have news of her from Geneva."

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MATTHIEU DE MONTMORENCY TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

"MONTMIRAIL, December 4, 1811.

"I intended to answer your interesting letter, *aimable amie*, by the last post: I am glad I waited until now, since I should have told you, unnecessarily, of the uneasiness I could not help feeling at the non-arrival of letters I was expecting. I received one this morning which has relieved my anxiety. It was some time on the way, being dated November 24. Our friend was

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<sup>1</sup> The chapel of a hospital founded by the Duke and Duchess of Doudeauville after the death of their daughter, Mme. de Rastignac.



beginning to be tired of waiting for answers which she assuredly will not receive; she talked of her return to Geneva as a thing unalterable, inevitable, and of her adieus to her peaceable retreat as a painful trial. You know how troubled I am at our unhappy friend's changes of residence; consequently, my thoughts dwell more than ever upon her, and I shall be uneasy if I remain long without hearing from her. She recommends us to pray; you see what an excellent idea your *neuvaine* is! She accuses me of being a little too severe, and especially in what concerns you. But while deeply distressed at your situation, your isolation, as seems doubly natural, since she reproaches herself with being the cause, she pays a tribute of esteem and respect to the noble temper you show; and how could it be otherwise? It ought the more to impress her from the fact that with all her great qualities, and, one might add, with all her marvellous gifts, she would be wholly incapable of courage of this sort. For my part, I find myself inwardly admiring it with the joy of a friend, if I may so express myself, sympathizing with the effort it may cost you, but, at the same time, filled with pride and satisfaction at this noble victory. I am not disposed to quarrel with the sentiments which have made you so strong. As for those you express in your letter, one cannot but respect them: and however exaggerated or inexact they appear to me, it is not by letter I should try to refute them; that should be reserved for long conversations, where speech is as rapid as thought, and

where you allow me to grow too excited for a time only because the next moment is quick to bring its corrective. If any exaggeration could ever be praiseworthy, it would be in the case of trust in Divine mercy. If the only inference we draw from it be one of indulgence and of hope for others, nothing can be better; but as to a personal application, I must tell you, to cite my own experience, that I have never examined thoroughly my own heart, never passed in review my own life, without a deep sense of the justice that should counterbalance mercy. It is in the union of these two attributes — both infinite as the Being we adore — that the complete solution of this moral mystery is found. But see, *aimable amie*, how I let myself go on discussing grave matters in anticipation of the time when we shall resume our debates by your fireside. I wish I could have that pleasure oftener. There is a young man here, more active than I, before whom I play the prudent, but whom I really envy for being able to talk of his excursions. Could not a pretext for one be found in a certain comedy which I think I have heard talked about, though you say nothing of it, any more than you do of your family visits, with which I am much pleased? You are very kind to ask for details of my life here, which passes very quietly. I begin to perceive that it draws near its close. I read tragedies to them, once or twice a week, in the *salon*, with great success. I do not choose the most exciting. Yesterday it was ‘Mithridate,’ in which you would have rendered well the part of the pure and proud Monime.

Adieu ; a thousand tender homages. Adrien announces that he will be here on Monday, the 9th. I have a great desire and need to talk with him ; he still says nothing to me of his ulterior projects, which I shall neither approve nor oppose."

Mme. Récamier's favorite cousin, the Baroness de Dalmassy, was now her companion at Châlons, in place of the Marchioness de Catellan. Mme. de Dalmassy having heard that M. de Montmorency intended paying a visit to her exiled relative, became alarmed, and, without her cousin's knowledge, endeavored to dissuade him from it, supposing that it would be displeasing to the government.

M. de Montmorency was much offended at her letter, and paid no heed to its recommendations ; nor did he, in his reply, conceal his sentiments :—

“MONTMIRAIL, January 2, 1812.

“I shall answer, Madame, very plainly and frankly the letter you have done me the honor to write me. I will not disavow the pain you foresaw it would cause me, not solely because of the sacrifice you ask of me ; real as that sacrifice is, I think I would do even more, if it were necessary, for the happiness of Madame, your cousin. What grieves me more is to think that a friend, whose office it is to console, and one, too, so well fitted for the task, should—thinking to be simply prudent—create fresh annoyances both for herself and for others whose position is already sufficiently painful without its being needlessly aggravated. I

have myself already more than once met with something similar, much to the surprise of your cousin's noble nature. We thoroughly discussed the matter together when I was last at Châlons; it was difficult for us to conceive that the usual opportunities of personal intercourse should be denied to two persons, known to have been friends previously, and against whom the same measure has been meted out, and apparently for the same cause. If the unfortunate, as they are styled, cannot see each other like other people, and are exposed to the risk of compromising themselves if they pay each other any attentions, I do not well see what is left them. I shall always esteem myself happy to have held these thoughts in common with a person whom I had long known as a beautiful and amiable woman, but whose courage and noble delicacy under recent circumstances inspire me equally with esteem and the desire to imitate them. We have promised, moreover, to trust each other in regard to matters of this kind, and to deal with them without the aid of intermediaries. Consequently, when Madame, your cousin, by the same post which brought me your letter, so kindly expresses a wish to see me, I am not tempted to begin with her a course of excuses and dissimulation by which she herself would never be deceived. Besides, I really should not know how to set about it. It is very possible that your wishes may be gratified, through no merit of mine, and that I may have to wait a long time for permission to leave this place; but if it does come, as I cannot go any nearer to Paris, I have

no other road open to me but that of Châlons, and I cannot believe that you would have me pass through that town without having the honor of seeing Madame, your cousin, and yourself, Madame, however much I may regret that your reasons have failed to convince me. I shall think I have conciliated the interests of friendship and prudence by restricting myself to a few days' sojourn. I might beg you, moreover, to observe that a similar visit, in the beginning of November, has had none of those grave results you seem to fear, and also that I have, indeed, imposed upon myself some sacrifices, even in those things in which I thought myself more free, since, being at a distance of fifteen leagues only from Madame, your cousin, I have allowed nearly two months to pass without making any of those excursions such as I have envied my son-in-law.

“I beg you, Madame, to accept his humble respects as well as my own.”

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MATTHIEU DE MONTMORENCY TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

“MONTMIRAIL, January 3, 1812.

“I have, *aimable amie*, an altogether exceptional opportunity of sending this, and you will perhaps at the same time receive a visit which is at least of such a nature as not to alarm the most timid. My friendship will be able to pour itself out with a little less reserve, and I shall anticipate by a few hours the reply that I proposed to make to your last letter to-morrow morning at the latest. That letter has made me truly

happy! How glad I am to find myself mistaken in my distrustful and presumptuous fears,—in my truly rash judgments! How you reassure me; how sweetly and modestly you bring forward your triumphant reasoning! It gives me the most heartfelt satisfaction, and I thank God for it. Your midnight mass also greatly interested me. I am much edified by what you tell me of the one at Châlons. I would have made you acquainted with similar ones in Paris had you wished it; and, in fine, if you would follow regularly the observances ordained by our religion, I am inwardly convinced that you would enjoy them greatly, and that after a time you would find that you had more of that sentiment of faith which now seems so strange to you. Good M. Duval,<sup>1</sup> to whom I mentioned the subject yesterday, is entirely of my opinion. I thank you with all my heart for the feeling you show in regard to my arrival. I should like very much to be able to fix the day; I at first proposed to start about this time; but since my chains have been drawn still tighter, and I must now wait for permission before I can stir, I am condemned to uncertainty. I, and, worse still, those about me watch the arrival of every mail; but it is evident that there was no intention of replying to the prefect's first application, otherwise it would have been done long ago. I only hope that his own journey may not cause delay in sending the answer, whatever it may be, which will undoubtedly come by way of Châlons. If you have any means of

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<sup>1</sup> The abbé Legris-Duval.

ascertaining that fact from the person who opens the packets in his absence, — naturally, and without eagerness or anxiety, — you will do me a favor if you will make use of them. I have no need to request you, in regard to this matter, to act, as in all the rest, with the same simplicity and generosity that you show in your personal affairs. Why do you talk of envying other people any thing? It is you who have more *dignity* than us all, and you seem to me to be the type, the model of what one ought to be in our position. Not only Madame, your cousin, — I beg her pardon, — but nearly all women and all men, with a few exceptions, must fail to understand you or to agree with you. In so far as it makes life more pleasant to you, I am delighted that she is with you. Perhaps I might prefer to have it otherwise when I come to see you. It would be very hard, however, for you to be deprived of the pleasure of her society.

“It is simply, then, a small provisional establishment that our friend has at Geneva. It seems impossible that the great settlement,<sup>1</sup> about which I was anxiously expecting news, should not be put off until the spring, with this suit going on, and the heavy snow-storms and very severe weather. What a winter is before her, and when will she come to a decision! How do you stand this cold weather? Never leave me long without hearing from you, until I come myself, if I can. The chateau in general thinks of dispersing

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<sup>1</sup> The projected departure of Mme. de Staël for America.

next week. I renew the assurance of kind regards from us all.

“It is possible that a letter for me from a neighboring town may be sent to your care; will you be kind enough to keep it for me, unless you have some very safe means of sending it.”

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THE COUNTESS DE BOIGNE TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

“PARIS, January 9, 1812.

“I owe myself an apology for not sooner replying to your kind letter; by delaying so long to converse with you I have deprived myself of a great pleasure. But my poor brother has caused us such lively and well-founded anxiety, that I have had no heart to think of any thing else. He has not yet left his room; but they assure us that there is nothing more to fear. I have punctually delivered all your gracious messages, and they were received, I thought, with the thanks they deserved.

“I believe your fears are ill-founded; you are the last person to be forgotten; and it is not because you are amiable, lovely, charming, and that every one remembers you with pleasure, in a way that flatters his self-esteem, and his heart, too, — if he happen to have one, — but because your gentle, natural, and captivating kindness of heart has discovered the secret of making every one believe that his fate is not a matter of indifference to you. You know that I am in love with this goodness of heart, — a charm which I have found in no other



woman. I have told you a hundred times, and thought it a thousand, that what makes you so seductive is your kind-heartedness. Perhaps I am the only one who has ever dared to tell you so ; it seems so absurd to praise the good heart of the most beautiful woman in Europe ! Well ! I am convinced — if it were possible to define the influence you exert — that this same goodness of heart has greater power than all your other more brilliant advantages, and gives them an additional force. So, Madame, it is because you are *good* that you have turned so many heads, and reduced to despair so many poor wretches ; they do not suspect it, but it is true, nevertheless.

“ Ah ! how right you are when you say that this is a forgetful world, and especially of the dead. I pass my life with people who for years were the most intimate friends of poor Mme. du Clusel, held the first place in her affections, and yet nothing, either in their manner or their looks, shows that the day they parted from her for ever was to them in any way different from other days, either past or to come. To see such things is better than a sermon ; and, were there any need of it, would thoroughly disgust one with such friendships !

“ Then there is that poor Mme. d’Avaux, who died yesterday ; she had a great many so-called friends ; perhaps they will think of her for two days, and talk about her for three. But I perceive that I am sending you an extract from the register of deaths ; and while I am in the humor, I may as well tell you that Mme.

de Catellan assured me that she was very easy to *live* with since she was dead! I did not exactly understand what that meant; be kind enough to explain it to me. You know that, in spite of this poor pleasantry, I appreciate and admire the true worth of your friend. She says that you ask her for marriages and love-affairs, but that people do not fall in love with one another this year. Alas! yes, Madame, they do fall in love, and very palpably, too; but you know all about it; the *dead* who write to you daily have not kept you in ignorance.

“I made Adrien tell me every thing about you, and you do not know with what interest I listened. I must tell you that I have been very much touched at the friendship he has shown us during my brother’s illness.

“I wish that you would send me a kind word for Mme. de Ségur; she is always talking about you, and not because she wants to find a subject of conversation which would be agreeable to me, but because she is really interested in you. I should be very glad if you would entrust me with some friendly message for her, without allowing it to appear that I suggested it. She is still suffering, but sweet and resigned. As I am not in her confidence, I know only what I see, and I do not think that she has any new cause of grief.

“M. Hochet comes sometimes to see me; he has rendered great service to my father in that affair of the mine, which is not settled yet. It has been a pleasure to remember that it is to you we owe his friendship. There is another friend of yours, less disposed in our

favor, M. Degérando. He appears determined to oppose my father in the department of the Interior.

“Confess that I have indemnified myself pretty well for my silence: I am almost ashamed of this idle talk and the nonsense of which it is made up. Do you know that the return of M. de Nesselrode is announced? M. de Tchernicheff<sup>1</sup> told me of it, assuring me, at the same time, that he was at liberty to mention it because he did not know it officially: this, I hope, is sufficiently ministerial. I have heard from Tuffiakin,<sup>2</sup> at Moscow; in replying to him I said a great deal about you. Good-day, dear Madame; you will have to beat me to make me stop talking. All my family cherish and regret you, and I first and foremost.”

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MATTHIEU DE MONTMORENCY TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

“MONTMIRAIL, January 18, 1812.

“It is kind of you to reproach me; it is I who have been tempted to do the same to you, and to think that you were neglecting me very much in your correspondence. The reason you give makes amends for all. I have been counting also on taking you by surprise this

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<sup>1</sup> M. de Tchernicheff was then Russian ambassador at Paris; there was some talk of replacing him by M. de Nesselrode.

<sup>2</sup> Prince Tuffiakin, a great Russian lord, brother, I think, of the Princess Dolgorouki; he was passionately fond of Paris, lived there a long time, and died there. He used to go often to Mme. Récamier's.

evening, at about six or seven o'clock. My trunks were nearly packed; all my late letters made me feel sure that I should receive by yesterday's post the necessary permission; nothing came. In all probability it will arrive to-morrow, and I shall leave on Monday. However, do not be anxious if you do not see me on that day. I postpone until that moment, always so pleasant to look forward to, a great many things I have to say to you.

"Permit me, *aimable amie*, to ask of you a little favor. Will you inquire, simply and naturally, at my inn at Châlons, on Sunday or Monday morning, for one or two gentlemen of Rheims, who were to be there, and with whom I have business. I would like you to beg them with many apologies to wait for me until Tuesday. Adieu; a thousand, thousand tender respects. Sosthène, who is in Paris, has left his wife with me until my departure, which is another inducement to leave as soon as I can, that they may not be separated too long. I am very confident that I shall hear from Châlons without delay. Adieu, until Monday, I hope."

M. de Montmorency received at last the permission he had asked for; he passed three days at Châlons, and then continued his journey toward the South of France, whence he wrote:—

"BÉZIERS, February 6, 1812.

"I, too, have been to see the fountain of Vaucluse. I do not send you a description of it; I know too well,

*aimable amie*,—without reproach be it said,—how you read descriptions; and besides it is not necessary to repeat what others have already said. Nevertheless, though I have had the privilege, almost unique, on account of my time being circumscribed, of visiting this picturesque and truly memorable spot during a frightful rain-storm, it inspired me with much interest. You, *aimable amie*, could not be forgotten there, as you never can be; I had already spoken of you with our Lyonnese friend,<sup>1</sup> who took me to see Madame, your sister-in-law. I anticipated the pleasure of renewing the same subject of conversation with our Baron<sup>2</sup> at Avignon, but he did not wait for me, having gone in search of a milder climate at Marseilles, where he will remain for a time. I have found traces of him; he was, however, not much in the way of being known and appreciated by the people to whom one of my cousins has introduced me, and who have treated me with the kindest hospitality; finally, I have travelled with your *souvenir* as with that of friends truly intimate. These thoughts and my books have kept me sweet company; I have had almost constantly a fine temperature, and to-day admirable weather, so that I could see the Mediterranean from the road as well as from the lofty platform of Montpellier. You gave me permission to send you from that town some slight token of remembrance. I have sent to my wife, asking her to transmit them to you, some small bottles of rose-

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<sup>1</sup> Camille Jordan.

<sup>2</sup> The Baron de Vogt.

water and some of the best *sachets*. These perfumes may be carried an immense distance without losing any of their strength; I might find in them an emblem of my faithful friendship, but I do not wish to be too poetic, even on returning from Vaucluse. I am only telling the truth when I say that the distance and long separation from you are the principal and almost only inconveniences of my new situation. I feel the same in regard to another friend, to whom, passing within forty leagues of her, I wrote. My heart was sore at not being able to profit by this proximity. I await impatiently for news of her establishment in the country. I hope that you have heard from her yourself, but are still as admirably discreet as ever in writing to me. I trust that you still maintain that union of dignity and good sense to which I have paid such sincere homage; give me some direct proof of it; do not let me remain ignorant of any thing which concerns you, or of the least change that may occur. My most constant, most sincere prayers are for you; we are approaching a period especially consecrated to prayer; true friends are no losers by it; try to employ it well, and, above all, to end it well. As for me, I shall rest from my journey among some very quiet people. I hope to arrive the day after to-morrow, and hear from you then. Receive once more my affectionate regards."

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THE COUNTESS DE BOIGNE TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

" Saturday, March 28, 1812.

" Your friend is so good as to take charge of a few lines from me ; I am conscious that they will lose much in being brought by her ; but, nevertheless, I wish to take advantage of this opportunity to assure you of my tender friendship. Adrien is always telling me that you send him charming messages for me ; I ask to see your letters, he promises, and then pretends that he cannot show them, and I tell him it is a device of his vanity to excuse his forgetfulness. We quarrel, and then we make up in talking of you, in whom, vanity apart, he takes a very lively and tender interest. We have had a long discussion in regard to what was best to do in your position, and this is the plan which appears to me to have the least inconveniences for you. But it is for you, for you alone, that we must make our calculations ; and you have unfortunately but too well proved that the lovely Juliette, in whom so many people are interested, is very little considered in your projects. To return to my plan ; I will tell you that if I were in your place, I would go to Vienna, and take up my residence there.

" You would be welcomed with transport, and you would find yourself from the first among people that you know. The rate of exchange would augment your slender income sufficiently to afford you every comfort requisite for a foreigner ; that is to say, a small establishment and a carriage. At first you would have to go

into society more than suits your tastes; but as soon as you had shown that you were something better than a pretty woman, when you had made a circle for yourself, you would be able to resume your old habits, well assured that, when once you had become known, your fireside would never be deserted. Such is the advice the most genuine interest impels me to offer. As to your plan of travelling in Italy, I think it wholly preposterous. You must not deceive yourself; the true need of your life is society and conversation. In Italy the one and the other are null, especially now when there are very few strangers there, for they alone supplied what life there was. You love the arts; yes, as a diversion, and because you have a correct and delicate taste which you wish to cultivate. But I ask you do the arts, and even a beautiful country, suffice to interest your heart and imagination? No, certainly not. Very well! you will find nothing else in Italy; besides, you will very soon be tired of wandering from city to city without aim or object. Travelling may be an agreeable fancy when we are looking forward to a speedy return to a beloved country, to tender hopes, and the ties that a short absence only draw the closer; but be sure that to travel only to kill time is the worst thing one can do. The movement of the body increases the uneasiness of the mind; we imagine that we are worse off, because we persuade ourselves that we shall be better with change of place, and the spot where we are is ever that which displeases us the most. Witness that poor Duchess de Chevreuse, who, by the way, is



very ill indeed. But Mme. de Catellan will tell you all this. I say nothing to you of ourselves, for I am sure you will question her in a kindly spirit, and that she will reply in the same strain; but I have not been willing to leave it to another to speak to you of yourself and of my unchangeable friendship."

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CAMILLE JORDAN TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

"LYONS, February 15, 1812.

"DEAR JULIETTE, — First came your letter, which rejoiced my heart, and then the friend who had seen you, and with whom I had a long conversation about you. Every day I have been meaning to reply to your letter, but one trouble after another has completely absorbed me. — Cruel disgrace of a prefect whose wife I dearly loved; a report of a new and laborious mission which will long banish the friend<sup>1</sup> whom I was expecting to see in Paris this spring; finally, the scene of desolation which for several days past has been constantly before our eyes. The Rhone has overflowed its banks, and swept furiously over Les Brotteaux,<sup>2</sup> overturning houses, and causing numerous deaths and losses of every kind. It is impossible at present to estimate the extent of the damage; but it is immense. There has not been for a hundred years so great and disastrous a rise of the

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<sup>1</sup> Degérando.

<sup>2</sup> Les Brotteaux, a suburb of Lyons, now one of the finest quarters of the city. — Tr.

river. So you see I have been very sad, and am so still. But for the moment I shall try to console myself by fixing my thoughts upon your sweet image. Our friend the traveller seemed to be wholly under the spell of those balmy influences we all feel in your presence; he was delighted to see there, as elsewhere, all hearts rendering you homage.

“You gave him not a word for me; you were reposing upon your five pages. It was, in fact, a charming letter; but it recalled a very painful remembrance. Is it possible that because no letter came, you really doubted me? Does your confidence in my affection, after so many years, depend upon the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of the post? Oh! sad progress of the scepticism of the age!

“You speak too flatteringly of some slight works of mine. I do not know whether, at another time, they might not be worth publishing; but I am quite sure that obscurity best befits them in this age of other successes, and of a very different sort of fame. It is enough for me if they serve sometimes to interest my friends, usefully employ my leisure hours, and prepare me to educate my children, which is the great and agreeable task of my domestic life.

“What do you say of our friend<sup>1</sup> in public life? of this terrible distance? I am quite dismayed at it. It grievously upsets my plan of a journey with my wife; still I do not quite give it up yet. If, failing them, I

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<sup>1</sup> Evidently M. Degérando.

should meet you, what a consolation it would be! It seems to me that it cannot be long delayed, that your ostracism must soon come to an end. Certainly I write occasionally to the friend of whom you speak. I pity her profoundly, for she suffers more than you do, and has not your patience. I presume that the worthy Baron continues to direct toward you the stream of his sensibility; as for me, he entertains me chiefly with his observations upon philanthropic enterprises, which afford me much pleasure; I find much to learn at his school.

“ We have just been through a very gay carnival, but in which I have taken little part. I seldom go beyond our family circles. I could never, I think, be fond of society unless it were animated and embellished by your presence. I have, nevertheless, met in the whirl the dissipated *Lady* whose face always lights up at the recollection of you. We talk of you with Regny. I also had a conversation the other day, of which you were the object, with your kind family, with your sister-in-law, so steeped in good works. My Julie is at this present moment doing penance for a few dancing parties, by a severe cold and painful inflammation. But in the midst of her suffering, she charges me with affectionate messages to you. My three children are well. Everybody tells me that Caroline is very charming, and I allow myself to be convinced. I wholly approve of you for having with you an adopted child, — an image of maternity. I presume, also, that you have always with you for company some of your excellent

relatives. Happy are those who can thus see you, minister to you, and enjoy the delightful intercourse that I found so pleasant, and that I often look back upon sorrowfully; for I love you, always will love you. Oh! ungrateful one, sceptic, atheist, that you are, to have a moment's doubt of holy friendship!"

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ADRIEN DE MONTMORENCY TO MME. RÉCAMIER.

" March 28, 1812.

"I write you, dear friend, with a lighter heart and a little more freely, by your faithful friend.<sup>1</sup> I am going to dine with her, carry her my letter, my best wishes for you, and my envy at her happiness and independence in being able to go to see you. Alas! I see nothing but ill-fortune; I anticipate nothing good, no indulgence for my poor exiled friends, not even for her who is incontestably the most unhappy of all, poor Hermessinde.<sup>2</sup> I have positive knowledge that in her case they will ever be inexorable. I am going to confide a secret to you, which will explain why I have been silent for several days. I would have liked to reply to your very sweet letter, which deeply touched and interested me. You shall judge whether I did well to be silent.

"I received a letter from the minister of police,<sup>3</sup> in-

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<sup>1</sup> Mme. de Catellan.

<sup>2</sup> The Duchess de Chevreuse.

<sup>3</sup> The Duke de Rovigo.

viting me to present myself at his house. I had never been there before. For the first time he spoke plainly, and in the severest manner. He reproached me for language which I had not held, but without quoting the words. He especially blamed me for the interest I took *in the exiles*, for my *lamentations* over them, and my *intimate relations* with them: all this, I think, was merely an exordium before coming to what he calls my *neutrality*.

“Taking this for his text, he went on to tell me, in the most violent manner, that I had every thing to fear from his severity, &c. I cannot now go into further details; what I have said will make it clear to you that I am on the brink of the abyss. It was not in my heart or my nature to say any thing in my own defence, but rather to take up that of my poor little cousin,<sup>1</sup> dying at Caen. There is no hope for her; she will die, there or elsewhere, and very soon; but she will not go to Orleans; she will not be allowed to come twenty leagues nearer, as her unhappy mother-in-law hoped, who sees her dying before her eyes. ‘*Lasciate ogni speranza.*’ These are the infernal words that must be spoken to her.

“As to Félicité, I doubt whether his change of residence will be an easy thing. Nevertheless, the attempt will be made, and permission asked for him to live at Orleans, with leave to go to his estates, which are not far off. From all this melancholy information, which I

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<sup>1</sup> Duchess de Chevreuse.

have obtained in regard to our situation, I have come to the conclusion that we must adapt ourselves as cheerfully as we can to the restrictions as first imposed. We must not flatter ourselves that there will be any change for the better, but see the wound as deep as it is, and not count on the generosity of hearts which never soften. As for you, dear, it would, perhaps, be well, when you no longer have the friends with you who have made life supportable, to choose some place where the waters might be beneficial to you. Watering-places have the advantage of sometimes bringing one into relations with influential persons who may become useful.

“As for me, I intend in a month from now to go into the country with my son, and get myself forgotten, if it be not too late. I shall go to Touraine to visit my cousin Amédée, of whom you have often heard me speak; and then I shall wait for the return of Félicité, and of my brother and sister-in-law, who will be turning their steps northward at about the same time; that is to say, toward the end of the month of May.

“Continue to write me under cover of M. Récamier. It is more than ever necessary to employ indirect means. I have had a very kind but despairing letter from our friend Albertine’s mother.<sup>1</sup> She has more elevation of soul than courage, and less resolution than elevation. I shall charge your friend with a little remembrance which I beg you to keep. Say nothing to her of what

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<sup>1</sup> Mme. de Staël.

I have told you in confidence, or of the visit I have made. We must suffer, be silent, and content ourselves with our own self-respect. Many, many affectionate wishes and everlasting attachment."

Mme. Récamier did not follow the advice which the friendship and prudence of the Countess de Boigne had suggested to her, and which, from a purely social and worldly point of view, offered many advantages. But so long as Mme. de Staël remained in France, the lovely exile never relinquished the desire and the hope of rejoining the friend for whose sake she had braved all. Nevertheless, she was consumed with melancholy and *ennui* at Châlons; she resolved to change her residence, and chose Lyons, which brought her much nearer to Coppet, and where she was sure of finding support for her youth and loneliness in the family of M. Récamier.

On arriving there she sent word to Camille Jordan that she was at the Hôtel de l'Europe, and awaiting a visit from him.

"In how sad a position do you find me, dear friend!" he replied to her the 13th of June, 1812; "my wife scarcely recovered from a severe illness, and plunged in deep grief by the death of her mother, who was buried yesterday; my daughter scarcely convalescent from an illness which put her life in danger; all the rest of our household ill and in mourning; I, still keeping up physically, but with a heart made sore and

wearily by troubles of all kinds during the last three months.

“Your arrival will shed a ray of consolation over this night of sorrow. But I lament beforehand that I shall have so little leisure to see you, that I can bring you only a sad countenance, and shall probably not be able to give you pleasure or be of any use; however, others who love you, of whom there are many here, will be eager to supply my place. I promise myself much consolation in the happiness of seeing you again, and reminding you how tenderly I am attached to you.

“CAMILLE.”

The sadness which had weighed upon Camille Jordan was, in fact, soon dissipated; reassured in regard to the health of those most dear to him, he quickly regained his usual spirits, and became himself again in conversing with one who sympathized with him in every lofty sentiment and every noble enthusiasm.

The Hôtel de l'Europe counted then among its inmates the beautiful and eccentric Duchess de Chevreuse. Exiled four years previously, this elegant and haughty lady of rank was still expiating the crime of resisting a command of Napoleon. As for Mme. Récamier, whenever she recalled the painful memories of this period of proscription, she was almost ready to bless, she said, the hard times which had given her good Ballanche. It was, in fact, during the summer of 1812 that he was introduced to her by Camille Jordan.



We insert here in its proper place a note from Camille Jordan, written while Talma was making a short visit at Lyons: —

“I had hoped to meet you to-day in Mme. de Chevreuse’s box, but our ladies, to whom I spoke of it, seemed to wish me to postpone attending the theatre out of regard to the recent death in the family; and I yield to a scruple which is perhaps exaggerated, but should be respected. I shall therefore wait until the very last performance. My regret at being able to hear so little of Talma at the theatre makes me desire more than ever to attend the prose-reading. Manage this for me if you can. — I shall be in town to-morrow, and trust at least that I shall be more fortunate than I was yesterday, when I neither found you at home nor at Mme. Delphin’s.

“I go to dine with a benevolent society at two o’clock; receive me, therefore, before that hour, if it will not inconvenience you too much. I should not mind your writing letters, nor the lessons. You might give me to read something interesting out of your immense collection of letters from the Prince of Prussia, or from Mme. de Staël; and I would talk to you again of the idea I have thought of often, and which pleases me more and more, that you should write memoirs; a most precious means, added to others, for diverting your mind, and beguiling you from the fatal need of stormy emotions. How I wish, above all things, that tender friendship did not seem to you so pale a thing, and that mine were something to you.”

Shortly after, the news of Mme. de Staël's departure for Sweden deprived Mme. Récamier of all hopes of rejoining her friend, and completed her discouragement. A prey to the deepest dejection, she had no longer even the courage to seek in the faithful and warm friendship of Matthieu de Montmorency the consolations his piety knew so well how to afford to suffering souls. She wrote to him no more. This silence made him very uneasy, and he resolved to go to Lyons and seek an interview with the very dear friend whom he had not seen for a year.

“So, then, it is absolutely necessary for me, *aimable amie*,” he wrote, the 22d of January, 1813, “either to stop at or stay in the city where you live in order to have the comfort of conversing a few moments with you. It is useless to hope for the compensation, insufficient though it be, of occasional letters, written with some degree of frankness. What do I say? You no longer write to me at all; such silence is really unheard of. Were it not for the trust you have authorized me to repose in you, might I not even conclude that you have taken very little pains to persuade me to come to see you? But I prefer rather to say to myself that you have feared the annoyance of a little concealment from one<sup>1</sup> whom you see frequently. It is under cover of her that I am writing to you, informing her at the same time of my coming. Between our-

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<sup>1</sup> The Duchess de Chevreuse, his sister-in-law.



MADAME DE STAËL  
*from an engraving by Müller*



selves, if it should happen not to be very agreeable to her, I should think that you, with your usual kindly influence, might make all things easy. Finally, I think I have removed the obstacles which, in certain circumstances of position or of family, I feared. I hope to see you Saturday of next week at the latest. It is a delightful prospect, and I have need to fortify myself with it in parting from those very dear to me whom I leave here. I shall postpone until that long-hoped-for time all that interests us and our common friends. Will you ask the good Camille — as I do not wish to give you that trouble — if he will be kind enough to devote a few moments to securing an apartment for me, simple, and especially not too large, on account of the season. This approaching meeting enchants me. Providence, after all, is very kind in all situations! We shall often return to this subject in our conversations.

“I hope that Camille has kept for me an instructive paper on hospitals which he was to send to Paris. Adieu; a thousand tender respects and anticipations. Do you know that to persevere I have had need to recall the noble simplicity of your character, and what we said to each other last year at this very season which always brings us together.”

The presence of M. de Montmorency raised the drooping spirits of the poor exile. He strenuously insisted, and Camille Jordan seconded him, that she should carry out the project so often made, but always postponed, of a journey in Italy. He was confident

that she would find then, as, in fact, she did find, an effectual means of diverting her mind in the arts, food for her piety in a sojourn at Rome, and a notable improvement in her health, which her repeated trials had impaired. At the beginning of Lent, in the year 1813, Mme. Récamier started for Turin with her little companion. M. de Montmorency accompanied the travellers as far as Chambéry.

Here occurs a somewhat unaccountable gap in the correspondence of M. de Montmorency, as also in that of Camille Jordan. I have in my possession none of the letters which they must have written to one who was very dear to them, and whose steps they anxiously followed from afar during this Italian journey.

I have made many and fruitless efforts to recover the letters which, during the space of thirty years, Mme. Récamier addressed to the man whom she always regarded as a brother and revered as her good angel. The Duchess Matthieu de Montmorency, while she still lived, kindly aided me in my researches; but it was impossible to find any traces of this correspondence, which must have been voluminous, and which I cannot believe that M. de Montmorency destroyed.

I am, however, able to give here, in the order of their dates, two of Mme. Récamier's letters to Camille Jordan; letters already published by M. Sainte-Beuve, who, like myself, owed them to the kindness of M. Arthur de Gravillon, grandson of the famous orator:—

MME. RÉCAMIER TO CAMILLE JORDAN.

"TURIN, March 26, 1813.

"It is impossible, dear Camille, to write a more charming letter than that I have just received from you; it has stirred the very depths of my heart. You can have no idea of the sadness which seized me on arriving at the summit of Mont-Cenis. I seemed to be putting an eternal barrier between me and all I loved; and I was so miserable on arriving at Turin that I thought I was going to be ill. For the last two days I have begun to revive, take up my plans again, look forward to the future, and emerge from that round of sad thoughts which I have fully determined to banish as far as possible. I begin to observe things around me, and to see a few people. The influence of Italy begins to make itself apparent here, not by the climate, but the customs. The women have *cicisbei* for society, and abbés for intendants. The Prince Borghèse, who is never called any thing here but *the Prince*, has, I have been told, the most solemn little court in Europe. The anecdotes, the toilets, and the love affairs of this little court seem to me to occupy all minds, and form the staple of all conversation. *Our friend*, Count Alfieri, has a prodigious success as master of ceremonies. The ancient nobility of Piedmont, and the French subjects holding places under government, are constantly meeting at the court, and do not love each other any the more on that account. The vanities of rank and power recall the great world of Paris, but

are far more ridiculous because they operate in a smaller circle, and have no political interests attached to them. I do not believe there is any country where more regard is paid to appearances; the houses are palaces, where the old luxury of having a great number of domestics is kept up; but if one arrives unexpectedly, he is very much surprised, after having passed through antechambers, *salons*, galleries, to find the mistress of the mansion in an out-of-the-way little room, lighted by a single candle. In short, it seems to be the custom here to indulge in superfluities at the expense of the necessaries of life. *The Prince* leads the most retired existence, except at reception hours. He passes all his time shut up in his palace alone. This seclusion has lasted two years. It has been noticed that during this time the blinds of the rooms at the back of his apartment have remained constantly closed. One *valet-de-chambre* only is allowed to enter this last room, which is garnished daily with fresh flowers and” . . .

The rest of the letter is wanting.

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MME. RÉCAMIER TO CAMILLE JORDAN.

“ROME, April 21, 1813.

“You are right: I am a little difficult to live with, but I do not bear malice; I speak out when I am offended, and then I think no more about it. I have been in Rome twelve days. I have passed five or six of



them ill in bed: I am better now, and shall begin to go about a little. I have already seen some very beautiful things, and regret that I have not the descriptive talent of the Baron de Vogt, so that I might talk to you about them. He has left behind him here pleasant memories; and your friend Degérando,<sup>1</sup> who was in a far more difficult position, has also left only flattering impressions. If he were unable to satisfy everybody, at least he displeased no one; and all render justice to his character and intentions. You are very good to think of asking him for letters for me; they would be useless. Upon arriving, I received invitations from all the authorities,—the governor, prefect, and administrator of police. I did not accept them, because I was still unwell, but I am on visiting terms with everybody. Werner, whom I believe you know (author of 'Attila' and of 'Luther,' two tragedies which have made much noise in Germany), is now in Rome. He has turned Catholic, and appears to me to be in the highest state of religious excitement. I have also seen M. de Chabot, Matthieu's friend, an amiable and good young man, who also spends all his time in the churches. These are the happy ones of the age! M. Millin, the antiquarian, has just arrived: he has talked to me of M. Artaud, M. Richard, M. Révoil; but the only charm I have found in his conversation are his reminiscences of my native Lyons; though he is an intel-

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<sup>1</sup> He was commissioner for the French government at the time of the abduction of the pope.



ligent man, fond of society and familiar with its usages, he, I know not why, does not please me. He has just sent me his last works; if I think they would interest you, I will send them to you. The director of police, M. de Norvins, has talked with me of you; he knows several of your friends and mine, and speaks of you as all the world speaks. It is a rare thing in these times to have passed through so many storms without making one enemy, and to be followed in retirement by the affection of one's friends and the high esteem of the rest of the world. M. de Norvins is certainly a man of intellect. He has let me into the secret of some writings of his which prove talent; but there is about him a mixture of the old and the new *régime* which is a constant surprise to me. Sometimes he reminds me of M. de Narbonne, and the moment after of Regnaud de Saint-Jean-d'Angély. Moreover, he is perfectly attentive and kind toward me. — General Miollis seems the best man in the world: he is much liked. I talked to him of Corinne; he did not know what I meant. He thought it was a city of Italy which he had never heard of.

“Why do you oppose the departure of M. Ballanche? This is really something to quarrel about. Do you not know that M. Ballanche is, next to you, the person above all others I should like to travel with? But I confess it is next to you. He appeals to whatever is good in my nature, you please my bad side as well. Take that for an epigram if you will, and pity yourself for being amiable enough to please my frivolous tastes, while at the same time you take my soul captive by all

that is noble and pure in your own. Julie will not be made jealous by this declaration; amiable and lovable Julie, I bear her with you in my heart. Why do you not give me news of Mme. de Luynes and Mme. de Chevreuse? I am anxious about the latter, and I beg you will go and inquire about her in my name. Be good enough to remember me to Monsieur and Madame" . . .

This letter, like the preceding one, is incomplete: the fragment preserved ends here.

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MME. RÉCAMIER TO HER SISTER-IN-LAW, MME. DELPHIN, AT LYONS.

“ROME, April 3, 1813.

“I thank you, my good sister, for your kind letter, which I received at Rome. I was ill for several days upon my arrival, but I am better now, and intend to make some excursions in the city and its environs.

“Your angelic goodness is again shown in the pains you took to visit that poor English invalid; I learned with real pleasure the care Lady Webb has taken of her. If, after the latter’s departure, the Englishwoman should be in want, give her from me what you think proper, and be good enough also to continue to look after our little Marianne.<sup>1</sup> If a writing-master could be found who was not dear, ought she not to take lessons for a few

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<sup>1</sup> Marianne was a little English girl who had fallen into the hands of a troop of mountebanks. It must be remembered that the rupture of the treaty of Amiens caused the detention in France of English people of every condition. Mme. Récamier saw this

months, making her, at the same time, keep up her English? But you know better than I how to do good, and I put this poor child under your protection.

“I am distressed at what you tell me of the state of Mme. de Chevreuse. How was she pleased with M. Suquet? I am surprised and grieved at receiving no letters from Mme. de Luynes since the one she was kind enough to write to me at Turin. She has been so good and kind that I truly hope she has not yet forgotten me. Be kind enough to see her before you write again, and give me news of her and Mme. de Chevreuse. I send a letter from Amélie to Mme. della Torre. I am very well satisfied with her disposition and her sentiments, but less so with her application; she is heedless, and on that account Mme. della Torre was just the teacher she needed. I shall certainly put her under her care again when I return to Lyons.

“I thank you for having sent me the trunk. It was an inconceivable piece of thoughtlessness on my part not to remember that it was to be sent to the diligence. It was another consequence of the wretched state of mind I was in before my departure; it seems to me I am a great deal better now, but I am in constant fear of again becoming a prey to melancholy. Please postpone the payment of the dressmaker’s bill until my

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child in the Place Bellecour, and was interested by her unhappy air and pretty face. She was rescued from the clutches of the vagabonds who were making use of her for their own purposes. Mme. Récamier placed her at school and afterward at a trade. She became a nun, and died young.

return, for it seems to me exorbitant for what she did for me. Adieu, dear and kind sister, and number me among those who most tenderly love you. Remember me to M. Delphin, Mme. Amélie, M. and Mme. Payen. Say also to Mme. Legendre that I much regret not having been able to say good-by to her as I intended to do. She was then a little unwell; tell me how she is. Is her son with her? She is so good and kind that one likes to know she is happy.

“Adieu, my good, excellent sister. I embrace you and love you with all my heart. Remember me to all those who take an interest in me. I have selected straw bonnets for your daughters, and will bring them on my return. I should like very much to find something which you would like, but I have not yet seen any thing to please me.

“Please address my letters henceforward to M. Torlonia, Rome.”

The fall of the Empire reopened the gates of France to Mme. Récamier, and she seized the first opportunity to return to Paris to the bosom of her family. She stopped, however, two days at Lyons to see her sister-in-law and Camille Jordan.

The return of Mme. Récamier to Parisian society was a veritable triumph, an era of renewed and increased success. To the fame of a beauty which years had not robbed of any of its charm, was now added another prestige,—the firmness she had shown during her three years of exile. But under such circumstances there

was little time to devote to correspondents; thus we see Camille Jordan complaining of a silence which made him fear he was forgotten, while at the same time he accuses himself of indolence. He writes from Lyons the 16th of August, 1814: —

“DEAR JULIETTE, — What a disgrace to our friendship, what mutual delinquency! What, after having met again with so much pleasure, though for so short a time, no longer one word! I am reduced to hearing of you through your relations, and you to my compliments by Matthieu! You are in reality much more culpable than I; for what have I to write about except the continued happiness of a united household, and my affection for you, so true and faithful, though I fear it seems more insipid than ever to you in comparison with Parisian adorations. But you, what could you not tell me of your triumphant return; of your reunion with so many friends; of the reorganization of the most delightful society; of the relations so delicate with the daughter and the mother; of the impression this new *régime* makes upon you; of your estimate of public opinion, for you know the value I attach to it, and how I delight to hear you, with your pure and discriminating mind, talk on all subjects, even the most serious. So do try to find a favorable moment and write me a long letter, or a few lines at least, upon the most urgent points, — your health, the state of your heart, and if you are happy.

“Name to me the people whom you see most frequently. Doubtless no one more indemnifies herself for

your long absence than Mme. de Catellan; and Matthieu, another one who knows how to love, does he, in his threefold busy life, succeed in finding the time which he without doubt wishes to devote to you? and the ambassador<sup>1</sup> and prince, have they not spoiled Adrien the friend? How do you stand with the household Degérando as regards both friendship and business? You may imagine how my heart rejoiced to see their fate at last honorably and happily fixed. You have lost in Mme. de Staël one of your greatest sources of interest and excitement, but now you will have the pleasant society of the Duchess of Devonshire. You will meet again with mutual pleasure. Not knowing her address, permit me to enclose and give in your care this note for her. My wife knows that I am writing, and desires to be affectionately remembered to you. Our three children, Caroline especially, continue to do well, and are the delight of our hearts. We are living in town, as it has rarely offered more objects of interest. I was wrong in supposing a moment ago that there was nothing to tell you. If I were addicted to the descriptive style, if I did not go to sleep in the middle of the finest narrations, I might describe to you the visit of the Duchess d'Angoulême, the magnificent *fêtes* we gave her for three days, the sincere and universal enthusiasm, which was the most beautiful part of all, and the profound gratification that she manifested.

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<sup>1</sup> Adrien de Montmorency, Prince de Laval, had been made ambassador to Madrid.

Paris itself did not offer her any thing like it. Thus you see that Lyons, which has been so much calumniated, has quite retrieved her reputation. But I refer you for all these particulars to the journal of our descriptive friend Ballanche, which I have told him to send to you. I found my usual phlegm desert me in the midst of these festivities; I could not see without profound emotion this most blameless triumph of the Orphan of the Temple. She had the goodness to ask after me, to permit me to be presented to her, to address to me a few kind words. We also presented Ballanche to her, that he might offer to the French Antigone the dedication of the Greek Antigone. It was the Révoils and the Artauds who had the most to do with the direction of the *fêtes*, and who brought to the task no less taste than zeal. We thought of you in this excitement, and regretted you much. The coming of the Count d'Artois is announced; but as for me, I have had enough; I shall escape to the groves of Écully, then to Bresse; and probably from Lyons I shall go to see you. What new charm for me your presence will give to Paris! But shall I find you the same as in exile? Will you not make me regret, as some one has said, *the good time when we were unhappy*,<sup>1</sup> you will be

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<sup>1</sup> A saying of Sophie Arnould, put into verse by Rulhière : —

“ Un jour, une actrice fameuse  
 Me contait les fureurs de son premier amant ;  
 Moitié rêvant, moitié rieuse,  
 Elle ajouta ce mot charmant :  
 ‘ Oh ! c’était le bon temps, j’étais bien malheureuse.’ ”



so surrounded and preoccupied? As for me, I shall bring back to you, you may be very sure, the same faithful friendship, the same desire to see you happy and perfect, of which I have so often assured you. Adieu, sweet and charming friend; do not fail to remember me to those of your circle for whom you know me to have either affection or liking. Particular regards to Mme. de Catellan.

“CAMILLE.”

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“LYONS, July 31, 1815.

“DEAR JULIETTE,— What mortal silence between us! If we only wrote to each other at least every time the Empire was overturned, there might be some hope of our correspondence. M. Delphin has indeed promised that he would assure you of my lasting and tender regard; but, however, I must for once speak for myself. These late troubles have made me think of you often. I judged of your anxieties by our own. I am persuaded that we have many opinions as well as feelings in common; for, without boasting overmuch of ourselves, we have generally been found together on the side of truth and justice. I came near flying to you from the tumults that raged in Lyons, with all my brood, for whom I was painfully anxious, but the difficulties in the way of so great a move deterred me, and, by the help of God, all has turned out much better than we dared to hope. Perhaps I shall soon come alone, if my health, which is somewhat feeble, permit.

“How glad I shall be to see you again, and how much

I shall have to tell you! Do not fail, meanwhile, to reply; and after telling me of yourself, your pleasures and your pains, one word, if you please, of public opinion in Paris, which you ought to know better than any one else, you who see the best people of all parties. Is there any hope of saving our poor country? any chance of reconciling so many divided hearts and minds? One word also about your several friends. Some of them must be lifted up and others cast down; and, according to your custom, it is not the latter who interest you the least. What do you think will be the fate of Degérando? I am much concerned about him. Have you seen lately our dear Matthieu; and the severe warning against all exaggeration, whether pious or profane, has he profited by it? What are your relations with the stormy family on the lake shore? One of their friends, who is an intimate acquaintance of yours, has, with all his senses about him, been dreaming a strange dream;<sup>1</sup> his awakening from it must have been bitter. Do you see Mme. de Krüdner, that amiable queen of the realm of the vague? My wife has suffered greatly from so much excitement; she is beginning to recover, and charges me with affectionate remembrances for you. As to my children, thanks to the happy thoughtlessness of their age, they have continued well. Do not forget, I beg of you, to remember me to your husband, whose passing troubles, wherein you showed as usual such perfect delicacy, I

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<sup>1</sup> Allusion to the conduct of Benjamin Constant during the Hundred Days.

nave heard of and deplored. Particular respects to Mme. de Catellan; but, above all, affectionate regards to the good Ballanche, who, intoxicated as he is by your charming society, is not, I hope, ungrateful enough to forget him who was the first cause of this crowning felicity of his life.

“Adieu, dear Juliette; I love and shall love you always. “CAMILLE.”

These letters are the last from Camille Jordan found among Mme. Récamier's papers, and are, very probably, also the last which he addressed to her. Chosen deputy by the department de l'Ain, in 1815, he occupied his seat in the Chamber with great regularity; and from that time until his death lived almost constantly in Paris. These two letters, written with an interval of a year between them, present points of very peculiar interest, for they foreshadow, and indeed already express, the struggle which was beginning in the mind of the great orator. In 1814, the joy of the lover of freedom in seeing France delivered from a despotic government heightened the joy of the royalist in witnessing the return of the Bourbons. This double feeling inspires the account he gives of the reception of Madame, the Duchess d'Angoulême. In 1815, the aspect of things had changed. A Royalist, but, above all, an ardent friend of liberty, the violent proceedings of the *Chambre introuvable*<sup>1</sup> greatly shook the con-

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<sup>1</sup> *Chambre introuvable*, — literally, not to be found, hence incomparable, — a name given to the Chamber of Deputies of the year

confidence of the patriot in the liberalism of the restored monarchy. Nevertheless, Camille Jordan, during the three sessions of 1816, 1817, and 1818, unhesitatingly supported the ministry. In 1819, we find him in the ranks of an active opposition. It was not that he had changed his opinions; but he thought he saw liberty in peril, and, with the energy of a grand political faith, he fought against doctrines which in his eyes were incompatible with the needs of modern society. Never was the eloquence of Camille Jordan more brilliant, never were his words more thrilling, than during this last period of his political career. Sometimes, it must be confessed, his glowing utterances were tinged with a deep bitterness, such as follows the disappointment of cherished hopes.

What added in no small degree to the effect of his speeches was the fact that Camille Jordan was dying. When he left his seat, where he was obliged to lie at full length, and mounted to the tribune, it seemed as though the little life he had left would exhale in the midst of his impassioned oratory.

The reader will doubtless have noticed in the letters of the eloquent orator to Mme. Récamier some expressions of anxiety with regard to the opinions of Matthieu

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1815, distinguished for its exaggerated royalism. "Certainly four months beforehand no one would have believed that the electoral colleges of the Empire could give birth to such a Chamber; and Louis XVIII., who, ten months later, was to pronounce its dissolution, was right in calling it, in the first effusion of his joy, 'Chambre introuvable.'" (Duvergier de Hauranne, "History of Parliamentary Government in France.") — TR.

de Montmorency which seemed to him too reactionary. The divergence of their political views more than once led to discussions between these two men so long united in the bonds of closest intimacy,—discussions all the more animated because both had strong convictions. But if the intolerance of party-spirit embarrassed and disturbed their intercourse, it could not weaken in these two noble hearts the deep esteem they felt for each other; whilst Mme. Récamier, moreover, continued to be between them a bond of concord and affection.

Camille Jordan died the 19th of May, 1821.

END OF PART I.



## PART II.

### LETTERS OF MADAME RÉCAMIER TO HER NIECE.

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IT is with inexpressible emotion that I make public these letters, proofs of the strong affection with which I was honored by her who held to me the place of mother. I hesitated long; but I was told that I had no right to keep concealed the treasures of loving-kindness hidden in that heart, — a heart so well fitted for all the sensibilities, all the ardor, all the self-denial of maternal love, but to which fate had denied the crowning joys of home.

A few words of explanation will doubtless not be out of place here. I am aware how difficult it is to escape ridicule in speaking of one's self; I shall endeavor, therefore, in regard to matters purely personal to me, to say only so much as may be necessary to portray what is, perhaps, the innermost side of the life and affections of Mme. Récamier. To exhibit the brilliant woman who so long wielded the sceptre of fashion and received the homage of all Europe, — performing the duties of governess and mother, duties which she had volun-

tarily assumed, and which she fulfilled with so much perseverance, good sense, indulgence, and firmness;— will not this, indeed, be a revelation to the majority of readers?

I was nearly six years old when I lost my mother, and my uncle, M. Jacques Récamier, my grandmother's brother, renewed the offer he had formerly made to take charge of his little orphan niece. My father no longer refused this affectionate proposal, and I was sent to Paris, where I arrived in the course of July, 1811, only a few weeks before that departure of Mme. Récamier for Coppet, which was the cause, or pretext, rather, of her exile.

My beautiful Paris aunt was not wholly a stranger to me. During a short visit which she made at Bugey in 1810 to her husband's family, I, young as I was, had already been dazzled and delighted by the brilliancy, grace, and rare elegance of the wonderful stranger. She, herself, won by my baby ways, proposed to take me away with her. I would have willingly gone even then with the enchantress, but she returned to Aix, where she was then taking the waters, and her lovely face faded a little from my memory. Upon her return to Paris, Mme. Récamier sent a message to my parents, asking for the little one. My mother, who was still living, could not resolve to part with me, and it was not until after her death, as I have said, that I was sent to Paris. Upon arriving there, the lady who had charge of me took me to the street Basse-du-Rempart, No. 48, where my uncle had his counting-room. It



must have been about four o'clock, for he had already despatched his letters for the mail. After a few moments my uncle took me by the hand and led me to the house No. 32, in the same street, where he lived with his wife after the hotel in the Rue du Mont-Blanc was sold to M. de Mosselmann.

A child's memory is capricious; some things leave upon it no trace, while others — the aspect of certain localities, the image of certain persons — make an indelible impression. I vividly remember my introduction to my aunt: she was in white, with her hair dressed in the fashion of the day, without any additional ornament,<sup>1</sup> and was reclining on a sofa placed opposite the fireplace, directly under her portrait by Gérard. General Junot stood talking with her. My uncle opened the door, and, pushing me forward, said, "Here is the little girl."

I recognized immediately the beautiful being who had formerly fascinated me. I felt neither fear nor shyness; her kindness put me directly at ease; our acquaintance was at once renewed, and an intimacy established between us. I sang a little song, half *patois*, half French, with an emphasis which greatly amused her. A bed was made up for me in a small room adjoining hers; and in so bewildering a situation, with so many strange faces constantly passing before me, it is easy to understand how ardently I attached myself to the kind and sympathetic protectress who

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<sup>1</sup> *Coiffée en cheveux.*

watched tenderly over the poor homesick child. — Some days after my arrival my aunt asked me if I knew how to read. I replied yes; as I had, in fact, been for more than a year at a school in Belley, where an old nun taught the little girls in the town their letters, and I was supposed to have learned to read. My aunt put a book in my hand and said, “Well, then, read me this.” I took the book, and without hesitating began to recite a dedicatory epistle to the dauphin, the only printed thing I had ever seen, and which I had got by heart from having heard it often repeated by my little companions. My aunt laughed heartily at my dedicatory epistle, and it was agreed that I must be taught to read.

Meanwhile, busy preparations were making for the departure of Mme. Récamier, which I watched without either understanding their significance or imagining that I was not to be of the party. I came very near not being of it, however, for it was only at the last moment that my uncle said, “Why do you not take little Amélie?” and so I was taken. My poor dear aunt, when she mournfully recalled years afterward the incidents of a life so envied by the world, but so sad and empty in reality, liked to attribute to Providence the chance arrival of the little orphan to supply her heart with a new interest just at the moment when her exile was to expose her to solitude and neglect, which were to her very severe trials.

Before reaching Geneva, while we were stopping at the last post-house to change horses, Augustus de

Staël, who had ridden to meet Mme. Récamier, opened so suddenly the carriage door upon which I was leaning, that I fell out between the wheels, but without doing myself any injury. My aunt left the carriage and went up into one of the rooms of the inn, where she was informed by M. de Staël of Matthieu de Montmorency's sentence of exile, which had just been made known to him at Coppet. Augustus was the bearer of a message from his despairing mother, beseeching Mme. Récamier not to expose herself to the same danger in the same place. But she was unwilling to retrace her steps without seeing her friend, and we pursued our journey. We arrived at Coppet after dark. I entered the *salon* behind my aunt. A woman in tears, whose gestures and action appeared to me very vehement, threw herself into her arms; then the maid carried me off and put me to bed. The next day at breakfast I was seated between Mlle. Albertine de Staël and Mlle. Randall; the conversation was very animated, and indefinitely prolonged. Sitting so long among strange people presently became insupportable to me: motionless on my chair, which I did not dare to leave, I sought a means of amusing myself, and tying two knots in opposite corners of my napkin to represent two dolls, I made them repeat, in a low voice at first and afterward aloud, a dialogue, not in very good taste, between sister Jacqueline and her confessor. I was so deeply engaged with my play that I did not notice the signs my aunt made me to be silent and go away. Mme. de Staël interposed with gracious and indulgent kindness:

“Do not scold the little one,” she said; “she will certainly make an excellent actress.”

Mme. Récamier’s order of exile was not long in following that of M. de Montmorency. Mme. de Staël had foreseen it too well when she had besought her not to come again to Coppet. A letter from M. Récamier brought the sad news. Mme. de Staël’s despair at this persecution, which seemed to be contagious, cannot be described. She has portrayed it herself in moving terms in her “*Dix Années d’Exil.*” Nevertheless, she still tried to persuade herself that if her noble and lovely friend would return immediately to Paris, it might not be impossible to get the cruel order revoked. By her grief and her tears she finally succeeded in inducing Mme. Récamier to take this course, and at the end of three days we left Coppet for Paris.

It was not very easy for me at my age to understand the meaning of the fits of fainting and crying, and the general excitement going on around me; but I had made out that exile was a danger that threatened the only being whom I loved and who cared for me. I considered myself exiled also; and while we were at Châlons, hearing in a sermon far beyond my comprehension the words, “an exile upon earth,” I seized my aunt’s hand and whispered, “Is he talking about us?” One night, hearing a loud knocking at the door of the house where we lived, Rue du Cloître, Mme. Récamier started up out of her sleep and cried, “Ah, *mon Dieu!* what do they want now?” to which I, who was sleeping in the same room, to her surprise replied, “What are you

afraid of, dear aunt; are we not at our forty leagues?" Thus, young as I was, the misfortune of my charming protectress served to bring her still nearer to me, her inseparable little companion.

In these days of liberty and publicity, we can hardly imagine how completely the master's displeasure reduced the exiles to the condition of pariahs. I find a singular proof of this in a letter from my uncle Jacques Récamier to his wife, dated July 15, 1812. My aunt had been authorized to leave Châlons, and for a month we had been established at the Hôtel de l'Europe, at Lyons.

"I was very confident," writes M. Récamier, "that you would have a most cordial reception from my family and friends; I was only anxious to know if you had responded to it properly; that is to say, in a way to please the tastes of one and all, which, very possibly, may not be in harmony with yours. I see that in this respect all has passed off very well: you have got on the right side of my sister Delphin, and seem to be on very good terms with her, which gives me great pleasure; only be on your guard against any excess in almsgiving and acts of generosity, to which she will be likely to incite you by the pictures of poverty she will daily set before your eyes, for I already do a great deal myself here, and one ought never in any thing to go beyond the bounds of reason.

"Be also careful with whom you associate, for, though it does not appear, you are always under the secret

*surveillance* of the police. Your change or transfer from Châlons to Lyons has put you in another division of the general police. I chance to have a friend in this new division, whom I met the other day on the *boulevard*; he told me that two reports from Lyons concerning you had already been received,—the first, to announce your arrival, and the second, to say that you were behaving very well, that you saw few people and lived very quietly. This friend promises to keep me regularly advised of all that happens in regard to you. He added that there would finally be a general report handed in, which one day or other would be sent to the Emperor, who would then definitively decide.”

Is not this the way that criminals released on probation are treated?

During the three years of Mme. Récamier’s exile,—whether at Châlons, Lyons, Rome, or Naples,—she never separated from the child she had adopted as her daughter. I never had any other sleeping room than hers. My education went on in the travelling carriage which bore from place to place the beautiful exile, as well as in the cities where we stayed; and when we returned to Paris, in 1814, I spoke Italian as fluently as I did my own tongue. My aunt delighted to teach me music, which she passionately loved; and I no longer imagined that I was reading when I repeated by heart the dedicatory epistle to the dauphin.

Amid all the excitements of the social success which welcomed Mme. Récamier back to Parisian society, her

habits with regard to her whom she called *her child* suffered no change in any respect. My little desk was placed in the recess of one of the windows of the great *salon*, where, under her eye, I took all my lessons. How often has it happened that some one of my aunt's most intimate friends, seeing me perplexed to find a date, or vainly looking for a word in the dictionary, would come to my aid! This recalls to me a little anecdote illustrative of the literary tact of Mme. de Genlis, and in which Lemontey appears in an amiable light. He used to dine with us every Saturday, and took the greatest interest in my studies. It was in 1817, and Mme. de Genlis, who was always forming enthusiastic attachments, had that year conceived a sort of passion, certainly with good reason, for Mme. Récamier. Wishing to make herself agreeable, she proposed to give me weekly a subject for a composition which she was to correct. One Saturday, on coming as usual to dinner, M. Lemontey found me in despair, and crying bitterly over a sentence which I had begun and could not finish. He inquired the cause of my grief, took my copy-book and dictated to me a sentence which freed me from my difficulty, and set me going again. The next week, when my composition was returned corrected, we found in the margin opposite the sentence dictated by Lemontey these words: "This sentence is wanting in youthfulness."

What might I not add were I to allow myself to describe in detail the watchful care, the far-seeing love which presided over my education! When, mother of

a family myself, I had to fulfil toward my daughters the duty of vigilance which the most brilliant woman of her day imposed upon herself; I had only to remember my own childhood to be penetrated with admiration and gratitude for the solicitude with which Mme. Récamier, in a *salon* full of people, heard and watched over all that was said to me.

She had early given me permission to pass the evening in the *salon*, warning me, at the same time, never to permit any man, whether young or old, to talk to me in a low voice, and, to prevent this, always to reply so as to be heard by everybody.

Straightforward and sincere under all circumstances, she held dissimulation in horror. I cannot describe the pains she took to acquaint me with household duties, to cultivate in me habits of order and economy. Although very methodical in the management of her property, Mme. Récamier had no taste, and declared she had no talent, for domestic details. Her constant aim, as she often expressed to me, was this: "I wish," she would say, "that you should have all that has been wanting in me, and that you may be more happy than I have been." This affectionate desire Mme. Récamier accomplished so far as it was in her power. She could not give me the rare and charming qualities, the lofty virtues which Heaven had been pleased to lavish upon her, but she gave me the domestic happiness which was not accorded to her; and in uniting me to the man whom I loved, and by whom I was beloved, she realized for the child of her adoption that supreme felicity of



love in marriage which had been the dream and the regret of her life.

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“DIEPPE, July 2, 1818.<sup>1</sup>

“I shall not return to Paris, my dear child, until the 17th of this month. If, as I hope, Mme. de Gramont is satisfied with you, I shall ask her to allow you to come out the day of my arrival. I am pleased with your intention of fully occupying your time. I find your last letter more reasonable; I was grieved at the idea you gave me of yourself by your want of resignation, but I hope that you will efface this impression. I take two baths a day; this fatigues me, and obliges me to lie down in the intervals.

“I think of you often; I talk of you often with M. Ballanche. You will either be a great grief or a great happiness to me; and that will depend upon yourself. I embrace you, and look forward impatiently to the 17th of July.

“I beg Mme. de Gramont to accept my affectionate regards.”

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<sup>1</sup> From the day I was brought to Paris I had never quitted my aunt; but when the time of my first communion drew near, Mme. Récamier, desiring that this important act should be performed in strict retirement, and far from all worldly distractions, placed me at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, under the particular charge of Mme. Eugénie de Gramont, with whom she was very intimate, and whose brother had married the daughter of her friend, the Marchioness de Catellan.

I passed a year at the Sacred Heart, and it is there that these letters were addressed to me.

“AIX-LA-CHAPELLE, Aug. 9, 1818.

“I have received your letters, my dear little girl, and I have heard of you through M. Ballanche and Paul. They tell me you are more contented and in good health. I recommend you to employ well the time of our separation, that I may have all the more pleasure in our meeting again. I am still ill, and in a state of mind which would make you say again, ‘I have truly the saddest of aunts.’ I hope that the waters, in quieting my nerves, will give me more strength and courage. Adieu, dear child ; I embrace you. Pray for me.

“Present my respects to Mme. de Gramont.”

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“AIX-LA-CHAPELLE, Aug. 26, 1818.

“I write very seldom to you, my poor dear little girl, because I am still an invalid ; but I think of you a great deal, and with lively affection. I have not a grief, not a vexation, that I do not say to myself that I will do all that is in my power to prevent your being exposed to the same trials. In your happiness I hope to find my consolation ; prove your gratitude by striving to perform all your duties. I have been deeply touched by your praying for me after receiving absolution. Poor dear little one, may Heaven bless you, and may you be happier than I!”

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MME. RÉCAMIER TO HER SISTER-IN-LAW, MME. DELPHIN, AT LYONS.<sup>1</sup>

“ August 17, 1825.

“It is a very long time, my dear and good sister, since I have had the pleasure of communicating with you. I know that you complain of not having seen me upon my return from Italy. I dare say that if you had known my motives you would approve of them, and you are too well aware of my affection to suppose I did not regret it. You know, my good sister, that we are occupied with the marriage of our dear Amélie. M. Lenormant, whom we think of for her, is a young man of twenty-four, of an honorable family, perfectly pure character, and of distinguished ability. I am trying to get the place of auditor to the council of state for him, and it will depend upon my success whether the marriage takes place. You can imagine, my good sister, how interested I am, and I know too well how much affectionate interest you take in us all to be afraid of wearying you with these particulars. You know that

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<sup>1</sup> Mme. Récamier made a second tour of Italy in 1823, while the Duke de Laval was ambassador at Rome, and M. de Chateaubriand minister of foreign affairs. She was accompanied by the good and faithful Ballanche, her niece Amélie, and J. J. Ampère. It was at Naples that M. Charles Lenormant was presented to her. She returned to France in June, 1825, by way of the Simplon and Geneva. Mme. Delphin, her sister-in-law, had expressed much regret that she had not stopped to see her. Mme. Récamier explains to her in this letter the motives which hastened her return to Paris.

The marriage of Mme. Lenormant took place February 1, 1826.

M. Récamier has met with new losses; this renders our situation still harder, and makes me all the more desirous for the establishment of Amélie. After having experienced all the ills of this life, I wish, as far as it depends upon me, to secure the peace of mind of those I love; and you, too, my good sister, you have had many trials, but you have the best and sweetest of consolations, a life wholly devoted to God and the relief of the unfortunate; you have made your name blessed, and you are loved and venerated as you deserve.

“I counted upon sending this letter to you by Mme. Derbel, but she was not certain of seeing you in passing through, as she will only stop a few hours. She has been cruelly tried, and bears her grief with as much courage as feeling. Her first interview with her mother-in-law will be very painful, but there is some comfort in sharing with another our regrets. Adieu, dear and good sister; pray remember me to your son, his wife, and all your family.”

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“FROM THE VALLÉE-AUX-LOUPS, Easter Sunday.<sup>1</sup>

“I desire, my poor child, to reassure you on the subject of my loneliness. I was so heart-broken on entering this house, the first moments were so sad, that I still think I did well in not letting you come with me.

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<sup>1</sup> Duke Matthieu de Montmorency died suddenly, from the rupture of an aneurism, on Good Friday, 1826, while kneeling at the tomb of St. Thomas Aquinas in his parish church.

M. Ballanche and Paul<sup>1</sup> are perfect, as you know. I have heard mass, and written a long letter to Mme. de Montmorency. I expect you on Wednesday; the first bitterness will be over, and it will be a comfort to me to see you.

“Adieu, dear child.”

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“1826. — ANGERVILLIERS, Sunday.<sup>2</sup>

“M. de Guizard, who leaves immediately, will take this note: Mme. de Catellan had been informed of the sad news by letters she had received. She was very much moved and touched at seeing us. She is alone with Mme. de Gramont; we cannot leave before Tuesday; we shall arrive for dinner between six and seven o'clock; we shall be tired. I desire to find only you and Charles at the Abbaye. Adieu, dear children. I embrace and love you. Send this letter to Mme. de Montmorency, who is expecting me.”

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“ANGERVILLIERS, Tuesday evening.

“I am still here, detained by my headaches; so, dear child, I shall not be able to arrive on Tuesday as I

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<sup>1</sup> Paul David, nephew of M. Récamier, a man of original mind and devoted heart. His friendship was as delicate and faithful as that of Ballanche. He survived Mme. Récamier, who made him her executor. M. de Loménie, in “*l'Ami de la Religion*” of the 25th of September, 1860, has devoted some charming pages to the memory of this good man.

<sup>2</sup> Estate of the Marchioness de Catellan.

hoped. Paul precedes me, that you may not be alarmed by this delay. He will give you particulars. I am a little cross with Mme. de Catellan, and I reproach myself for it; she wishes to keep me at any rate; but, dead or alive, I shall arrive on Wednesday, and I hope to find you at the Abbaye. I am very much afraid that M. Lenormant is making my absence only too easy for you to bear; but I am generous, and still sing his praises while he is teaching you to forget me. Adieu, then, until Wednesday. Is M. de Larochefoucauld appointed? How many things I shall have to learn upon my arrival! I have received a letter from M. Ampère which came by post; inclosed is my reply, which Joseph must take as well as the letter for M. de Chateaubriand.

“Word must be sent to Mme. de Montmorency that I shall not arrive on Tuesday.”

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M. BALLANCHE TO MME. LENORMANT.<sup>1</sup>

“July 23, 1828.

“*Mon Dieu!* How far away you are from us! and how much farther still you are going! In taking my

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<sup>1</sup> It will perhaps be necessary to remind the reader that in 1828 the Duke de Laval-Montmorency was ambassador to Vienna, while M. de Chateaubriand had replaced him at Rome, and M. Lenormant was on the point of setting out with the scientific expedition to Egypt, at the head of which was the famous Champollion. Mme. Lenormant accompanied her husband as far as Toulon, where the frigate “l’Eglé” was waiting to transport the *savans* to Alexandria.

short morning stroll, I am reduced to merely looking at your door, and in the evening we seek you in vain, whether in the charming little room or in the fine *salon de Corinne*. You arrived at Lyons very much fatigued, no doubt, and we were not there to know it, and to persuade you not to continue your journey if your strength were not equal to your courage. The weather is still execrable. I trust that you will get into better as you proceed.

“On Monday evening, by way of being a little in your company again, we read M. Lenormant’s article,<sup>1</sup> which both instructed and interested us. It is satisfactory to see a special idea referred to a general idea: unity of thought is the sole and true condition under which any thing can be produced, whether in art, poetry, or even in letters. Scattered ideas isolated from each other, without a common centre, are fugitive and barren.

“Yesterday morning I returned the proofs to the printer; they have given me very little trouble; they are to be submitted to M. Guizot’s revision. Yesterday, at three o’clock, we, that is, Mme. Récamier and I, took a short turn in the Bois de Boulogne. It was not very pleasant; however, we took advantage of a few fine moments to walk a little. We talked of nothing but the travellers. Your aunt had passed a more comfortable night, and she remarked that she was inclined to reproach herself for feeling better when she thought

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<sup>1</sup> An article on Greek vases in the “Revue Française.”

of you, overcome with fatigue and perhaps even ill. In the evening we had no one but Mlle. de Martigny, and after Paul and I had left your aunt was taken unwell again. But, at all events, the day had been a good one, and it is to be hoped that these tolerable days will become more frequent, and her health be at last re-established.

“The evening before, Messrs. de Catellan, Montbel, Auguste Lefebvre, Jussieu, Mme. d’Hautefeuille came. We have good news of Ampère, Jun. M. de Catellan is to leave. Mme. de Gramont has returned to see her physician about her health, which is still poor. In the way of news, I must tell you that several of the bishops now in Paris, among others M. de Chéverus, think that the civil authorities have not exceeded their powers in the famous Ordinances. At least that is what was said night before last. My respectful remembrances to your mother-in-law, Mme. Lenormant; embrace for me, if you please, the young antiquary. Send us news of yourself regularly, and let it be somewhat in detail. We are expecting impatiently M. Puy, who is to come to Paris after seeing you all at Lyons. I hope also to have news of you through Brédin and Révoil.

“M. Récamier was a little indisposed last evening; he is better this morning; it amounts to nothing. My best love.

“BALLANCHE.”

Mme. Récamier added a few lines to this letter:—

“Here is a kind letter, dear Amélie, from M. Ballanche. I, too, desire to tell you how impatiently I



am waiting to hear from you. I hope to have a letter to-day: everybody I see asks me for news of the *young travellers* with the most affectionate interest. I saw yesterday M. de Larochevoucauld, who starts for the Pyrenees. The Duke de Laval, whom I also saw yesterday, was very sorry that he arrived at your house a moment too late to bid you good-by. I was better yesterday, but to-day my illness and melancholy have returned. Adieu, dear child. I love and embrace you. I am very anxious to hear of your safe arrival: write me a long letter the day of the *departure*. Poor dear little one! How I dread that moment!”

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“ August 4, 1828.

“ So you are all alone now, my poor Amélie! In reading the words ‘*it is to-morrow,*’ my eyes filled with tears; I felt all that you were feeling; and had it not been for the preparations necessary for so long a journey, my impulse would have been to start at once and go to you, that you might not be alone with your sorrow. M. Lenormant’s letter went to my heart. I see that at the moment of departure he was overcome with grief at leaving you; that he had need of all your courage to sustain his own; and you know, perhaps, now that it is probable that this separation will be much shorter than you expected, and that the travellers will find at Alexandria orders to return to France.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It was feared that the war in Greece as well as in Turkey would be an obstacle to the peaceable labors of the scientific

“The happiness of returning to you will console M. Lenormant for not continuing his journey ; and I confess I could not help feeling a secret joy at hearing this news which will abridge your sorrow. As to myself, I am again very unsettled. I will write you when all is decided. M. de Chateaubriand has most kindly taken charge of the note for M. Hyde de Neuville. He still expects to leave on the 1st of September. I pass my days in a painful uncertainty, from which I know not how to extricate myself. I must not talk to you of happiness, my poor child, when your heart is torn ; but your griefs are passing ones, and your lot seems so sweet to me that I would willingly give the brightest days of my life for your saddest ones. M. Ballanche, Paul, and all my friends talk of nothing but you.”

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“ August 21, 1828.

“I am distressed, my poor Amélie, at all the trouble which Paul’s letter has caused you. He, as well as M. Ballanche, is going to write to you. I have a letter for you from Mme. de Turpin ; thinking that it might

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commission. M. Drovetti, French consul-general at Alexandria, thought it his duty to write to Champollion a letter which crossed him upon the sea. By the advice of the viceroy himself, he begged the illustrious French *savant* to postpone his voyage to another year. M. Lenormant, in his letters from Egypt, relates this incident, and adds : “ Our coming caused, therefore, a moment’s embarrassment to M. Drovetti ; as for the Pasha, like a true prince, he at once exclaimed, ‘ Let them be welcome,’ and the affair was settled in a trice.”

give you pleasure, I lose not a moment in sending it to you. M. de Chateaubriand has lately been ill. His journey is still fixed for the beginning of September.

“How sad are all these departures! how hard a thing is life! When shall we be all together again? Adieu, my poor dear Amélie; return as soon as you can, and repose on my heart while waiting for something better, and try to quiet your poor imagination, and take care of your health. M. Lenormant must find you upon his return fresh ‘*as the queen of flowers.*’”

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“April 21, 1829.<sup>1</sup>”

“Here, dear child, are Mme. de Boigne’s letters. I have heard nothing sad of Sébastiane. You know all our troubles. I stayed until midnight yesterday with M. Récamier; meanwhile, all our friends came to the Abbaye to inquire after you. M. Récamier is better this morning. M. de Chateaubriand’s *congé* has gone. I received yesterday a letter of eight pages from him;

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<sup>1</sup> M. Lenormant accompanied Champollion as far as the second cataract, and then returned to Alexandria to reimpark for France. But he found, on arriving at Alexandria, that he had been appointed assistant-director of the archæological section of the scientific commission which the French government had sent to the Morea. He therefore proceeded to Greece, studying the monuments for four months. He had given his wife permission to join him, and she was waiting at Toulon for him to meet her. He intended to petition for a renewal of his commission, but on account of M. de Polignac becoming minister, he declined to ask any favors.

he is very much excited. I have seen M. Delécluze. Inclosed is a letter from him, also one from Canaris: it pains me to have to send you all these things. I especially recommend to you the letter for Zante; you know what you promised me. What a pity that we are not together! but that was not possible. I was much overcome upon entering your deserted home. M. Ballanche and Paul have promised to give you all details; you know that I do not write; they will tell you all; but no one can tell you how much I miss you. I did not try to keep you, I understood you too well, and I saw you were so happy! Say to M. Lenormant how much I was touched by his letter. The moment of your meeting will be a happy one in your life. I have need to let my thoughts rest upon it, and I shall have no peace until I know you are reunited. Direct all your letters as we agreed upon. I am your *chargé d'affaires*, tell me what you want me to do. I hope that as much honor will accrue to M. Lenormant from this expedition as from the one to Egypt, and that it will prepare the way for a good situation on his return.

“Adieu, adieu! I am going to write to M. de Chateaubriand by a courier who leaves this morning; then I shall go and stay with M. Récamier in your little room until evening. I no longer know what I am writing. Adieu, alas! adieu. Take good care of yourself; be prudent, and lose no opportunity of writing to us.”

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“ May 11, 1829.

“ I hasten, poor dear child, to forward you this letter, which has been sent here by accident, instead of to you. The situation in which you are placed, this cruel uncertainty, this isolation, — every thing distresses me. I am also very anxious about matters in Rome. The Duke de Laval has refused, but whom will they appoint? M. de Chateaubriand is waiting. His wife will arrive in a few days. M. Récamier is remarkably well. I have been very ill; I am a little better; but I shall not have a moment's peace while I know that you are in this state of uncertainty. We talk of you constantly, and we are going to try to arrange it so that you shall have a letter every day. Take courage, dear child of my heart, and think of the time when we shall all be together again. I cannot advise you, since your fate depends upon your husband's reply. I hope your very sensible letter will convince him. It will then remain to be seen whether you are to proceed to Zante or return to us, and you can imagine with what anxiety we await the decision.”

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“ PARIS, May 21, 1829.

“ I wrote you a long letter, but I tore it up at the last moment. I will tell you why some day, but I reproach myself for having delayed a letter from Paul. He has probably written to you to-day. The idea of your loneliness is always haunting us; we talk of it constantly. Meanwhile the days go by with me as with

you; I suffer much, and the pleasures of the world have lost their charm for me.

“M. de Chateaubriand will soon be here. I am more troubled at the situation in which he will find himself than happy in the thought of seeing him again. I do not know whether he will return to Italy or no. The uncertainty attending your movements as well as his plunges me also into a state of perplexity, and I can form no plans. I saw your mother-in-law yesterday, who is truly an excellent woman. I was so ill that I was obliged to leave a room full of people and go to bed. Everybody asks after you; it is always the first question addressed to me. It is impossible to inspire more interest, or to have a better and more charming reputation. I am very proud of my work, though I recognize that I have had very little hand in it, and that God has blessed my intentions rather than my skill. We are all expecting with an anxious impatience the letters that are to decide your future course. I will write to you as soon as I have seen M. de Chateaubriand. Adieu, dear child; take courage, and think of the bright future of happiness in store for you.”

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“ May 26, 1829.

“Yes, dear child of my heart, I can well imagine your great joy on learning that M. Lenormant would soon arrive, and when I know that you have met, I shall be tranquil. Tell him all our grief at parting from you, but enjoy without any alloy the happiness of



M. DE CHATEAUBRIAND  
*from a rare engraving*





this reunion. You have done what I should have done in your place. We have all suffered much, but we shall all meet again, and you will have given to M. Lenormant a proof of affection the remembrance of which will shed a charm the more over all your future life. Tell him how much I am attached to him; how grateful I am to him for your happiness; but say to him also that he ought to adore me for having given him such a wife. Can you read me, dear child? I write with difficulty, being tormented by sharp rheumatic pains in my head; I have not closed my eyes all night. It is nothing, however; it will all pass off in a day or two; but for the moment the pain is unbearable. Inclosed is a letter from Lina, who has also written to me. I had two letters yesterday by a special courier from the Duke de Laval. They are dated a week apart. He is far from suspecting the blow which is about to fall on his head. He will arrive at the same time with M. de Chateaubriand. Here is an opportunity for me to exercise my great talents. I truly think that I can be useful to them: this is a consolation in the midst of all my sorrows. M. Récamier is much better; our friends are very good, and affectionately interested in you. We are all waiting anxiously for news from Toulon. Adieu, dear child; I press you to my heart."

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"June 1, 1820.

"You know all the particulars respecting the Abbaye, dear little one; M. Ballanche, Paul, M. Récamier must have written you long letters. M. de Chateaubriand

arrived on Thursday; I was very happy to see him again, — happier even than I thought I should be. The only thing wanting now to my full enjoyment is to know that you are happy. Your solitude weighs on my heart. I cannot give you any advice owing to the uncertainty I am in myself. If M. de Chateaubriand returns to Rome, it is probable that I shall pass the winter there. Perhaps also my health may oblige me to go this summer to Dieppe for the sea-bathing. But by that time your fate will be decided. Mme. Auguste Pasquier is very ill. I have not seen Paul for three days. I am expecting M. de Chateaubriand, who is having an audience of the king, and is coming to give me an account of the interview. You know that our unfortunate mortgage bank is going to break: it is disastrous. I see a good deal of company, — M. Villemain, whom I find very pleasant, M. de Sainte-Aulaire. But it is M. de Chateaubriand's arrival that has renewed my life, which seemed almost extinct. My own feelings are still so youthful that I can the better understand yours: this is another bond of sympathy between us, and I am the one in whom your poor heart should wholly confide."

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M. BALLANCHE TO MME. LENORMANT.

"June 18, 1829.

"It seems to me that the end of your exile is near. I trust that you are now profiting by the little time left you, to take sea baths. I cannot tell you what importance I attach to health; with it one enjoys more and

can endure more. That you will go to the Morea does not now seem probable. M. Lenormant cannot much longer delay returning; and as for you, it would not be worth your while, for the short time you will have to remain there, to undergo the different quarantines to which you would doubtless be subjected. M. Lenormant is making his circuit independently of the commission. The important thing for him is that he has done it; his future is assured. Doubtless I shall have many questions to ask him, and I shall be delighted to be able to give him a mass of information. I am growing old, I no longer have any hope of visiting places which, nevertheless, it would be very useful to me to visit, not for the work I am upon at present, but for 'Zenobia,' if ever I undertake an epic poem upon the early days of Christianity. Well, well, we shall see.

"Yesterday there was a brilliant assembly at the Abbaye-aux-Bois to hear 'Moses' read. Lafond<sup>1</sup> read very badly, because the manuscript was bad; but M. de Chateaubriand took it and read it himself; so what was lost in the reading was amply made up in the interest. Your aunt, however, was upon thorns; but be assured that all went off very well, and every one was delighted, as it was natural they should be. Among the auditors I shall confine myself to mentioning Mesdames Appony, de Fontanes, and Gay; MM. Cousin, Villemain, Le Brun, Lamartine, Latouche, Dubois, Saint-Marc-Girardin, Valery, Mérimée, Gérard, and the Dukes de Doudeauville and de Broglie; MM. de Sainte-

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<sup>1</sup> Of the Théâtre Français.

Aulaire, de Barante, and David ; Mme. de Boigne, Mme. de Gramont, Baron Pasquier, Mme. and Mlle. de Barante, and the Mlles. de Sainte-Aulaire, Dugas-Montbel, &c. I might as well have given you at once a complete list, for it was very select. M. de Chateaubriand was in his best mood. He manifested no annoyance when his beautiful verses were mangled, and he was very obliging in reading some passages, besides a whole act. He received, as you may imagine, a great many well-merited compliments.

“ Ampère was to have been at the reading, but he does not arrive till to-day. He, like a good son, has been to see his father, whose health gives him some anxiety. Mme. Récamier received this morning a letter from him, in which he appears less uneasy. This young man is very attractive, and he will not be one of those you will be the least pleased to meet again.

“ You ask me for news of what they are pleased to call my little ‘ church.’ It is still progressing. The so-called progressionists desire to put themselves under my wing, and will not publish any thing except under my direction. This is very well, but one has to begin by establishing the enterprise upon a sure foundation, and that is not an easy thing. I should like to talk to you of ministerial matters, but, in truth, I know nothing of them.

“ I am writing at your aunt’s, and cede the pen to her. I will say no more, but only assure you of my love and of the interest I take in your exile, for your own sake and for the sake of us all.”

FROM MME. RÉCAMIER.

“M. de la Rochefoucauld, who has just come in, only leaves me time to embrace you, and say to you how much I miss you, and how weary I am of the sort of dissipation in which I find myself plunged. When shall I resume our pleasant and peaceful habits? When shall I see you again, dear child of my heart?”

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TO MME. LENORMANT.

“DIEPPE, August 10, 1829.

“So you are still alone, my poor child, but it is only for a very short time. I have written to your husband, inclosing him a letter that I have received from M. de la Rochefoucauld; he will surely be pleased with it, and we must soon come to a decision of some sort. A new ministry is talked about; it is to be completely *ultra*: in that case, M. de Chateaubriand, I think, would send in his resignation; and it is possible also that this event may cause M. Lenormant's request to miscarry. So you see what we have to fear, and that this unlucky chance may bring us all together again in Paris. If I did not apprehend danger, or at least an alarming tendency for France in this movement, I could scarcely help rejoicing at it. However, a few days more and we shall know our fate.

“I am here in the midst of *fêtes*, princesses, illuminations, plays. Two of my windows face the ball-room, and the other two the theatre. In the midst of all this bustle I live in perfect solitude; I sit and dream

by the sea-shore ; I pass in review all the melancholy events of my life. I trust that you will be happier than I have been. I am deeply touched by the affection you still have for me, when it would be so natural for you to be absorbed by quite another feeling. Your image has a place in all my dreams ; it is through you that I have a future. If you make the journey, we will resign ourselves to it by thinking of the influence it may have on M. Lenormant's whole career ; if we do not succeed, resignation will be still more easy, and we shall all meet again in a few weeks.

“I have met here Léonie de B. She was under the impression that you had married an old *savant*,—a pedant. Imagine my pleasure in telling her that this old *savant* was a young man only twenty-five, with a most elegant figure, a very handsome face, and brilliant conversational powers. Poor Léonie is not very agreeable ; I think she is tired of remaining unmarried. Her mother is very attentive to me. I also see Mme. Annisson ; she is particularly polite to me, and pleases me on her brother's account as well as her own ; but I pass almost all my time in reading and talking with M. Ballanche, who adapts himself perfectly to our solitary life. He is lodged in a sort of tower, where he has a view of the sea ; he is working on his ‘Palingénésie,’ and seems the most contented man in the world. Poor Ampère has gone to Lyons ; he is very uneasy about his father, who has been ordered to try his native air. The son is to return at the end of this month. His care for his father is very touching. He accompanied

me, when I left for Dieppe, as far as the first stopping-place for the night. As I travelled alone, and by short stages, we arrived very early, took a walk, had supper, some reading, and then he left to rejoin his father; he travelled by night in a wretched conveyance, but he was delighted with our little journey; it was a pleasant change for him in his troubles. How I have gone into particulars, but I know that you have plenty of leisure. If M. Lenormant were with you I should not write so long a letter. I rely upon your skill to decipher my scrawl. I hope, at all events, to see M. Lenormant before his departure. I embrace and love you."

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FROM BONNÉTABLE, THE RESIDENCE OF THE DUCHESS MATHIEU  
DE MONTMORENCY.

"Thursday, August 15, 1830.

"So you are alone, poor little one! I shall think of you more constantly than ever during these days of your husband's absence. I have not been able to decipher the day of return; it is the fault of my eyes, or the fine English handwriting. I hope to be in Paris between the 25th and 27th, but I do not dare yet to talk of leaving. I find here all that I came to seek, and if my heart did not draw me back to you I would willingly prolong my sojourn in this solitude. Paul tells me that you are perfectly well, but that does not prevent my being anxious. I have received a letter from the Duke de Laval, which seems to me to show such true feeling that I desire to send it to you that you may share my

impressions, and also know his plans, which must affect M. Lenormant's journey.

"Adieu, dear Amélie, dear child. Say to M. Balanche that I will write to him to-morrow, and to Paul the next day. The chapel of the chateau was formerly M. de Montmorency's chamber. You can well imagine how these reminiscences go to my heart.

"Send me back the Duke de Laval's letter. Send François immediately with the letter for M. de Chateaubriand."

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"MAINTENON, August 10, 1835.

"You have heard, dear Amélie, by a letter from M. Ampère, the particulars of our pilgrimage to Chapelle-Saint-Éloi. We arrived yesterday at Maintenon. M. and Mme. de Noailles are perfectly charming in their own house. It is impossible for hospitality to be more noble, more elegant, more refined in every particular, and at the same time more simple and easy. The Duke de Laval arrived a quarter of an hour after us, and I think we shall see M. de Chateaubriand to-day. I shall arrange with him the precise time of my return, and then I shall immediately notify Paul. I should like very much to know your plans, and especially whether it be possible for us to pass a few weeks together.

"M. de Chateaubriand has arrived.

"I have just been talking with M. de Chateaubriand. He leaves on Thursday and I on Saturday; and so, dear Amélie, good-by until Saturday night. I am very happy at the thought of our meeting; I certainly



hope to find you at the Abbaye. I shall arrive, I think, between seven and eight o'clock; we shall dine at Versailles."

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"PARIS, September 6, 1835.

"I am delighted, my dear Amélie, to know that you have all arrived safely at your journey's end. There is no talk of the departure of M. de Chateaubriand, quite the contrary. It is the first time I have seen him when he did not repel the idea of a future in France; judge how I encourage in him this state of mind. He even talks of refurnishing his house as soon as he has sold his 'Mémoires.' In that case, I shall take the large *salon* of the Abbaye; we will have a dinner every fortnight; and I shall pass two or three of the summer months with you in the charming valley. M. de Chateaubriand will establish himself in the little inn already known to him. These projects, which will bring together all my dearest interests, delight me, but I dare not rely upon them. However, dear child, one thing is certain, that I am very much pleased and touched that you and your husband should have set your hearts so much upon this reunion. I have pictured it to myself as so charming, that it will be very hard to be obliged to renounce it. Give my affectionate remembrances to your husband. I am not anxious about his course of lectures, which will assuredly meet with the approval of the educated, and I hope also of the ignorant, who will like being instructed in so pleasing a manner. I judge by myself, as I find always so much to interest me in his conver-

sation. Adieu, my dear, kind Amélie. Embrace your two little girls for me, and be assured that I have never more earnestly desired that my life should not be passed apart from yours."

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“PARIS, August 23, 1836.

“I wish to tell you myself, dear Amélie, all my regrets. I had made up my mind to start next Monday; all my preparations were made; I had an excellent carriage; we would have had delightful drives all about your neighborhood; I was taking great pleasure in the thought of this reunion in your poor little valley, which I so often anathematize. My health, which is an obstacle to every thing, again stands in the way; my friends think me so unwise to undertake a journey in my condition, they are so uneasy about it, that they have at last dissuaded me from it. I give up, therefore, for this year, my visit, and look forward to the end of September. I shall take care in time to prevent this happening again next summer. I have been worried about the health of your children, your anxieties, and your solitude; we must have no more of these long separations. I have too short a time to live to be willing to submit to them. I am thinking of a little house near Paris where I could receive you without being separated from my friends here, who would be left too solitary. We will talk it over, and try to manage it. I am very much touched by the joy my dear Juliette showed at the prospect of my coming. I also shall be delighted

to see that lovable child. Your last letter has revived all my regrets; in truth, there was no need. M. Lenormant will be with you in a few days; you will no longer be alone. My life goes on without change; Ampère is away; Ballanche is full of great schemes, and I am very uneasy about him; I fear his affairs are in a sad state. He is sacrificing the little fortune which is sufficient to make him happy and independent to the millions he hopes to gain. He said to M. de Chateaubriand, who regrets having sold his 'Mémoires,' 'I will buy them back; I can get them for three or four hundred thousand francs.' It would be laughable, if it were not distressing, to see so excellent a man plunging into endless embarrassments.

"Adieu, dear friend; I embrace you with all my heart."

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"September 3, 1838.

"I have counted upon M. Lenormant's giving you news of the Abbaye, as somewhat better than the letters of my *dame de compagnie*. In writing to you myself, I can hardly be a substitute for him. He has doubtless told you how much I miss you, how I dislike these long separations, when we might be so happy together. But I need repose first of all; nevertheless, I went to the rehearsal of the opera by Berlioz. The theatre was quite full, the audience very cold, and I, like the audience, for I was so tired, and had such a bad seat, that Dupré himself gave me no pleasure. I was with Mme. Salvage, Eugène, and Ampère; they are both going

away in a few days. I trust you will come with your husband before his departure for Italy. I dare not wish to keep you during his absence, since the country is so beneficial to your health and that of your children; and, on the other hand, I should not like to leave M. de Chateaubriand, who would be quite alone in Paris. Were it not for him I should have gone with you, for I am convinced that since it would have given me so much pleasure, it could not have done me harm. My letter will find you, I think, on your return from your visit to M. Guizot; you will give me an account of your journey, you know how fond I am of details. I hope you will bring Juliette as well as her sister; they will keep each other company; you will dine with Paul or with me, and we will try to make you pass as pleasantly as we can the little time you will be able to give us. Dupré is to sing for M. de Chateaubriand at Saint-Gratien, at M. de Custines'; we shall go there to breakfast; the house is charming. If the day did not depend upon Dupré, I should have appointed one when I could take you with me; that would be delightful. Perhaps it will so happen naturally. Adieu, dear child; I embrace you heartily, and am happy in the thought that I shall see you in a few days. Do not let me be forgotten by all the good people who live at Saint-Éloi."

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## ON HER RETURN FROM EMS.

“PARIS, September 11, 1840.<sup>1</sup>

“It is very true, my dear child, that I have returned in a sad state, and truly regret having taken such a long, expensive, and useless journey. How very kind M. Lenormant has been; how much I thank him for having thought of coming for me; but the fact is, I am so weary of myself that I dread, above all things, making others weary of me; not surely, that I do not rely upon the attachment of my friends, but to cause them only sorrow, to contribute in no respect to their enjoyment of life, is for me the keenest pain that I could possibly suffer. I have thought of you often and very lovingly during this journey, thought of *our* children, made a thousand plans that I shall never realize. My ill-health interferes with every thing. Take care of your health, you are not inclined to do so: do it for the sake of others. I impatiently expect you. I had day before yesterday so violent an attack that it was followed by fever, and I was obliged to pass the whole day in bed; and, imagine my vexation, Mme. de Boigne had invited me to dine with her in company with M. de Chateaubriand that very day. The dinner had to be given up, their plans deranged, and all this suddenly with little circumstances of detail that were most

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<sup>1</sup> The health of Mme. Récamier was visibly declining. She long concealed from her friends her constant state of suffering in order not to alarm them, but her sight was becoming impaired, and at the time she was ordered to Ems for the waters, it was ascertained that upon both eyes a cataract was forming.

annoying. In fine, my dear child, I cannot tell you how tired I am of myself. I look forward to your coming to give me a little courage. One happy moment is still in store for me, — the one when I shall see you again.”

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“ September 23.

“What pleasant memories I carried away from Saint-Éloi! How happy I was in the midst of you all! With what impatience I look forward to the 10th of October! I have read the very pleasant article of the pilgrimage to Combourg<sup>1</sup> to M. de Chateaubriand. Juliette’s letter was charming; but I am provoked at the sixty francs for the curtains; and is it true that they are horribly mean? I hope she is mistaken. I have seen Mme. Guizot and the young people, who are very impatiently expecting you. M. Guizot, who was at his mother’s, was very affable. I took advantage of the opportunity to ask him for a little contribution in aid of Mlle. Robert: with the most gracious alacrity he sent me a check for two hundred francs. M. Salvandy came to see me the same day; he was still radiant from the fortnight he had passed at Eu. I was very much pleased with Mlle. Godefroid. M. Ballanche is quite well. Poor M. Brifaut suffers much, but his courage never fails. What might seem frivolous in his charac-

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<sup>1</sup> By M. Lenormant. Combourg is the ancestral home of the Chateaubriands. Chateaubriand the author passed part of his boyhood there. His chamber and study in the chateau remain the same as when he occupied them. — Tr.

ter becomes admirable now in his sad situation. Mme. and Mlle. Deffaudis come every evening; they entertain me with music. Camille's voice is charming.

"This is a very long letter for my poor eyes; I am writing as though with white ink, without seeing what I write. Can you read me? Adieu, my Amélie; adieu, my dear little Juliette; I expect a letter from Paule. I embrace you affectionately. I miss you and expect you."

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"CHATENAY, Wednesday, April 10, 1841.<sup>1</sup>

"I do not wish to influence your plans, and shorten a stay very necessary, perhaps, to the health of your children, but for myself, dear Amélie, what I most desire in the world is that we may be together; if you return on the 16th, I will be in Paris on the 14th; if you do not return until the 18th, I will be there on the 16th, to arrange our establishment. Reply to me by return of mail at Mme. de Boigne's, at Chatenay, near Antony. I find Mme. de Boigne charming; I am always more and more pleased with her wit; but nothing can compare with the pleasure I anticipate in meeting you again; I feel that it will not be, perhaps, as complete for you as for me, but we will talk of the travellers; we shall hear from them directly and indirectly. In fine, I hope that with me by your side you will pass these months of absence a little less sadly

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<sup>1</sup> M. Lenormant was about setting out for Greece and Constantinople with Messrs. Prosper Mérimée, J.-J. Ampère, and de Witte.

than if we had not hit upon this plan of living together. Adieu, dear Amélie; I press you to my heart; I embrace your dear little ones, and I am charmed, delighted at our approaching meeting."

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"MAINTENON, August 13, 1842.

"You will receive these few lines at Lyons; you will again see that Hôtel de l'Europe where '*you had, indeed, the saddest of aunts.*' I follow you to Belley, to the very spot where I saw you for the first time. I see again the meadow before your grandmother's house, where I first conceived the idea of asking your parents to give you up to me. My design in adopting you was to provide a solace for your uncle in his old age; what I thought to do for him, I have done for myself; it was he who gave you to me, and I shall always bless his memory for it.

"As I can only write one word, I charge you, above all things, to take care of your health, which you neglect altogether too much. This is our old quarrel, and your only fault. I beg M. Lenormant to watch over you; my own health is wretched. The Duke and Duchess de Noailles are so perfect in their attentions that I scarcely perceive that I am not at home. M. de Chateaubriand will arrive on the 20th of the month. I do not think he will remain more than a day. We shall return to Paris by Saint-Vrain, where we shall find the philosopher Ballanche between '*Dragonneau*' and '*l'Âme Exilée.*' I do not know what will become



of me afterward, or what I shall do with the month of September. Write me often; reply to all the questions I should like to ask you. Is there any chance for you? Will not the change of ministry be an obstacle? I know nothing yet of M. Lenormant's report to the Institute; he has written me a very kind letter, for which I thank him. M. Brifaut is always kind and good; he will leave Maintenon with regret: he is in his element here: the beauties of this royal chateau, the memories of Louis XIV. and Mme. de Maintenon, but, above all, the pleasure of seeing himself between the Duchess de Noailles and the Duchess de Talleyrand are joys of which he never tires. I am almost glad that he has a weakness which gives him so much satisfaction. They would have been pleased to have you here; the Duke de Noailles hopes for it next summer. Adieu, dear Amélie; do not let your children forget me. I do not count for much in their lives; they can only love me through you; I hope that it will not always be so. Once more, adieu! I press you to my heart."

END OF PART II.



## PART III.

### JEAN-JACQUES AMPÈRE AND THE ABBAYE-AUX-BOIS.

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**I**N order to portray completely Mme. Récamier as she appeared in her most intimate relations of affection and friendship, I must introduce to the notice of the reader J.-J. Ampère, the young friend of her riper years and of her old age, whom she treated as a son or as a brother. Pardon me if I dwell with pleasure upon the recollections of an epoch which evoke, alas! the phantom of my own youth. To recall the past, is it not the sole comfort left to those whom Providence dooms to outlive their friends?

The numerous letters from Mme. Récamier interspersed among these reminiscences of a time that is no more will, I feel sure, impart to them a genuine interest.

Jean-Jacques Ampère was the only child of André-Marie Ampère, the celebrated natural philosopher, a man of learning and genius. He had from his earliest youth a passionate admiration for his father, in whose fame he took the most touching and legitimate pride.

He never knew his mother.<sup>1</sup> She died when he was nearly three years old. His father, called to Paris in 1803,<sup>2</sup> took with him his son and sister. Mlle. Ampère was a pious and saintly maiden lady, who spent her youth, strength, and little fortune in her brother's service. He, it is true, loved her tenderly, but, notwithstanding his goodness of heart, piety, and other rare endowments, he never succeeded in diffusing around him or finding for himself either peace or happiness.

Absorbed in the sublime combinations of science, Ampère, whose powerful intellect could discover the laws of electro-dynamics, was ignorant, or at least unmindful, of the simplest affairs of every-day life; consequently his money was wasted, his house ill-kept, and when, through some disagreeable accident, he became conscious of this want of order, he would fall into a state of utter but unavailing despair. His nature was thor-

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<sup>1</sup> The "Journal et Correspondence d'André-Marie Ampère," published in Paris in 1873, supplies some interesting facts in regard to Ampère's mother. She was Julie Carron, of Lyons, and a lovely and attractive person. This journal, which is a *naïve* and pathetic story of the courtship and brief married life of André Ampère, shows him, as well as his young wife, in a most engaging light. Her early death was an irreparable loss to her family, as she had the practical qualities that were wanting in her husband, and which his sister also appears to have lacked, judging from Mme. Lenormant's account of their household. André Ampère was married August 6, 1799. His son was born August 12th, 1800, and his wife died July 14th, 1803. — TR.

<sup>2</sup> According to the "Journal," Ampère did not go to Paris until November, 1804. He left his child with his mother and sister at Polémieux, near Lyons. — TR.

oughly upright, kind, and affectionate, his intellect of a high order; and he had, what are rarely seen together, remarkable creative genius, and great aptitude for a variety of pursuits. Weak in character, and easily troubled through the excitability of his imagination, Ampère, awkward and absent-minded, displayed in his intercourse with the world the simplicity of a child, without, however, being destitute of *finesse*. He was interested in every thing, understood every thing, was acquainted with all that was going on in the intellectual world: he read with the same interest the most abstruse treatises on algebra and geometry and the finest poetical compositions; he devoured with equal avidity technical works on physics, natural history, metaphysical speculations, or the novel that came in his way. What was truly admirable in him was the disinterested love of science, which made him take almost as much interest in the discoveries and labors of other men as in his own. A devoted Christian, he fulfilled all his religious obligations with fervor and simplicity, while he was at the same time perfectly tolerant. The European reputation of the illustrious *savant* and his relations with all the eminent scientific men of his day, attracted to his house celebrities of every sort. With the most kind-hearted eagerness he would press upon them his hospitality. But his guests had need to remember the respect due to his high position in order to overlook the inelegance and carelessness of his housekeeping. By a second marriage with a person who very soon separated from him, he had a daughter,

who was brought up at home under the care of his excellent sister.

It was in this brilliantly intellectual atmosphere, this respectable but ill-ordered household, that J.-J. Ampère grew up and developed.

Although naturally endowed with talents of a high order, the young Ampère did not inherit any of his father's tastes for mathematics and the physical sciences. A delicate and nervous organization, a mobile and somewhat dreamy imagination, a restless temper, accompanied with great sensibility, a loving heart, and a keen appreciation of the beauties of nature, were indications rather of the poetic temperament, and, in fact, he was visited by the Muses at a very early age. To be a poet was not, however, his true vocation, though he himself was long deceived upon this point. Though his memory was very retentive, and his intelligence remarkably quick, J.-J. Ampère was but a poor scholar; so at least all the masters say who directed his education. It is evident, however, that his academic studies, irregular and far from brilliant as they seemed, were not wholly without fruit, for on leaving college he obtained the first prize for philosophy.

The happiest and most fondly remembered hours of Ampère's childhood and youth were passed with the de Jussieu family. The two households were very intimate, and met constantly either in the beautiful library of the Jardin des Plantes, where the de Jussieus' herbarium was kept, or at the charming rural retreat of Vanteuil, where three generations of illustrious *savants* furnished

an example of simple manners and those patriarchal virtues which so well accord with vast erudition and brilliant intellectual culture.

In this privileged circle was a number of gay and intelligent young people. In their morning walks they studied botany, and in the evening they acted comedies; they also wrote verses, and J.-J. Ampère was the liveliest of the company, to whom he communicated his own high spirits. The following anecdote is one of many heard from his own lips: During one of the summer vacations, they noticed every morning that the fine fruit in the garden that they had admired the evening before, and expected to find ripe the next day, had disappeared. As it had not been gathered by the servants of the family, it was clear that the garden was robbed at night. Adrien de Jussieu, the last botanist of this noble line of scientific men, a man of exquisite wit, shrewd, yet most kind-hearted, was about to return to Paris. But before starting he caused it to be circulated throughout the neighborhood that he should bring back with him to Vanteuil a watch-dog, from the Jardin des Plantes, that had been reared in the cage of a most ferocious lion. He returned in the course of a few days with a fine large Pyrenees dog, the mildest and most inoffensive of creatures, who was thereupon installed in the barn-yard. The poor dog would not have harmed or bitten any one: he had been chosen, in fact, for the remarkable gentleness of his disposition; but his reputation for ferocity, presumed to have been acquired by association with lions, was so

thoroughly established, and inspired so salutary a terror, that never afterward did any thief attempt to scale the walls or strip the espaliers; and whenever the harmless creature barked, the peasants within hearing would say with respect, "That's the lions' dog."

The young Ampère was presented by Ballanche to Mme. Récamier on the first of January, 1820. Her last reverse of fortune had occurred the year before, and she had already been sometime settled at the convent of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. I have already, in the "Memoirs and Correspondence," explained the motives which induced Mme. Récamier to seek this asylum. It was a courageous and self-denying resolution, which sensible people approved, and which the gay world, in spite of its frivolity, could appreciate and respect. It was not long before the little room in the attic of the Abbaye-aux-Bois became one of the most fashionable centres of good society.

The circle at the Abbaye was not large on the evening when M. Ampère came there for the first time accompanied by his son. The only persons present besides Mme. Récamier and her niece were Dugas-Montbel, the translator of Homer, Lemontey, Matthieu de Montmorency, M. de Genoude, and Ballanche. The wish to be agreeable to the oldest and most intimate friend of Ballanche ensured a most gracious welcome to the great physicist and his son. The learned mathematician was very well pleased with his evening; but a far deeper impression was made upon the young poet, and before the expiration of many weeks, J.-J. Ampère,



captivated and enthralled, had become a daily guest at the cell in the Abbaye-aux-Bois. We were so accustomed to see every one yielding to this sway, and becoming devotees of the shrine at which we all worshipped, that nothing seemed to us more natural. Rarely did any resist the influence of that all-potent charm which had its basis in the truest benevolence, the most painstaking kindness, and which, exerted as it was by a lofty and delicate soul, appealed to all that was highest and best in each one's own nature.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> M. Sainte-Beuve, with whom Ampère was connected by a bond of intellectual sympathy rather than of friendship, and from whom he had long been separated by his travels, lapse of time, and, above all, difference of political opinion, has devoted a charming and brilliant article to the memory of his distinguished comrade in literature. The following account of Ampère's first relations with the Abbaye-aux-Bois is borrowed from this article:—

“The summer or autumn following this introduction was passed by Mme. Récamier in the Vallée-aux-Loups, where Ampère also spent a few weeks in company of his friend de Jussieu, who had there a *pied-à-terre*. During this happy, rapturous time, his imagination yielded itself captive to all the charms of a refined and choice companionship, made still more attractive by a setting sun of divine beauty. Ampère returned to Paris about a fortnight earlier than Mme. Récamier. As soon as he heard of her return he presented himself at the Abbaye-aux-Bois and found her alone. She talked to him with her usual grace of their charming days, their drives and walks in the valley, of the cheerful intercourse to which the young man's animated conversation had lent an additional charm. Then, touching with her exquisite tact the tender chord, she casually intimated that there had perhaps been opportunities for warmer feelings, that had they stayed there much longer she would have been afraid at least lest a heart inclined to poetry might have begun to weave a romance, for her young

All Mme. Récamier's friends, also, were delighted with the young Ampère. Born in August, 1800, he was not then twenty years old; and his face, which long remained beardless, was almost boyish in appearance. The charm of his conversation was already very remarkable, and his wonderful attainments, joined to his absolute ignorance of the ways of the world, made him appear very piquant and original. Extremely fond of discussion, he engaged in it eagerly with everybody, and on all subjects. But what rendered him particularly dear to Mme. Récamier, and established such close and deep sympathy between him and Ballanche, was the exquisite — I might almost say, feminine — delicacy of his soul, the generous enthusiasm of his aspirations, the rectitude of all his instincts. As members of a secret society recognize their brethren by certain signs, so natures of a high moral order are prompt to understand each other, and open their ranks to those who resemble them. If Mme. Récamier was kind to everybody, in her affections she was exclusive; she confined them to a narrow circle. She was fond of saying that there was "a certain taste in perfect friendship to

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niece was then with her. At these words Ampère could not restrain himself, but suddenly bursting out, agitated and sobbing, 'Ah! it is not for her,' he cried, and fell upon his knees. His declaration was made, his confession had escaped him; he had, without intending it, uttered the sacred word, and he would not take it back. This is pure Petrarch or pure Dante, as you will. From that moment his destiny was sealed. Mme. Récamier had only to go on fascinating him, calming him by degrees, but never curing him."

which commonplace characters could not attain." But the young Ampère had a superior nature, and, henceforward admitted to Mme. Récamier's fireside on the footing of a son or a brother, he was for thirty years one of her family.

Ten years from the day of his first presentation at the Abbaye-aux-Bois, Ampère reminded Mme. Récamier of those early days of their friendship in a letter written from Hyères, whither he had accompanied his father, who was already suffering from chronic laryngitis, which was finally the cause of his death.

"HYÈRES, December 27, 1829.

"I hope, madame, that this letter will reach you upon the very first day of that year in the course of which I shall see you again. I am not, you know, a great lover of forms, but the first day of the year is an epoch for me, the return of which I cannot see unmoved. It was on New Year's day that I saw you for the first time. That moment when you dawned upon me, dressed in white, with a grace of which till then I had no conception, will never be forgotten. It was just ten years ago. Between that time and this lies all my youth; and, at every joyous or painful epoch during that interval, you reappear to me with all the charm of that first day, and with even greater, for daily intercourse with you has revealed to me other reasons for loving and admiring you. I think fondly of this as I write you from my little cell. I say to myself that, when you read this letter, you will be moved a little as you think of

the placid and pure affection that has lasted ten years, that nothing can alter, and upon which we can count for all the future.

“But how sad it is to be writing you all this, two hundred leagues away, and to think that I shall not, like those who are near you, come to dine with you to-morrow *en famille*! I hope at least that, when you are all met together, you will think of one who might be there and so happy, but who is far away and sad.

“I find myself continually counting the months, the days, trying to realize what a month is, how the one just gone has passed; then putting all together, and endeavoring to get an idea of what the whole will be. I am very impatient to be able to feel that this year, which I must end away from you, is among the things of the past: it seems to me that, when I have reached the one that is to bring me back, I shall have made a great advance. But how many days yet, how many weeks! Oh, how I wish it were spring! They say it begins here in the month of February: that will be none too soon for me. Will you not send me for my New Year's gift a few of those lines that you alone know how to write? It will take you only a moment, and I, I live long on such moments. My father coughs a little, and I see by that how much the slightest accident is to be feared; however, he is already better, and if he will be prudent all will go well. My journey ought to result in good to compensate me for being obliged to undertake it. Adieu, adieu; my best wishes

for your health and happiness, and may you remember your friend."

This letter, revealing with so much grace and simplicity one of those attachments which are unchangeable because they are pure, has made me anticipate a little. Let us return, therefore, to the early youth of Ampère. I have said that while still at college the demon of poetry took possession of the young student, in whom his father would have preferred a passion for mathematics. But the number of those who immediately, and without feeling their way, find their true course, is small. At twenty, J.-J. Ampère, besides some miscellaneous poems, had composed a tragedy, "Rosemonde," taking his plot from an incident in the history of the Lombards in Italy. The young poet had, to a certain degree, faith in his ultimate success, and only needed encouragement to persevere. "Rosemonde" was a respectable production cast in the classic mould. It was read before the committee of the "Théâtre Français," and was well received. But at the Abbaye-aux-Bois it was thought that the great talents of Ampère might be better employed than in writing for the theatre. When his excellent father anxiously said to Ballanche, "My good friend, do you think that my son has genius?" the candid philosopher, though confident that his friend's son, if he had not the genius of Corneille or of Shakspeare, had talent enough to insure him a brilliant future, was very careful not to give an affirmative reply.

Up to the year 1823, with the exception of a pedestrian tour in Switzerland, in company with his dear friend Adrien de Jussieu, J.-J. Ampère had scarcely quitted Paris except to go to Vanteuil, and, after he had become one of the family at the Abbaye-aux-Bois, to accompany Mme. Récamier either to the Vallée-aux-Loups or to Saint-Germain. It is rather singular that a very decided taste for the study of foreign languages and literatures did not sooner arouse the instinct of the tourist in the man whose passion for travelling was one day to lead him to so many different points of the globe, but, as I have before said, his true vocation was not yet clear to him. Unforeseen circumstances led to his first journey.

Although Mme. Récamier, both from taste and temperament, kept aloof from all political intrigues, it so happened that a change of ministry, which occurred toward the end of the year 1822, disturbed the quiet of her retreat. M. de Chateaubriand became minister of foreign affairs in the place of Matthieu de Montmorency. The divergence of their political views, and the consequent antagonism between two friends who held so large a place in the heart of Mme. Récamier, caused her the greatest pain; and, in spite of her efforts to make the situation less difficult, she suffered from it cruelly.

In the summer of the same year, 1823, her niece, whom she treated and loved as a daughter, fell dangerously ill; when she became convalescent, it was decided by the physicians that she ought not to pass the winter

in Paris. This alone, no doubt, would have determined Mme. Récamier to go to Italy, but there was still another motive for departure: wounded in her feelings, grieved and surprised to find how intoxicated by elevation to power the illustrious writer had become who was the object of her deep admiration, she thought, and rightly, that a temporary absence on her part, would restore tranquillity to all hearts. Accordingly, Mme. Récamier set out for Rome November 2d, 1823; the faithful Ballanche unhesitatingly accompanied her, and the young Ampère, having made his father understand the help such a journey would be to him in his studies, received permission to join the little party.

Mme. Récamier and her devoted friends gave a month to the journey from Paris to Rome. After reaching Turin they travelled by short stages with hired horses, going from city to city; making some stay in Florence, exploring ancient monuments, churches, museums, libraries. During the mid-day halt, as well as in the evening, they talked of what they had seen, they read aloud to each other, or Ballanche and his young friend earnestly discussed questions of history and philosophy. Mme. Récamier had the wonderful faculty of instantly transforming the meanest chamber of a wayside inn and giving it an air of elegance: a cloth thrown over a table, books and flowers arranged upon it, a muslin coverlet spread upon the bed, and her own distinguished air and inimitable grace, transported you as by enchantment into the realm of poetry. Ballanche and Ampère projected a "Guide for the Traveller in

Italy," which was to meet every want and satisfy every curiosity: the arts, history, politics, rural economy, manners,—every thing was to be found in it, not forgetting information respecting the best inns and the price of provisions. One day, when they were complacently talking over this comprehensive plan, Ballanche, who was sitting by the fire, jumped up, exclaiming, "Yes, for that work, just as it is, I would not take a hundred thousand crowns!" A general burst of laughter silenced Ballanche's magniloquence, and the wonderful guide-book is yet to be written. But what would the impatient generations of our day think of such a mode of travelling? A month seems to them more than sufficient to get a complete idea of Rome, Florence, and Naples. Since the invention of steam and of railways, people think they can acquire a knowledge of different countries by merely passing through them: they forget that to know a country we must live in it.

It is easy to conceive what a series of delights a sojourn in Rome offered to young Ampère. To apply his mind to the study of objects so new to him and so interesting; to enjoy, with the fresh heart of a youth of twenty-three, the masterpieces of art, a beautiful sky, fine scenery, and all this in company with an incomparable woman whom he idolized, to be admitted through her to the most distinguished society of all countries, to find at Rome as ambassador of France a Montmorency, who received him with fatherly kindness, was, indeed, an accumulation of delights. The





HORTENSE EUGÉNIE DE BEAUHARNAIS (QUEEN HORTENSE)

*from an old portrait*



impression made upon Ampère was lasting: the magnetic influence which so continually drew him back to the Eternal City, and converted him almost into a Roman, dates certainly from this happy epoch.

I must not forget to mention in this connection an important episode of the sojourn at Rome. Queen Hortense and her two sons passed the winter of 1824 in that city, once the asylum of all fallen greatness, and where the Bonaparte family were gathered about the mother of Napoleon. Mme. Récamier met frequently the Duchess de Saint-Leu; these two women — both the sport of destiny, though in different ways — were delighted to see each other again. They made appointments to meet, sometimes in the Coliseum, sometimes on the Campagna, beyond the church of St. John Lateran, and frequently at some villa. During these promenades the two were wont to hold long conversations apart, and Ballanche and Ampère meanwhile passed the time with Prince Napoleon, the Queen's eldest son (her younger son, Prince Louis, who was still a mere youth, rarely made one of the party). The exiled heir of Napoleon was a man of very generous impulses; chafing under the inaction to which he was condemned by fate, he thought of taking part in the struggle for Greek independence, and joining the ranks of the Philhellenists. He talked of this project with Mme. Récamier's friends, and questioned them about France and the state of public opinion there, choosing rather Ampère for his confidant as being nearer his own age. He asked him if he knew M. Moc-

guard.<sup>1</sup> That name which has since acquired great notoriety was then wholly unknown, at least to these gentlemen; and they were obliged to confess, to the great astonishment of the Prince, that they had never heard of him. To those who know the attitude of opposition maintained by Ampère under the second Empire, there is something very piquant in these transient relations with the Imperial family.

After the festivities of Easter, the Holy Sacrament and St. Peter, the little French colony, with Mme. Récamier for its centre, repaired to Naples, whence they visited Pæstum, Pompeii, and Herculaneum. Mme. Récamier had determined to pass a second winter in Italy; meanwhile Ampère's letters from Paris were growing more and more sad: his father found his absence long and painful; he did not recall his son, whose tour he had sanctioned, but he was so unhappy in his loneliness, that Mme. Récamier and Ballanche decided that their young friend must return to France. Accordingly, Ampère sadly tore himself away from his studies and the society which had now become, as it were, a necessity to him. He returned home by way of Bologna, Padua, Venice, and Milan. At each of these stopping-places he found words of comfort and encouragement from his friends.

In reply to one of his letters, Mme. Récamier wrote to him:—

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<sup>1</sup> Afterward private secretary of Napoleon III. — Tr.

“NAPLES, Thursday, Nov. 16, 1824.

“I have just received your second letter from Terracina, which touches me to the bottom of my heart. I think of you, I follow you on your lonely route; I see you, like the poor wandering pigeon:—

“ ‘ Mon frère a-t-il tout ce qu’il veut,  
Bon souper, bon gîte et le reste ? ’

“I am obliged to think of your excellent father, in order not to consider your departure absurd.

“I am delighted with what you are reading. Do you not work at all during this long journey? You promised me an ode upon Venice.

“I do not know when I shall be able to leave Naples. They are not willing to let me go: I am easily persuaded; all places are alike to me. I hope, however, that I shall take pleasure in returning to Paris, but it will be a mixed pleasure. I have just been walking in the Margravine’s villa;<sup>1</sup> the weather was delightful, the air soft and full of perfume. I was alone. I stayed there a long time, my heart oppressed by many memories.

“Adieu, until Saturday.”

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TO J.-J. AMPÈRE.

“NAPLES, November 26.

“It was impossible for me to write you by the last post. M. Ballanche undertook that duty. Only the

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<sup>1</sup> A charming villa on Mount Posilipo, now belonging, if I mistake not, to Mrs. Augustus Craven.

fear lest you might be uneasy gives me strength for it to-day. I write you this little note in my bed. I have just received a letter from M. Givré<sup>1</sup> and one from you. I am impatient to reply to you, but I am so weak that I have not the courage to attempt it. I have been five days in bed with a sort of fever, and a strange uncomfortable feeling. M. Ballanche, fearing to alarm you, did not probably tell you of this; but I prefer that you should be alarmed on the score of my health rather than my friendship. All the details you give me of your journey revive my regrets. How sad to think that you are so solitary when it would have been so pleasant for us all to travel the same road together!

“Adieu.”

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“ROME, December 3, 1824.

“You wrote me from Venice the most affecting, the kindest, the wittiest letter possible.

“I do not know why I should go to Venice: you give me so vivid and animated a description of it that I have already seen it all. I have been there with you, and I doubt whether the objects themselves would please me as much as your description of them.

“You know now why I did not write: my health is much better since my return to Rome, and henceforward you shall have a few lines by every post; but the mail goes only twice a week, Saturday and Thursday. Why did you not send me the verses you wrote in

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<sup>1</sup> M. Desmousseaux de Givré, secretary of legation at Rome.

Venice? They are mine: I wish to put them with the others you left with me. When I return I will bring them with me, together with your letters, and we will read them all over again in the little cell."

With a heart full of regrets Ampère arrived home toward the end of November. Great was the joy over the return of the child whose presence was so longed for, and the thought of his father's happiness partly compensated our traveller for the bitter sacrifice he had made. However, as they were leaving the breakfast-table one morning, shortly after his arrival, Ampère, the father, who had not spoken a word during the meal, suddenly exclaimed, as he looked at his son, "It is strange, Jean-Jacques, I thought it would give me more pleasure to see you again."—"Ah," murmured the son, sadly, "then why did you not let me stay at Naples?"

While looking forward to a return to the pleasant intercourse at the Abbaye-aux-Bois, Ampère kept up with his friends an active correspondence. He was engaged upon another tragedy, "La Juive," a Spanish subject, whose plot he had thought out during his journey. In his letters he describes his life, and talks of his labors and his *ennui*; in return they kept him informed of the doings of the little company of friends who had now returned to Rome to be present at the opening of the Jubilee. It is Mme. Récamier again who replies to him.

“ROME, December 20, 1824.

“How kind you are to write with so much punctuality! Your letters are charming. It is like talking with you; but this momentary illusion makes me only the more regret your absence. The ever-present charm, the pleasant intimacy, the wit, so sparkling and so varied, which gave life to all our intercourse,—this is what we daily miss, and I take comfort in seeing these regrets shared by all who know you. The holy year is not what I imagined it to be. About thirty male and ten or twelve female pilgrims are all we have seen so far. We went yesterday to see the female pilgrims eat their supper; they were waited upon by the Princess di Lucca, and all the great Roman ladies, and the Princess Doria, beautiful as an angel. All these ladies, in black gowns and white aprons, performed the offices of servants; they were washing the feet of the poor pilgrims when we arrived. Would you believe it? I was not the least affected by this scene,—I, whose imagination is so easily moved by things of that sort. These poor women seemed to me so embarrassed at being made a spectacle of; the aid given them, which is limited to a hospitality of three days, seemed so pitiful after such pompous preparations,—that I found myself almost acquiescing in M. Lemontey’s philosophy; and I saw, in the passing and theatrical self-abasement of these great ladies, only a new means of self-glorification, another occasion for pride, though doubtless they were themselves not conscious of it. But, in spite of the ease with which I enter into the impressions of



others, I could not lend myself to this illusion. Adieu, adieu. What are you doing? Are you working upon "La Juive"? Remember me to your father; you know how much I am attached to him. Say to M. Delécluze that I shall take good care not to write to him as long as I can have you to speak for me. We look forward with pleasure to seeing him in Paris."

In another note Mme. Récamier gently reproves Ampère for allowing himself to become despondent:—

"ROME, January 17, 1825.

"Your last letter caused me much pain. I had to say to myself that it was written under the influence of some transient impression. I will not make your blessings wearisome to you by recounting all the reasons you have for being satisfied with yourself and your lot. But in truth you are an ingrate, and you ought every day to thank God for all he has given you.

"I still expect to leave in March. I dream of a summer in France, and then a return to Italy. I pass my life in forming projects; it is the malady of those who are not content with their fate. You are included in all my plans; it cannot be otherwise. I hope to find on my return some fine verses, and promise myself the pleasure of listening to them in the little cell."

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"Saturday, 14.

"The Duke de Laval sends me two letters from you that arrived at the same time. He says: 'Here are the

*billets-doux* they write to you under cover of M. Ballanche; he and I are in a pretty business.' — Your letters fill me with remorse for not writing oftener, but then we shall soon meet again. We leave in March. M. Récamier, as I have confided to you, has met with new losses. I shall have many vexations to encounter upon my arrival, — prosaic troubles which are so hard for me to bear. I need not tell you to keep this secret; I know your discretion, and M. Récamier is particularly anxious to conceal his situation. Apart from its festivals, the holy year is much like all other years; all the strangers have fled; we are alone, which suits me exactly. Guérin has been very ill, but is now out of danger; his situation excited lively and general interest. Adieu. Write to me always punctually; your letters interest me greatly. What has become of Mlle. Mars? Remember us to M. Montbel and M. Delécluze. We often talk of him. We have needed you both very much to put life into our sad evenings.

“I walk daily in the avenue Santa-Croce in Gerusalemme, where we used to go together. Do you recollect the bright sky, the ruins, the ground all covered with flowers, our pleasant and confidential talks?

“M. Ballanche and all your friends in Rome desire to be remembered to you. I have heard of you through Duke Matthieu, who was delighted to see you. I have received a very sad, desponding letter from M. de Chateaubriand. So you have heard of my new passion for Mme. Swetchine? She is to take the apartment which I give up at the Abbaye-aux-Bois. She is very

kind and bright; she likes you already, and you will be much pleased with her."

Mme. Récamier left Rome April 20, 1825, and on her way announced to M. Ampère the return of the little colony so impatiently expected:—

"FOLIGNO, April 23d.

"It is three days since we set out on our journey homeward, and each moment brings us nearer you. I intended to write you on leaving Rome, but I was so interrupted I could not find a moment's opportunity. Amélie has been very ill; she is already better. I am writing you these lines from Foligno; the date, I trust, will give you pleasure. In a few weeks we shall be all together again in the little cell talking over our travels. I have a secret<sup>1</sup> to tell you that will interest you, and in which you will play an extremely pretty part. Adieu, adieu! I shall write to you from Bologna and Venice. We shall not go to Florence; but I have sent for my letters which, will be forwarded to Bologna."

At the time of Mme. Récamier's return to the Abbaye-aux-Bois, political events had brought about great changes in the respective situations of her friends. M. de Chateaubriand, in his turn, had been dismissed from the ministry, and was waging against M. de Villèle

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<sup>1</sup> Her niece Amélie's engagement to M. Charles Lenormant. It was Ampère who introduced the latter to Mme. Récamier in Naples.

that formidable opposition which, without his intending it, was to result in the overthrow of the elder branch of the house of Bourbon. Matthieu de Montmorency, who was now a member of the French Academy, had been appointed governor to the Duke de Bordeaux.

In Mme. Récamier's family circle events of no less importance took place. A few months after her return she had the great pleasure of seeing her niece united in marriage with Charles Lenormant. Nearly at the same time M. de Montmorency, the dear and saintly friend of her youth, was suddenly snatched away from her by the rupture of an aneurism.

It was in 1825 that Mme. Récamier presented J.-J. Ampère to M. de Chateaubriand, who directly conceived a great liking for this young man, to whom he became year by year more attached. He delighted in Ampère's activity of mind, and admired in him an independence and elevation of character in sympathy with his own nature.<sup>1</sup>

About this period, and I have reason to believe for the first and only time, a marriage was proposed for Ampère. The lady was Mlle. Cuvier, whose father, the naturalist, had treated him with the greatest cordiality. At that time all Europe was flocking to the Jardin du

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<sup>1</sup> According to Sainte-Beuve, this liking was by no means reciprocal. Ampère grew very tired of Chateaubriand; and once, during an absence of Mme. Récamier, had actually the temerity to publish an article in the "Globe" reflecting sharply, though indirectly, on the great man. — TR.

Roi, and crowding the beautiful galleries where Cuvier's collections were displayed. In the midst of the distinguished assembly, seated by her mother's side, could be seen a young girl who, though not striking in appearance, had a most kindly and intelligent expression. A modest reserve did not prevent her being very much interested in the conversation, nor even from taking part in it, and giving proof of as much wit as knowledge. This was Clementine, Cuvier's only child, an angelic creature, in whom the famous academician was pleased to see the reflex of some of the rarest of his own intellectual gifts. She showed for young Ampère a scarcely perceptible shade of preference, which betrayed itself only by her greater readiness to address to him rather than to another a conversation which turned exclusively upon literature and science. On his part, he felt himself filled with tender respect for the young girl; and the feeling she awakened in him might easily have ripened into love, had he not feared her father's domineering spirit. He felt that no one could become Cuvier's son-in-law without submitting his neck to a yoke, — a condition thoroughly distasteful to a man of Ampère's essentially independent character. To his father, who was a friend of Cuvier, the match seemed in every respect desirable; he could not understand his son's hesitation, and consequently this difference of opinion was a source of vexation and anxiety to both.

To escape his father's importunities, and also to examine calmly his own feelings, J.-J. Ampère left Paris

for Vanteuil, whither Mme. Récamier, the confidant of his perplexities, wrote to him:—

“Tuesday, 23d.

“I have received your little note: I am somewhat better, but still very sad. Every evening we see M. Alexis de Jussieu. He is very agreeable, and is sincerely attached to you. I still purpose leaving for the poor little valley on the first of August. M. and Mme. Lenormant will not go until a few days later. What effect has solitude upon your feelings? Do you see a little more clearly into your heart? Adieu! Do not distress yourself, and return.”

Providence did not long permit the illustrious *savant* to cherish this hope so dear to his heart. In less than two years, Mlle. Cuvier, cut off by death, bequeathed to her friends and all who had ever met her the memory of a truly angelic being.<sup>1</sup>

This matrimonial scheme, of which the Cuvier family knew nothing, did not occupy the mind of the young scholar to the exclusion of his favorite intellectual pursuits. Scandinavian poetry having excited his curiosity, he resolved to devote himself wholly to the study of German and the languages of the North. Accordingly, he left Paris in the autumn of 1826 for Bonn, where he intended to pass the winter.

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<sup>1</sup> Mlle. Cuvier died of consumption, September 28, 1827. She was, at the time of her death, engaged to be married, by her own choice, to a M. Duparquet. — Tr.

At that time, Niebuhr had brought the university of this city into great repute. The first volume of his Roman history had already been published (it was not translated into French), and our neighbors had been stimulated to great activity in historical studies by the novelty and happy audacity of its author's researches. Other professors besides the famous historian of Rome contributed to the fame of the Rhenish University. William Schlegel, the purely literary and French form of whose lectures offended pure Teutons and provoked vehement attacks, was then establishing the first school of instruction in the Sanscrit language and literature: Welcker, now the sole survivor of the famous period of the University of Bonn, was explaining the classic writers of Greece. The latter was one of the first examples of that happy union of two orders of erudition, the literary and the archæological, which has been so fertile in results. He infused new life, so to speak, into philology by his method of comparing the writings of the ancients with the monuments of ancient art.

Some people were astonished to see J.-J. Ampère in the latter part of his life abandoning the purely literary questions which hitherto had chiefly occupied him, to write a Roman history. But for him it was only a return to the studies of his youth: he was plunging anew into memories of that University of Bonn which had exercised so great an influence upon his life. In the plan of "*L'Histoire Romaine à Rome*," and in his manner of explaining the great features in the annals of this

sovereign people, we clearly recognize the pupil of Niebuhr; while in that large portion of the work devoted to monuments of antiquity we detect the influence of the teachings of Welcker.

Two letters exchanged between Charles Lenormant and Ampère about this time will give the best idea of the interest felt by all the inmates of the Abbaye-aux-Bois in the young student, and the nature of the studies then claiming his time and attention:—

CH. LENORMANT TO J.-J. AMPÈRE.

“PARIS, Shrove Sunday.

“I foresee that upon your return to Paris nobody will be able to contend with you on any subject. I confess that I consider it a great privilege to be able to draw from original sources as you are doing. The Germans, if they had ever so little foresight, would do well to close them against you, for workers like you are great rogues. We frequently talk over at the Abbaye the great step you have taken, and we are all enchanted at it. It seems to us all that no one is better fitted than you to enlarge the field of literary criticism which with us is so narrow. But is it really true that you have wholly given up poetry? That would be monstrous ingratitude, — an evil sentiment of which I did not suppose you capable. For my part, I should be very sorry to lose those Souliotes<sup>1</sup> whose gallant bearing so captivated me. It seems to me that in a mind

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<sup>1</sup> “Un Épisode des guerres de Souh,” published by Ampère in the volume called “Heures de Poëste.”



like yours there is room for every thing; it is so rare a thing with us to find the poetical faculty combined with original thought.

“I do not know whether you ever think where you are of our unhappy literature. I imagine that upon your return you will find that it has come down a peg or two. Every thing still combines to keep up an interest in history; we must cling to that as to an ark of safety.

“I am looking forward impatiently to discussing Niebuhr with you. Shall we never have a good translation of his book? Sautelet has told me most astonishing things about it. I am all the more impatient as I seem to be for ever debarred from giving my attention to the original sources of ancient history. I have been devoting myself, amid the constant distractions of my social and official life, to the Middle Ages. I shall continue to pursue my labors in that direction.<sup>1</sup>

“Oh that I could, like you, read High German! Oh that I could feast upon the Niebelungen, which, however, I find a little too northern for my taste! By the way, would it not be possible for you to bring me home some of the tales of the 12th century troubadours who wrote in German for the courts of Suabia and Bavaria? It seems to me there must exist some voluminous work on the subject, very complete, full of research, but

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<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to notice how mistaken people sometimes are respecting their true vocation. Younger than Ampère, Charles Lenormant was then only twenty-four years old, and seems to have had no suspicion that his love of art would lead him to apply himself with ardor to the study of antiquity, and make him one of the most eminent archæologists of the day.

which, as usual, has not been translated into French. At all events, I should be much obliged to you if you would give me all the information you can, at least as far as books are concerned.

“Adieu, monsieur; go on heaping up treasures for our poor France, who one day will, I hope, thank you heartily for it. The Rhine is a terrible barrier. It is for you and those like you, if there be many such, to throw across that accursed river a bridge that will endure. But, above all, make haste, that you may the sooner return; the Abbaye is dead since your departure; the life has died out of our discussions: come and reanimate them with the immense material you will have gathered.”

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J.-J. AMPÈRE TO CHARLES LENORMANT.

“BONN, March 4, 1827.

“I am ashamed of letting your kind and friendly letter get the start of me. I will not, at any rate, make you wait for my answer. I have for a long time intended to write to you, but have put it off from day to day, wishing to talk to you of Niebuhr at some length. Now I think it will be better to postpone that until my return. He is not a man that can be readily put into aphorisms. I hardly know what success his book would have in France; he is forced into constant discussions which lead him into a mass of details, and the more he is obliged to explain, the more concise he makes his

style. One thing is certain: it is the work of a superior man.

“You are very good to count upon my knowledge; do not rely too much upon it, however: I am tempted here by so many different objects of study, even without quitting the round I have marked out for myself, that I think I shall bring back to France more of methods and materials than of acquirements properly so called. I am like a general of cavalry, who, with one little squadron, should be obliged to hold in check a dozen army corps, and I make a charge now in one direction, now in another, but the enemy seems to grow more and more numerous. Still I hope that I shall have learned at least one thing here; that is, how to learn.

“Since you are still deep in the Middle Ages, it will not be uninteresting to you to learn that they are making a collection of the “*Historici Rerum Germanicarum.*” Herr Pertz, who was for a long time in Sicily with this object, is now in Paris. Perhaps it would be well for you to try to see him; if I remember our conversations rightly, Germany and Sicily are just what you want. This Herr Pertz has discovered in Paris, so it appears, some new laws of the Lombards and some of Charlemagne’s Capitularies which have escaped Baluze. Just like those confounded Germans!

“One of the professors at Bonn has written an excellent book on the troubadours, the poet Uhland on the *trouvères*, and they have just published at Leipsic an edition of Calderon in Spanish, very cheap, and infinitely more correct than any published in Spain.

“As for the poets you speak of, I do not think that any complete work upon them exists; but many of their works are published, and of some there are excellent editions. I mean to bring home with me every thing of that sort I can, for I have made up my mind to ruin myself in books. My books and my German I gladly put at your disposition. Moreover, if I do not succeed in inspiring you with some little affection for my beloved Niebelungen, you can at least admire the Minnesingers, for they are half southern. It appears that their epic poetry is derived from that of the troubadours, and our poets of the *langue d’oil* have certainly supplied them with the materials for their chivalrous epics. Moreover, I promise you a history of the House of Suabia, by Herr Raumer, which is highly spoken of. I am sure that yours will be infinitely better. I doubt whether it be possible for a German to have your strong and true feeling for the South and for art.

Adieu, monsieur; our correspondence shall not stop here, but shall continue until correspondence gives place to what is far better, to conversation, to the delightful discussions to which I look forward. While awaiting the day of battle, allow me, like a true Teutonic knight, to press cordially the hand of my adversary. Do as much for me to Messrs. Ballanche, Montbel, and Paul David.”

Never was there a mind more full of life and animation than that of Ampère: these two qualities, it might

be said, were superabundant in him. His absence, therefore, could not fail to create a great void in the family circle at the Abbaye-aux-Bois: all felt it, but Mme. Récamier most of all. Nevertheless, she had been the first to recognize the great benefit which would accrue to him from a year's hard study at a learned German university. She did her utmost, therefore, to encourage the project. It is pleasant to notice the affectionate solicitude expressed in her letters, and how firmly as well as kindly she advises him.

A few of these letters I select at random: —

“PARIS, September 2, 1826.

“I have been wishing to write you, and I do not know why I have not done so before. I cannot disapprove of your plans, but I miss you. I have seen your father several times, I love him on your account and on his own; he is an excellent man. At present he has only one idea, but as it is easy for me to share it, we get on admirably, and talk only of you.

“Adieu! Write to me, and ever rely upon my tenderest friendship.”

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“October 8, 1826.

“I am so touched at the pleasure you tell me my last letter gave you, that I lose not a moment in order that you may still receive these few lines of remembrance at Berne. I repeat again, that I both miss you and approve of your plans. I shall see your father frequently. I was charmed with the last conversation I had with

him. He is resigned to your absence, and hopes much from the future: you know that he is going to pass a few days at Vanteuil. I shall see him often this winter; I intend to ask him to give me the verses you have sent him: I am a little jealous of this preference; it seems to me that I have the first right to your poetical confidences. Adieu! This long absence is, however, very sad, I miss our pleasant habits. Amélie is ill; they fear another miscarriage. The Duke de Laval leaves in a few days: my life is made up of anxieties and regrets. Write to me, give me a detailed account of your occupations, and be well assured that you will find us upon your return unchanged.

“I think I may ask you, as a sister might, to apply to me if you have any temporary embarrassment *in regard to your finances*. I lay claim to confidences of all sorts. Once more, adieu; keep busy, and remember your friends. I have a presentiment that you will work out your destiny in accordance with your desires.”

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“December 13, 1826.

“I have been meaning every day to write to you, and reproaching myself for a silence which leaves you ignorant of the great pleasure your letters have given me; and I have just received a note from you so sad and affecting that I cannot forgive myself for the pain I have caused you. You must have received a long letter from Alexis de Jussieu. You are the chief and almost the only subject of our conversations. You

know I like M. de Jussieu, but I fear that the want of stability in his character will be detrimental to his success in life. Without determination and perseverance we can do nothing truly great.

“This is why, though I feel your absence sensibly, I have so strongly commended a resolution which gave proof of a strong will. I have never doubted your mental abilities, but I have sometimes feared that the versatility of your character might prevent your employing them profitably; reassured on this point, I am at ease about all the rest.

“The account you give me of the employment of your time causes me real satisfaction. This journey will be of great service to you.

“Your first visit to M. Schlegel also very much amused me: your letters are charming. Say to M. Schlegel that I have not forgotten him, and let me know how I can send him a lithograph of my portrait by Gérard.

“I seldom see your father; he is still constant in his visits to M. Cuvier. When thinking of the future, do your thoughts ever turn in that direction? Is that all forgotten? Why is it you say nothing to me about it? I should also like to know when you purpose returning. I can promise you that you will find your friends precisely as you left them, and that you will have lost nothing by your absence.”

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“ March 26, 1827.

“I have received two letters from you since I last wrote. I have no need to tell you with what interest I read your letters. I was especially charmed by the article you were afraid would *shock* me.

“The impression left upon you by this course of exegetical lectures seems to denote a progress upon which I set the highest value. With superior mind and faculties, it is impossible not to suffer from absence of belief: since you cannot believe with the simple, believe with the wise; thus by different roads we shall reach the same result. I am more and more convinced every day of the nothingness of all which has not this for its end, or at least for its hope. When shall we be able to talk together? How many things I shall have to ask you! I see frequently your friend Alexis de Jussieu; he is very polite to me; I lecture him, and yet he is not vexed, which seems to me a real triumph. M. and Mme. Lenormant and M. Ballanche always think of you with kind interest, and we scarcely pass a day without talking of the poor absentee whom we miss and whom we all long for, but I most of all. Adieu, adieu! Did you think of me on the 24th<sup>1</sup> of this month? I passed that sad anniversary in the poor little valley, and read some admirable letters from our saintly friend. You shall see them some day.”

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<sup>1</sup> Anniversary of the death of Matthieu de Montmorency, which took place March 24, 1826.



When the lectures at the university were over, Ampère left Bonn, and, before returning to France, went to Berlin, Dresden, and Munich, not forgetting Weimar, whither he was led by a passionate admiration for Goethe. Received with the most friendly cordiality by the patriarch of German literature, Ampère, in writing to Mme. Récamier, drew a very lively and striking portrait of the man of genius whom he had been permitted to see in the privacy of his home; and Mme. Récamier, who lost no opportunity of showing her friends to advantage, readily communicated these piquant details. The result of a communication of this sort made to Henri de Latouche was the publication by the latter in the "Globe" of the sketch of Goethe's home and the court of Weimar.

Written by an enthusiastic visitor, these details were very interesting to the French public, but they only half satisfied the pride of the Germans. On seeing them published in the "Globe," Mme. Récamier was doubtful of the effect they might produce, and addressed the following note to Ampère:—

" May 22, 1827.

"What will you say of this indiscretion? M. de Latouche, whom I had not seen for three years, called day before yesterday; he asked me if I had heard from you. I spoke of your last letter from Weimar. He wanted to see it, thought it charming, and asked permission to make a short extract from it for the "Globe;" and this morning the "Globe" arrives, and I inclose

this extract to give you the pleasure of seeing how you look in print. Tell me whether you are pleased or annoyed. You will notice a few slight changes. Adieu. I await impatiently your next letters, and with still greater impatience the time when I shall receive no more."

The traveller did not return to the fold until autumn. He was persuaded that to be fully imbued with the sentiment of any literature, it is necessary to know the land and the places which have inspired it; and, as he somewhere says, a better knowledge can be obtained of the poetry of a nation by journeying in the country than by a multitude of dissertations and analyses. The study of Scandinavian poetry, therefore, naturally inspired him with the desire to visit Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. This extension of his absence seemed at first somewhat hard to the father of our young friend; but interest in one's work, whether scientific or literary, justified any thing in the eyes of the illustrious *savant*; and when relations or friends, less easily satisfied, would ask him what motives had induced his son to go to these northern regions, he would unhesitatingly reply: "As it is a disputed question whether the Edda or the Niebelungen is the more ancient, it was very necessary that he should go there to verify the identity of Sigurd and Siegfried." This identification was not the only profit derived from this journey. Ampère's residence in Germany, his travels in Scandinavia, and, above all, his course of hard study in the University of Bonn, not

only furnished him with valuable materials, but revealed to him his double vocation of traveller and critic. A few lines from the Abbaye-aux-Bois welcomed him upon his return:—

“Sunday, 27.

“M. Ballanche is writing to you, but it seems to me that it is only I who can tell you how impatiently you are expected. I have received charming letters from you; the last especially went to my heart. Hasten to animate by your narrations our poor *salon* at the Abbaye, which you have been pleased to call your *patrie*. M. de Chateaubriand is looking forward to your coming. M. Lenormant has arrived.”

It was after the return of Ampère to Paris that his young sister's marriage took place. Unfortunately this event only brought more trouble and unhappiness into the family of the illustrious mathematician. His son-in-law lost his reason and died in a lunatic asylum, while his daughter fell a victim to a dreadful disease. It is almost impossible to give an adequate idea of the devotion, patience, and self-forgetfulness displayed by J.-J. Ampère in these trying circumstances. But when we consider all the trials he had to encounter in his own family circle, we can better understand what a refuge for him was the Abbaye-aux-Bois, with its atmosphere of peace and affection. When, cast down by prosaic vexations or painful anxieties, he repaired to that *salon* where his trials met with the ready sympathy of true friends, little by little his mind regained its calm, his

interest in all general questions drew him away from painful thoughts, and he was himself again, full of the life, ardor, and hope so natural to his age and character.

Ampère made Mme. Récamier acquainted with all the young members of the de Jussieu family,—Adrien, Laurent, and Alexis. He took pleasure in thus introducing into the circle which he called his *patrie* friends of his own age. He also brought thither Sautélet and Prosper Mérimée.

The latter had just entered upon the profession of letters, in which he directly took a high position by the originality of his mind, the soberness, vigor, and purity of his style. A romantic adventure, far from injuring his reputation by the cruel publicity given to it, gave him, on the contrary, additional importance in the eyes of worldly people. Under a cold and sceptical exterior, his friends declared he hid a faithful heart. They maintained that his somewhat haughty and cynical reserve was only put on to conceal his timidity; it increased, at all events, the distinction of his appearance and manners. In conversation he was solid, and, at the same time, piquant; he was highly appreciated by all Mme. Récamier's circle, and became an intimate friend of M. Lenormant.

Ampère and Gérard (the celebrated painter) conceived the idea of giving a career to M. Mérimée, and inducing him to enter into diplomacy, for which he was in many respects eminently fitted. Mme. Récamier was spoken to on the subject, and readily entered into the



PROSPER MERIMÉE  
*from an etching by Lalauze*



project. The Duke de Laval had just been appointed ambassador to London; he liked wit and men of wit, and the idea of rallying to the Bourbon government a young man whose literary reputation was already so brilliant would have been attractive to him. He would have been very willing to attach M. Mérimée to the embassy as secretary of legation, but before the negotiation had made much progress, Ampère left Paris for the south of France with his father, who had been for some time suffering from an affection of the larynx, now become alarming. Mme. Récamier also left for Dieppe, accompanied by Ballanche, while M. de Chateaubriand was on his way to the Pyrenees, and Mme. Lenormant was awaiting at Toulon the return of her husband, from whom she had long been separated. The inmates of the Abbaye-aux-Bois, being thus dispersed, the affair of M. Mérimée was temporarily postponed.

Mme. Récamier wrote from Dieppe to Ampère:—

“ June 28, 1829.

“I arrived yesterday at Dieppe, and hastened directly to the seaside to find something to remind me of Naples. The weather was enchanting, the sun was sinking into the sea, the air was sweet and fresh. Hardly had I abandoned myself to these sweet influences, when I heard myself called by name by one of the ugliest, heaviest, most tiresome of men; one that at any time it would be most disagreeable to meet, but especially at such a moment. It was absolutely impossible to get rid of him; he felt himself obliged to give

me the pleasure of his society all the rest of the evening. When I saw that there was no means of escape, I set out with him to visit all the inns in pursuit of a lodging; for in my enthusiasm I had gone to look at the sea before thinking of settling myself. I found quite a pretty room at the Hôtel des Bains. I have been to the post-office for my letters, and found a number; but yours, and one from Amélie, which announces the return of M. Lenormant, were the ones that went to my heart. Adieu, adieu! Shall I see you here? shall we have some pleasant walks together by the sea?

“Pray tell me all your plans, of your father’s health, of M. de Vatimesnil’s audience, of Cousin, Villemain, and especially of yourself.”

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“DIEPPE, August 1, 1829.

“This is the day you leave;<sup>1</sup> I follow you with my thoughts and good wishes. I wait impatiently for news of your journey. I was talking this morning with M. Ballanche of your illustrious father, for whom he has the most tender affection; I spoke of you, of the future; it was pleasant to discuss here beside the sea that delightful project of our becoming but one family.

“We are living in the midst of a crowd in perfect solitude. I go to bed at nine o’clock, I rise at six; I take sea-baths, which are to make me an entirely new creature; I read, I stroll by the sea-shore, I think and

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<sup>1</sup> For Hyères.



dream of my friends, I make a few morning calls, and pass the evening with M. Ballanche. He adapts himself perfectly to this solitude; you are only wanting to enliven it by your wit, and to save us by your versatility from a little monotony. M. de Chateaubriand has arrived at Caunterets; I received yesterday a letter from him, full of keen and tender sensibility; the interest he takes in you is another claim upon my affection; nothing is sweeter than to be able to bind together and merge in one all the interests of our hearts.

Adieu! Tell your father how much I am interested in him; think of me in your vexations; let me hear from you often. I dare not hope to see you here, but I think of you so constantly that it is not a separation."

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"September 24, 1829.

"M. Ballanche has had very encouraging news; we hope that you will bring your father back to us in good health, and that you may long enjoy the reward of your care and sacrifices. But this winter will be very sad for everybody. I am as much discouraged as you are, and look forward to the return of the warm season with as much impatience. Write to me, tell me if you are working; write often. We are all very affectionately interested in you, and I most of all. I miss you as I should do a brother, a son. Do not complain of these names; I know none sweeter."

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“ October 11, 1829.

“How glad I am to find you taking heart again, and how I share your joy! You will have received the letter in which I announce to you that we are living in the new apartment. Mme. de Boigne, the Duke de Laval, M. de Chateaubriand, — supreme judges in matters of taste, — find it charming and enchantingly arranged; but I shall not fully enjoy my success until spring. The political situation is still the same: the Duke de Laval passed five days in Paris. Our conversations were painful: he left yesterday for London, charged with instructions favorable to the Greeks; but though he is generous, his aristocratic tendencies, I fear, render him easily satisfied where the interests of the people are concerned. I spoke to him of your friend Mérimée; he does not know him personally, but being your friend was a recommendation in his eyes; and if he still has the desire to enter upon the diplomatic career, he will have with the Duke de Laval a very pleasant *début*. As it is not my place to talk to him about his affairs, you had better write to him. The Duke de Laval returns in a month, and I shall, I think, be able to arrange this matter easily. I have for M. Mérimée that interest which a noble character and real talent naturally inspire, still further increased by the interest that you yourself take in him.

“M. de Chateaubriand is still engaged upon his historical labors, and waiting very impatiently for the time when he can take part in the making of history. He is still talked of for the head of the ministry which

is to succeed that now in power; this would seem a natural thing, but what is probable never happens. Meanwhile, I am making some historic researches for him, which give me quite a taste for history. I have read Thiers and Mignet, I am reading Tacitus. I should like also to collect materials for your book, but you are too learned to have need of me. We talk of you every day of our lives; I miss our conversations, our disputes, and all our old life to which I have become so pleasantly accustomed, and all who know you share my regrets.

“Write to me.”

The rejection of a career, opening under the most favorable auspices, — a rejection based wholly on scruples caused by political convictions, or, if you please, political dislikes, — is so rare an occurrence that I may be permitted to dwell upon it.

We have just seen, from Mme. Récamier's letter, that the success of the negotiation which was to attach M. Mérimée to the embassy at London only depended now upon his own consent. Ampère was charged to obtain it. He accordingly wrote to his friend, and the following is the reply, addressed directly to the kind-hearted lady whose intervention had been requested:—

“MADAME, — A letter from Ampère informs me that you are kindly thinking of me to accompany the Duke de Laval in his embassy to London, and that you are disposed to solicit him in my favor. I came to the

Abbaye-aux-Bois this morning to talk with you on this subject, and I went away regretting that I had not been able to present my thanks, and express to you how much I was touched by this mark of interest on your part. I beg permission, madame, to explain to you the motives which impel me to-day to refuse a favor which at any other time I would have accepted with the greatest pleasure.

“I am the author of a few indifferent works, and, as such, my name has appeared in the newspapers. A stranger all my life to politics, in my books I have expressed (and perhaps too crudely) my opinions. I have thought that in accepting any employment, however unimportant, under the present administration, I should not be acting consistently. Shall I confess to you, that M. de Chateaubriand’s example has confirmed me in this resolution? This is the height of presumption, you will say; and indeed it ill becomes me to compare the post of secretary or under-secretary with an important embassy, or to mention myself in the same breath with the first writer of our time. Nevertheless, madame, the common soldier cannot do better than follow, as far as he can, his general’s example, and it seems to me that M. de Chateaubriand has pointed out the duty of all men of letters, great or small.

“And then the bad habit of writing! One is never cured of it. I should be obliged either to cease writing, which would, perhaps, be difficult for me, or put myself under restraint, and my solitary merit so far has been my frankness. Pride again, — but this time I do not

defend it, and this motive is of very little weight in comparison with the first. Might I venture to beg you, madame, to reserve your kind interest in me for another time. Meanwhile, pray believe in my lively gratitude, and accept my thanks and respectful homage.

“P. MÉRIMÉE.”

A few days afterward came another note, confirming this refusal.

“Madame,” wrote M. Mérimée, “M. Gérard has talked to me like a friend and father. He said to me (what was worth more than any other argument) that were he in my place he would accept. Nevertheless, madame, he has not overcome the scruples of which you are aware, and I persist in my refusal. I perceive that in acting thus I lay myself open to ridicule, and have the air of extraordinarily exaggerating my own importance. But that cannot be helped. Granted that it be pride or false reasoning, I cannot bring myself to accept. I have consulted no one, but I have debated the question long in my mind, and it seems to me that in persisting in my first determination I have yielded to no consideration of indolence, &c. If my obstinacy does not make you think too ill of me, I shall be extremely flattered to be presented by you to the Duke de Laval. The acquaintance of a gallant gentleman and a man of wit is always desirable. However, madame, I shall venture to beg you not to mention me to him in the character of a diplomatic aspirant. That would involve me in disagreeable explanations. It is

to you only, whose goodness is known to me, that I dare explain the motives of my refusal, and speak with open heart. Please accept, madame, the assurance of my gratitude and profound respect.

“ P. MÉRIMÉE.”

M. Mérimée did himself much honor by these scruples, even in the eyes of the friends of the government which he refused to serve. I have taken pleasure in recalling these memories of a time when he belonged entirely to letters; and would to Heaven this admirable writer had never been unfaithful to them!

Meanwhile, the mild climate of Provence, absolute rest and filial care, had almost restored the health of André Ampère. From Hyères he, with his son, went to Marseilles, where he was welcomed with the utmost cordiality and respect. Yielding to pressing solicitations, J.-J. Ampère consented to give at the Athenæum of that city a course of lectures on literature. The subject of these lectures was the literatures of the North of Europe, though he at the same time unfolded with much brilliancy his ideas on the poetry of all nations. In Paris, the friends of the young professor waited with much anxiety to hear the result of this *début*. Mme. Récamier wrote to him:—

“ March 14, 1830.

“ It is ages since I wrote, and yet you have never been more in my thoughts. I feel warmly grateful to you for your care of your excellent father. I joyfully treasure up in my heart of hearts every thing that may

increase my good opinion of you, and give me new reasons for loving you.

“I like to talk about you with your friends. I see sometimes Sautelet and Mérimée. Poor Sautelet is very tired of his lawsuit, though he accepts the situation not only with courage but with very good grace.

“Your lectures will soon begin: it makes my heart beat. No, certainly, I should not like to be there; I should be too anxious. You can imagine how impatiently we await particulars.

“So you have been in society? So have I. I went to a *matinée* at Mme. de Sainte-Aulaire’s, and to a dinner at Mme. de Boigne’s. I have also been at the Duchess de Ragusa’s; I saw a multitude of people I had not met for centuries. You cannot imagine how kind and cordial everybody was; I was very much astonished and charmed at it, for it seemed to me very natural to be forgotten.

“The fine weather is fast approaching; the lilacs and roses will have bloomed before your return: it is very sad.”

The professor’s success was great; six hundred auditors overwhelmed him with enthusiastic applause, and he himself became conscious of the talent which he was henceforth to display in expounding his ideas and setting forth the result of his researches. If J.-J. Ampère had not precisely a *creative* mind, he was, *par excellence*, a *promulgator*. Few persons seized with

more rapidity and assimilated more completely conceptions the most diverse, or knew so well how to present them in a fashion as ingenious as it was effective. He has thus disseminated by means of his lectures and books a multitude of new ideas.

It is easy to conceive of the illustrious philosopher's pleasure in the triumph of his son; great, too, was the satisfaction at the Abbaye-aux-Bois: M. Lenormant took it upon himself to congratulate the successful young lecturer:—

“ April 8, 1830.

“ I should like to talk to you of your lecture, but you must be tired of hearing it praised. The impulse is now no longer from the centre to the circumference: we get our light from Marseilles; you will be condemned for a Federalist,— beware! I am, moreover, delighted that you are pleased with the people of Marseilles. Yes, it is odd, after talking of Scandinavia to come in sight of the blue sea of the South; it is still more strange that Scandinavia should be discussed only at Marseilles. I take a personal pride, moreover, in your success, for I am one of those who never doubted of the good you would derive from thus trying your hand at lecturing.

“ Paris will now be wanting you; your friends will no longer be obliged to answer for you; there is nothing like type for making a man. Print all you can,— the whole course, or, at least, the greater part. Your first lecture is not only a model of sagacity and breadth of view, but the style is excellent,— nervous, flexible,



varied, plastic. You will improve visibly in this respect in correcting the proofs. Do you not think it strange of Parisian folk to talk to a great man as I talk to you?

“It is, at all events, a good thing for you that your first great success should have occurred at Marseilles. It will make you more eclectic, and you will turn again to my Southern Europe, which is every thing, or almost every thing. There is eclecticism for you!

“You have seen the trial of the ‘Globe’ and the ‘National.’ We think here that the ground taken by the ‘National’ is disastrous, but it has editorial talent of the highest order. Sautelet’s bearing in court was marked by perfect propriety. As for the ‘Globe’ and Dubois, it is the Peasant of the Danube over again; but I think his position much nearer the true one, and politically more honest.

“You asked me a long while ago for a list of Egyptian divinities. I have never sent you any thing, as I have been all the time waiting for the final version from Champollion. If you still have need of it I shall now be able to send you something positive. M. Balanche has learned by a letter from your father that you were to read at the Athenæum ‘La Mort de Virginie.’ I cannot tell you how happy it makes the poor man. I hope your eloquence will get him some subscribers at Marseilles. What do you think of ‘Hernani?’ Have you spoken of it to your six hundred hearers? It seems to me that you ought to help on the new school a little down there. Sainte-Beuve seems to me to have taken

a very high rank in his 'Consolations.' Adieu; enjoy your fame, and do not forget the obscure Parisians.

“CH. LENORMANT.”

In a letter to Ampère, written during the following June, Mme. Récamier alludes particularly to the improvement which was thought to be produced in his poor father's health: —

“No, certainly not, I am not *angry*; it is you who might be so. I have not written, I have not replied to you; an irresistible indolence, a dread of the act of writing, which has become a sort of mania with me, has made me confide to M. Ballanche the task of assuring you of my constant and tender friendship; but I wish to tell you myself how much I regret that I shall not be in Paris when you return. I leave for Dieppe on the 25th of this month, and I shall not return until the end of July. It is sad to add some weeks more to a separation which I already think so long; but, however, you have accomplished the end for which your journey was undertaken, you have the reward of your sacrifices, and you may almost say to yourself that it is to your care that your excellent father owes his restored health. You have, moreover, reaped by the way a harvest of success, which you did not expect.

“Why must news<sup>1</sup> as painful as it is unexpected come to sadden your heart? I do not wish to dwell upon these thoughts now; we will talk of them here-

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<sup>1</sup> The death of Sautélet, who committed suicide, May 13th.

after. This poor young man made me his confidant; his friendship for you attached me to him; I well knew how you would feel. Adieu, adieu; how many things we shall have to tell each other!"

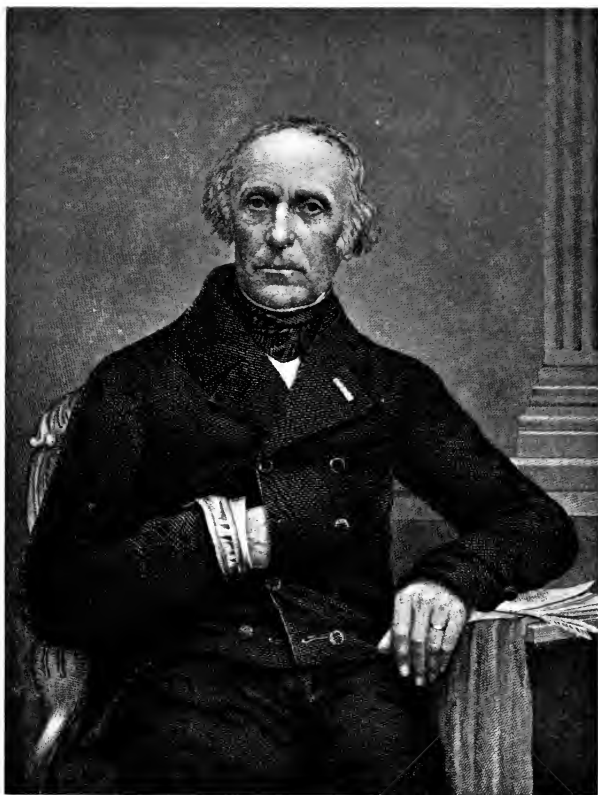
The political horizon was dark with clouds when the two Ampères returned to Paris in the middle of June, 1830. The struggle between the nation and the crown was near its end, and in less than two months the famous ordinances appeared which were the death-warrant of the elder branch of the house of Bourbon. Ampère's political convictions were strong and very liberal, but he took no part in the controversy carried on by the daily press, though he was on the most intimate terms with Armand Carrel, M. Bastide, M. Magnin, and other editors of the "National" and the "Globe;" nor would he accept any position which would force him to engage in the strife of parties. Though primarily of a speculative and literary turn of mind, he was yet an ardent friend to religious and political liberty; calling himself a republican, he was led by his temperament to take sides always with the opposition, under whatever government, and he had a sturdy hatred of arbitrary power. It was natural that he should hail with ardent aspirations a revolution which seemed to him a progress.

In the first ministry formed under the government of Louis Philippe, the Duke de Broglie held the portfolio of Public Instruction. Among the happy measures which marked his short administration was the

opening of the Normal school, which had been closed during the last years of the Restoration, and the establishment in this school of a course of lectures on literature, which was confided to J.-J. Ampère. Our young professor occupied this post three years, and at the same time temporarily supplied the place of two members of the faculty in succession: first of M. Fauriel, and the subsequent year of M. Villemain. In 1833, the death of Andrieux left vacant the chair of French literature at the Collège de France. Ampère, whose talent and fitness had been attested by four years of successful teaching, was, by vote of the professors, appointed to succeed him.

Just at this time, M. Sainte-Beuve, a man of keenly critical mind, poet and prose-writer, was anxious to try his hand at teaching. He spoke to Ampère on the subject, expressing a desire to replace him at the Normal school. The latter, always ready to further the wishes of his friends, cordially embraced the proposition.

Before leaving for Italy, where he was to spend his vacation, Ampère had an interview with M. Guizot, who was then Minister of Public Instruction, and mentioned to him M. Sainte-Beuve's proposal. He then took his departure, intrusting to a common friend of all three the care of continuing the negotiation. There was more than one difficulty in the way. M. Sainte-Beuve belonged to the most advanced wing of the republican party. He had, moreover, just published "*Volupté*," a romance which, though showing much



FRANCOIS PIERRE GUILLAUME GUIZOT  
*from an approved photograph*



talent, did not precisely entitle its author to university honors.

M. Guizot made very light of the obstacle presented by the political opinions of M. Sainte-Beuve, who had himself no scruples on that score, and received with the greatest favor the idea of intrusting to him a chair of instruction in literature, for which he thought him eminently endowed. But he declined to make the appointment immediately, lest it might seem a reward for writing a book which was certainly not very moral in tone; he asked that Ampère should retain the place for the present, and thus give the clever critic time to produce another work more in keeping with the dignity of the professor's chair than "*Volupté*."

These conditions were generously accepted by Ampère, who wrote from Florence to Mme. Lenormant:—

"September 21, 1833.<sup>1</sup>

"What you tell me, madame, on the subject of our friend Sainte-Beuve does not surprise me. M. Guizot, who, in literary and scientific matters, has never been influenced by political considerations, could not be false to his principles of generous equity in the case of so distinguished a man as Sainte-Beuve. From what you say, I infer that M. Guizot would like me to remain another year at the Normal school, during which time M. Sainte-Beuve is to write another book, and this

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<sup>1</sup> Evidently a wrong date, as Sainte-Beuve did not publish "*Volupté*" until 1834. See "*Ma Biographie, Nouveaux Lundis*," vol. xiii.—Tr.

arrangement will insure the nomination of my friend, which I so ardently desire, both for his sake and for the Normal school. — However weighty the motives which have made me wish to consecrate myself entirely to the broad plan which I propose to follow out at the College de France, and which I was not able to enter upon last year, all personal considerations must cede to the interests of such a friend as M. Sainte-Beuve, and of an establishment like the Normal school, — that school to which I owe peculiar gratitude, and to which my devotion to M. Cousin, that constant friend and promoter of my university career, would of itself suffice to attach me.

“It was only the feeling that it was *impossible* for me to remain that made me think of withdrawing from it. I hope that this impossibility will be overcome by the privileges which you say, madame, M. Guizot is disposed to accord me. I am to give only two lectures a week, and my vacation is to be a month longer. On these conditions, and with the assurance that Sainte-Beuve will certainly be appointed next year, I will resume my duties between the 15th and 20th of November. It will be necessary to write to me at Rome, if the matter is thus arranged.”

M. Sainte-Beuve would accept of no postponement; the minister endeavored to make him understand his reasons by explaining them himself.

“Will you, madame,” he wrote, “ask M. Sainte-Beuve to come to see me the day after to-morrow, be-



tween eleven and twelve o'clock. I will talk to him as best I can; and then if he will not accept my kindness, I will accept his humor.

“Many affectionate respects.

GUIZOT.”

The irascible and *spirituel* critic preferred to give up the professorship rather than consent to wait six months. Ampère gave in his resignation, and devoted himself with more ardor than ever to his pupils at the Collège de France; but, before his return, Mme. Récamier, who was not willing that Ampère should torment himself during his short journey with the negotiation that had been set on foot, wrote to him:—

“PARIS, October 15.

“You have written me from Sienna so kind a letter that it has overcome my indolence; though I might, however, complain of this prolongation of your absence. You write charming letters, but you are not very eager to return to your friends.

“M. Sainte-Beuve is in the country; M. Ballanche is a candidate for a seat in the Academy; M. de Chateaubriand is enchanted with the success of “Moses.” Monsieur and Madame Lenormant return to-day from Clamart. I shall direct this note to Rome, where I hope you will be reminded of our walks and talks. I say nothing to you of the negotiation for M. Sainte-Beuve; I know how annoying explanations by letter often are, and I limit myself to telling you that you need have no uneasiness, and that every thing will be

arranged satisfactorily. Adieu; I am very impatient to see you."

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"December 1.

"I have just received your letter from Florence, and it makes me anxious. I entreat you to take care of yourself, and avoid every kind of fatigue. M. Lenormant says that you are working too hard. Remember that you are in Italy for your health; let that be your principal occupation. You must be earnest about this, you are so little used to thinking of yourself; try to care for yourself as you know how to care for others. We talk of you constantly at our poor Abbaye. You know that the readings<sup>1</sup> have begun again; fancy how they make us think of you! We are to have one tomorrow, and a somewhat larger audience.

"I have seen Lord Bristol again after an interval of sixteen years. He was so overcome by the memories which the Abbaye evoked, that for some moments he could not speak. We talked of *old times*, of pleasant hours passed in the little room in the third story with his sister,<sup>2</sup> M. de Montmorency, and the Duke de Laval. Sad as this conversation was, it was not without its charm. All my reminiscences carry me back to that period already so remote. It was in that little room that I saw you for the first time. Give a thought to me in the places we visited together, and let that

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<sup>1</sup> Of M. de Chateaubriand's "Mémoires."

<sup>2</sup> Duchess of Devonshire, *née* Lady Elizabeth Hervey; by her first marriage, Lady Foster.

thought recall my counsels, for I finish as I have begun, by begging you to take care of your health. Adieu ; I am anxiously expecting to hear from you from Rome."

But while absorbed in the labor and success of teaching, our friend was threatened with a misfortune which his filial love made him try to think impossible. In vain for six years had he lavished upon his father the most assiduous care; the chronic laryngitis with which the illustrious *savant* was afflicted, though somewhat checked, was not subdued. It had been arranged, it is true, that the tours of inspection which he made for the university should take him always toward the South of France; he passed a whole year in Provence with his son, before the latter was retained in Paris by his public duties, but the malady was gaining ground; long before he had attained his sixtieth year the illustrious academician bore the marks of decrepitude. With his emaciated and stooping form, dimmed eye, and drooping lip, he looked eighty years old. In spite of this physical decay, his mental vigor continued unimpaired. Every question of general interest discussed in his hearing still captivated and stimulated his powerful mind. I remember listening to a conversation in which Charles Lenormant, recently returned from Egypt, explained to him the discovery of the method of reading hieroglyphics, and how he had seen it applied by Champollion to all the monuments of the Pharaohs. Transported with admiration, the dying old

man of an hour before recovered his life again as he listened to these marvels accomplished by the genius of another man. It was truly a beautiful and noble spectacle.— André-Marie Ampère died at Marseilles June 10th, 1836.

His son's grief for his loss was deep and lasting. He had had for his father while he lived an ardent admiration, and now that he was dead he worshipped his memory. The three volumes of "*L'Histoire Littéraire de la France*," published in 1839, he dedicated to him. In this affecting dedication, after enumerating André Ampère's claims to imperishable fame, he ends with these words: "A true Christian, he loved humanity. He was good, simple, and great."

Henceforward we are to see J.-J. Ampère giving himself up much more unreservedly to his passion for travel. In one of his prefaces he propounds the theory which he calls *la critique en voyage*. We always make a theory to justify our prevailing passion. "I am far from thinking," he says, "that it is necessary to visit a country in order to understand and enjoy the literature that country has produced, or that it is impossible to appreciate Pindar and Isaiah without having made the journey to Athens and Jerusalem. We can, without leaving our library, study the masterpieces of poetry, but there will be always something wanting to this study as long as we have not visited the countries where the great writers lived, contemplated the scenery which moulded them, and recognized their soul, so to speak, in the regions still stamped with their

impress. How can we understand their coloring if we have never seen their sun?"

In September of 1838, Ampère, in company with Ch. Lenormant and another eminent archæologist, Jean de Witte, made what they called their *voyage Dantesque*; in other words, Ampère and his two companions, the "Divina Commedia" in hand, traversed Tuscany and Lombardy, following from city to city, or indeed step by step, the traces of the great Florentine poet. Shortly after, Ampère made another and more complete excursion of this sort, in company with the Marquis Capponi, a noble and patriotic Tuscan, for whom he had the greatest respect and friendship. The result of these researches, as minute as they were enthusiastic, was a work of the highest interest. A keen appreciation of the poetical beauties of the poem, intermingled with historical explanations, the study of manners and character, the description of places, gives to this commentary on the great epic of Dante much variety and animation.

This *voyage Dantesque*, which Ampère afterward included in what he very properly called "literary studies from nature," was first published separately, and met with a singular fate. Deservedly successful in France, a German did it the honor to translate and publish it under his own name, adding to the title, it is true, as a salve to his conscience, "In the footprints of M. Ampère." An Italian, leaving out this addition, which appeared to him of no importance, translated the German translation; and in the endeavor to penetrate the pseudonyme which hid the writer, succeeded in

proving conclusively that it was the work of Prince John, afterward King of Saxony, author of several highly esteemed works on Dante. To appropriate to themselves provinces is the pastime of kings, to appropriate a literary work is a rare exercise of the royal prerogative; and Ampère gaily exclaims, in the preface to his third edition, "The opinion which attributes my book to a royal personage is highly flattering to me, and is based upon excellent reasons; but, strong in my own identity, I protest that I am not the King of Saxony."

We cannot with impunity dwell in those favored climes where the sun reigns supreme. Ampère, whose youthful imagination had been captivated by the sombre poesy of the North, now felt the force of that attraction which has ever drawn the northern races southward. It will be remembered that in the letters which passed between him and Ch. Lenormant, the latter rallied him upon his Germanic preferences, and preached to him eclecticism. The conversion was thorough, and year after year found the studious professor of the Collège de France again in Italy.

In 1841, it was toward the Orient that he turned his steps, in company with Prosper Mérimée, de Witte, and Ch. Lenormant. It may be doubted if ever there were a party of friends whose companionship promised to be more pleasant and profitable than that of these four. All were deeply versed in ancient lore, all were lovers of the beautiful, and consequently quick to appreciate the masterpieces of Greek art, all were young

and fond of adventure. Ampère was never more agreeable than while travelling; his inexhaustible spirits, his good humor, seemed to rise higher with the thousand accidents inseparable from an excursion in a country where civilization had scarcely begun to revive. Ch. Lenormant was the only one of the four who had already visited Greece. After accompanying Champollion to Egypt, he had taken part in an expedition to the Morea; but at that time, 1829, Athens was still under Turkish control. For him, therefore, as well as for his companions, the beauties of the Parthenon were a surprise and a revelation; for no drawing, no description can prepare the beholder for the matchless effect produced by the temple of Minerva, lighted up by the magical splendor of the Eastern sunlight, and in perfect harmony with all surrounding objects.

After a careful exploration of the monuments of Greece proper, Ampère and Mérimée left their companions, whom they were shortly to join again at Constantinople, and made a rapid journey through Asia-Minor. Under the form of a letter to Sainte-Beuve, Ampère published an interesting narrative of his journey.

It was in 1842, the year following his tour in the East, that Ampère was elected a member of the Académie des Inscriptions, taking the place of M. Dégerando. He had won this distinction by his works on the sources of French literature and the formation of the language.

The insatiable desire, inherited from his father, to

learn, know, and understand every thing, led Ampère, as I have said, into the greatest diversity of studies; but this exercise of his prodigious activity did not in the least impair the warmth of his affections. On the contrary, he was easily influenced by his friends, and gave himself, as it were, without reserve to those whom he loved. One man more than all others exercised over him the ascendancy of an earnest friendship. This was Alexis de Tocqueville.

To give an account of the origin of this intimacy, I must retrace my steps a little.

Alexis de Tocqueville was presented to Mme. Récamier by his relative, M. de Chateaubriand, during the winter of 1836, a few months after the publication of "Democracy in America." The sensation produced in the literary and political world by this admirable work is not yet forgotten. M. de Chateaubriand was delighted with the unprecedented success achieved by his young relative at the outset of his literary career, and was furthermore gratified that a nobleman could so well handle a pen. The aristocratic distinction of De Tocqueville's manners, the elegance which tempered their somewhat cold reserve; the breadth and elevation of his mind, in which great firmness was allied to much *finesse*; in short, every thing about him, even to his very liberal and almost republican opinions, was pleasing to M. de Chateaubriand.

Ampère met De Tocqueville for the first time at the Abbaye, and immediately conceived for him one of his enthusiastic and devoted attachments. The attraction



was reciprocal, and the absolute conformity of their opinions continually strengthened and increased this mutual sympathy. Ampère, even before he knew De Tocqueville, claimed some friends in common with him. These friendships had for the most part been contracted in the *salon* of General de Lafayette, about the time the illustrious champion of liberty returned from the visit he made to America in 1824. This visit, as is well known, was a triumphal march. The grateful Americans, in their welcome to the brother-in-arms of Washington, exhausted every form of enthusiasm. Ampère had been deeply moved by the reports of this uprising of a whole nation. Immediately on the general's return to France he sought an introduction to him; and in the autumn of 1826, profiting by the invitation which had been kindly given him, he passed several days at La Grange.

Singular and striking were the contrasts presented by this old feudal chateau, inhabited by the only republican in France, the shrine to which every American made a pious pilgrimage, and, too often also, the place where the enemies of the house of Bourbon met to contrive their plots; nor were the figures that animated the scene less remarkable in themselves.

The family of M. de Lafayette, like the general himself, maintained all the traditions, all the elegant habits of the old *régime*. A charming bevy of young girls, granddaughters and grandnieces, gathered around the staunch old veteran of the principles of 1789. Among his sons, sons-in-law, grandsons, and grand-

nephews, were rare and brilliant minds. The heroic soul of the prisoner of Olmütz seemed still to hover over her daughters and inspire their Christian virtues. Crowds of strangers from all points of the globe, incessantly coming and going, and at times also the ignoble apparition of some low-born conspirator, served to complete the picture of this unique household.

To Ampère, who had a marvellous gift of description, all this was delightful. The cordial welcome he received made him a frequent visitor at La Grange, where he formed more than one enduring friendship. It was there he became acquainted with Gustave de Beaumont, who was to be the worthy and faithful companion of Alexis de Tocqueville in his American travels, with Charles de Rémusat, with M. de Corcelles, whose name, dear to liberty, is not less dear to the church, and with whom, as well as with Gustave de Beaumont, he became more and more intimate through the strong attachment all three bore to their common friend.

While De Tocqueville was engaged on the second part of his book, he took possession of the estate near Cherbourg which bears his name. There, toward the last of August, 1839, Ampère paid him a visit, and found him in the midst of his double duties as author and proprietor. He had scarcely quitted him when De Tocqueville wrote:—

“ September 17, 1839.

“ Your letter, my dear friend, has given us the greatest pleasure. I say *us*, because my wife was quite as

anxious as I that you should find yourself tolerably comfortable in our dilapidated mansion, and she has received with as much satisfaction as myself the kind assurances you give us of the pleasure your visit afforded you. A man must needs be well off with people who watch his coming with the greatest joy and feel at his departure the liveliest regret. Good friends are rarer than good lodgings. I trust this is what you sometimes said to yourself when the blows of the pickaxe and hammer sounded in your ears. As for ourselves, we retain most agreeable recollections of your short visit, and all we ask is that you should come again soon. What you tell me of my book makes me very happy. You would not hide from me the truth; I therefore believe you, and I shall read over what you say whenever I have one of my attacks of spleen. In this respect your presence here had already done me much good. You appeared so pleased with what you read, that it gave me courage. I have not forgotten your promise to revise my manuscript. I cannot express to you, my dear friend, how grateful I am for the trouble you consent to take.

“I have been in great perplexity this morning; in looking over a very important chapter on the way in which *democracy modifies the relations of servant and master*, I fell upon a long section relating to the character of domestic service in aristocratic ages. I think my ideas are right on this point, the expression of them only seems too theoretical; I ought to have two or three examples drawn from authors of the period, but I have

none to give, — though I have an impression that I have met with a great number of them from Froissart to Mme. de Sévigné. If your memory furnish you with any, point them out to me, I beg of you. What I should like, above all, to make understood is that which happened often in the aristocratic periods, when servants merged, so to speak, their own personality in that of their master, and prided themselves more on his advantages than on their own. Caleb, in ‘The Bride of Lammermoor,’ is the ideal of this character, but I do not remember any historical counterpart.

“Pardon me, my dear friend, for thus persecuting you with my own affairs. I have no fear in so doing, for I feel that I interest myself deeply in all that concerns you, which emboldens me to think that you will readily take part in every thing which occupies me. Adieu ; I embrace you with all my heart.”

In a letter of nearly two years’ later date, written after De Tocqueville’s return from his fatiguing journey in Algeria, — a journey which seriously impaired his already delicate health, — are several passages which seem to portray admirably the affectionate relations between the friends.

“TOCQUEVILLE, July 5, 1841.

“You take so lively and so truly friendly an interest in the state of my health, that it is only right that you should be one of the first to hear from me.

“I hasten, therefore, to tell you, my dear friend, that

my journey did me not the slightest harm. Precisely twenty-four hours after leaving Paris I sat down to my own table at Tocqueville. When you can command a few days, remember that there is one spot where you will be sure of finding true friends who will be honestly glad to see you, and do not hesitate to come. Do not do like those people who, always desirous to do every thing too well, end by not doing any thing at all. Do not reserve yourself wholly for that time when you will be able to come and pass months with us; give us meanwhile the weeks that fall in your way. In this matter we shall accept every thing with gratitude. That famous room you have heard so much about, in which you are never to hear the slightest noise, is at last almost ready. It shall be 'Ampère's room,' even when occupied by another, so that no one else shall acquire a prescriptive right to it, as the lawyers say.

"I cannot tell you, my dear friend, what a charm there is for me in my present mode of life. It is owing, I think, to a general cause; namely, my constantly increasing experience of the conflicts of the world, and also to an accidental one,—the agitated and fatiguing life I have lately led. The contrast between the tumult and bustle of those days and the silence and repose of these, give to the latter a sense of vivid delight which rightfully is not theirs. Such passionate enjoyment of quiet denotes a mind still agitated; and this is my case.

"Now, see the incredible absurdity of human nature.

Ask this very contented man if he would always remain in this state which so transports him, and he will answer, no, certainly not; and after saying such fine things about the charms of solitude and tranquillity, he would consider himself much to be pitied could he never plunge again into the thickest of the fight, mingle in the tumult and the crowd, in political animosities, literary rivalries, legislative chambers, academies, — play his part, in short, on the great stage of the world, which he was so rejoiced to quit. But I am running into philosophy. To escape that peril, I embrace you with all my heart and bid you good-by. I need not ask you to remember me particularly to M. de Chateaubriand and our good friend Ballanche, and, above all, to Mme. Récamier, to whom I was prevented by my last attack of fever from saying good-by.”

Among the young celebrities who, between 1838 and 1840, made their appearance at the Abbaye-aux-Bois, Frederick Ozanam must not be forgotten. He had already, seven years before, been presented by Ampère to Mme. Récamier and M. de Chateaubriand, who had both begged him to make his visits frequent. He then declined the honor, but presented himself anew at the expiration of the time he had himself fixed for achieving a reputation. Notwithstanding the disparity in their ages, Ampère attached himself eagerly to Ozanam. His affection for him was almost paternal in its character, and made up of both love and respect. He survived this young and saint-like friend, to whom he paid

a last tribute of regard which is worthy of mention.<sup>1</sup> Among those who gave expression to the public regret at the grave of Ozanam, — and they included the most illustrious of his contemporaries, — no one spoke of him more affectingly or with deeper feeling than Ampère. The allusion to his celebrated father in the eulogy of his friend is peculiarly touching. He thus expresses himself: “Sent to Paris to study law, Ozanam had the good fortune, which he always appreciated, and loved to thank God for, to pass two years under my father’s roof. From this time, 1831, dates the beginning of our fraternal intercourse. I have ever watched with the tenderest care over this young friend, advising him as best I could, and striving to moderate his excessive love of study; loving him for his boyish warmth of heart, and—I will speak as I feel—inspired with respect by his virtues.”

But let us revert to the literary labors of Ampère. After his return from his journey in Greece and Asia Minor, and while occupying the chair of French literature, and publishing at the same time his studies of Greek literature, he was seized by one of his irresistible fancies. This time it was Chinese that was the object of his scientific caprice. Ten years before he had studied the language with Abel Rémusat, and put into verse a romance of the Celestial Empire; now it was the philosophy of Lao-Tse that he took upon himself to explain, examining, in some clever articles published

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<sup>1</sup> Articles in the “*Journal des Débats*” of the 9th and 12th October, 1853

in the "Revue des Deux Mondes," Stanislas Julien's translation of the works of the celebrated founder of the sect of the Tao-Sse. The transition from Chinese characters to Egyptian hieroglyphics is very natural; by studying the first of these systems of writing he became interested in the other. However, as he was already intimate with Klaproth, and imbued with his prejudices, he ranged himself at first among the detractors of Champollion. Where is the discoverer who has not seen the truth it was his mission to reveal to the world denied? Through the generosity of Charles X., Champollion was able to visit the banks of the Nile, and study on the spot the great monuments of the Pharaohs; but even after the decisive proof of the worth of his system furnished by the results of this exploration, and even also after the publication of his grammar and dictionary, there were learned men who still contested the truth of his discovery. Charles Lenormant, an early disciple of Champollion, who accompanied him on his expedition, and afterward succeeded him as professor at the Collège de France, vainly tried to make Ampère appreciate more justly the labors of his master; the frequent and animated discussions which occurred between the two friends failed to convince the sceptic. After exhausting every argument, Lenormant finally said to him: "You are talking of a matter you have never examined experimentally for yourself; lay aside theories that are not your own; here are the grammar and dictionary, study them; I am confident of the result." Ampère



took the tools provided by the genius of Champollion for the help of learners, and, applying himself to the study of them with his usual ardor and acuteness, was soon able to read the hieroglyphic characters. This anecdote is an illustration of his admirable sincerity in matters pertaining to learning, as well as the impetuosity with which he pursued his literary investigations. Once convinced of the truth of that which he had doubted, Ampère thought only of applying his knowledge.

Full of this idea, he resolved to set out for Egypt; "that country," he said, "which awakens all the grand memories of the past, whose present and whose future still interest us, and which deserves to engage the attention of the world for ever. At the very beginning of all tradition in Judea and Greece, we descry Egypt. Moses came out thence, thither went Plato; she drew to herself the thought and the tomb of Alexander; toward her tended the piety of Saint Louis, the fortunes of Bonaparte."

From M. Villemain, then minister of Public Instruction, Ampère received most kind assistance in carrying out his plans. He was able to secure as his fellow-traveller the man of his choice, M. Paul Durand, a fine scholar, who was, at the same time, physician, draughtsman, and archæologist. Ampère set out in the middle of the summer of 1844. He expected to meet, and did meet, on the banks of the Nile the great scientific expedition despatched by the King of Prussia, at the head of which was an eminent Egyptian scholar, M. Lepsius.

Egypt was still under the government of Mehemet-Ali, that most able adventurer, who exterminated the Mamelukes, and conquered Syria, where he treated the Christian population during his short administration with equity, though governing his Egyptian subjects with a rod of iron. Ampère was presented to the viceroy by M. Benedetti, French consul at Cairo, to whom he brought a letter from Reschid-Pacha. The following is his account of his interview with the celebrated despot :—

“Mehemet-Ali is a very hale old man; he was standing when we entered, and seemed very firm on his legs. He sprang lightly upon the tolerably high divan, where he squatted, and we took our places beside him. He did not strike me as very *distingué* in appearance, but very intelligent, and he has not the slightest expression of ferocity. Our interview was marked by one incident only of any significance. The pacha invited me to inspect his Polytechnic school; I replied that my father would have proved himself most worthy of an honor that I did not merit, and begged his highness to permit me to decline a task for which my studies had not fitted me. His highness was unwilling to give up the point. ‘What the father could do, the son should be able to do,’ he said. Unfortunately I knew too well the limit of my abilities. I was obliged to oppose, with respectful firmness, the well-meant persistence of the viceroy, in order to avoid making myself ridiculous by examining, on matters I

do not understand, the pupils and professors of the school under the direction of M. Lambert. But though I did not yield to Mehemet-Ali, I had not the satisfaction of convincing him. I mention this little occurrence, because it illustrates a characteristic common to all oriental governments. They all, in fact, including even the reformatory government of Egypt, are convinced that every man, and especially every European, is fit to do any thing. Mehemet-Ali understands Arabic very imperfectly, and disdains to speak it. He is a Turk, who speaks Turkish, and governs through the Turks."

Friends in France, and especially the guiding spirit of the Abbaye-aux-Bois, were not forgotten on the bark which bore our traveller toward the second cataract. He wrote to Mme. Récamier: —

“CAIRO, December 19, 1844.

“Behold me really in Egypt, madame; yes, here I am, in what is, perhaps, the most remarkable city of the East; and I take pleasure in addressing a letter from this place to you, who have been so often in my thoughts in such widely different places. Beneath the palm-trees of the Nile, just the same as when I was younger among the pines of Norway, do I love to bear your image with me, and dedicate to you my first impressions of the extraordinary country I am now visiting.<sup>1</sup> Cairo; the Pyramids, that I see from my window;

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<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to recall the fact that at this time Mme. Récamier was an old lady of sixty-seven. — TR.

Heliopolis, where I went yesterday; visions of the temples close at hand; palm-trees, camels, minarets,—all lighted up by the soft radiance of a sun like ours in early June, compose a ravishing picture. And this is only the portal of that Egypt where so many marvels to be seen and deciphered await me.

“I have already worked hard among the collections in Rome and Naples; I merely passed through Alexandria, but here I have found already many things. We shall start in a few days, so as to reach as soon as possible Thebes and Upper Egypt. I earnestly trust that I shall receive before my departure a letter from M. David, which will give me news of you. You have had a return of neuralgia, in consequence of staying too long in a spot where I followed you in spirit. You promised me not to expose yourself again in this way. Consider the feelings of absent friends, and so conduct yourself that they shall have good reports of you; they have great need of them, that they may not feel even further off and more widely separated.

“Happily, thanks to the steamer, I am only a fortnight from Paris. How glad I shall be to find myself there again in the spring! That thought makes me press on, for every step that I make forward brings me the sooner back. We have been presented to Mehemet-Ali, who was in a very good humor; he seems to be in excellent health. After we have visited the Pyramids, and explored Cairo and its environs a little, we shall proceed in our boat to Thebes and Upper Egypt, where I hope to have more letters.

But I fear they will come a little irregularly, and that the same will be the case with those I write ; this is the cruel side of this journey. However, there is now a chance of receiving and sending letters, which several years ago there was not. I have already seen on the Nile some of M. de Chateaubriand's birds, and I shall write to him about them when I have seen them among the ruins. I have executed M. Lenormant's commissions. I feel assured that his course of lectures is going on finely in every respect. Soliman-Pacha<sup>1</sup> has been so kind to me that I am really touched by it. He reminded me in the pleasantest way that he had been a pupil of my father. He has been everywhere recalled to me here. Adieu, madame ; M. Ballanche has written me a kind letter, for which I thank him. Adieu, again, very affectionately."

Those beautiful Egyptian nights, so well described in verse by Ampère, came near costing him his life, for he neglected all precautions. After passing the whole day, like a true *savant*, copying inscriptions under a burning sun, he liked nothing better than to spend the night lying on the deck of his boat, enjoying the cool air, either indulging in reverie or composing verses. In an Eastern climate one pays dearly for such reckless imprudence. Our friend was seized with a most violent attack of dysentery, and yet, nevertheless, he insisted

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<sup>1</sup> Soliman-Pacha (Selves), major-general in the Egyptian army, was a native of Lyons, and had known Ampère, the mathematician.

upon continuing his journey, and ascended the Nile as far as the second cataract.

His travelling companion, M. Durand, who had vainly counselled him to be prudent, succeeded too late in inducing him to submit to his care, both as friend and physician. He brought the sick man, not without difficulty, back to Marseilles, where his illness and weak condition obliged him to remain several weeks. All the letters addressed to Ampère by his friends at the Abbaye-aux-Bois are full of the deepest anxiety. Mme. Récamier wrote to him June 1, 1845: —

“ *Mon Dieu!* how your last letter to M. Ballanche alarms me! How sad to feel that you are thus detained far from your friends at the very time they were so joyfully expecting you! I unite with M. Ballanche in recommending the greatest prudence and greatest care of your health; I beseech you also to let us hear from you much more frequently; we should like to have a line by every mail, one line only, so as not to fatigue you too much. I rely upon you, upon your friendship, to spare me anxieties which would be hard to bear. Ah, *mon Dieu!* how many things I have to say to you, to ask you; and when shall we be all together again?”

A few days afterward the good Ballanche took up the pen: —

“ June 12, 1845.

“ My very dear friend,” he said, “ we were greatly in need of your letter to Mme. Récamier; we were all in

deep distress, and it is easy to understand why: we all went about in search of news, for we knew how necessary careful treatment is in these climatic maladies; besides, we were afraid that the vexation of being banished far from all your friends might still further retard your convalescence, already so trying; consequently the news indirectly communicated by Mme. de Jussieu, then that received by M. Lenormant, finally, your letter to Mme. Récamier, were immediately circulated.

“My very dear friend, I have had experience in these convalescences where a strict regimen is necessary. I know how much time they require, and how much prudence must be exercised before one can be again restored to full health. Thus, while I encourage you, I cannot help advising you to be extremely prudent. We have had no spring, and we are now entering as it were into the heart of summer all at once, without any transition.

“Mme. Récamier is very well; she goes out for a little while in the morning, but generally stays at home in the evening. You will find her in good health and without plans; how could she form any while so many of her friends are absent?

“My health is good, save from time to time some little drawbacks which are always enfeebling, but I am old and resigned. You will find the Princess Belgiojoso building a house for Augustin Thierry. M. de Chateaubriand<sup>1</sup> has arrived at the end of his journey, conse-

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<sup>1</sup> M. de Chateaubriand had gone to Venice to see the Count de Chambord.

quently he will be coming back soon; so we are approaching gradually to the end of all these absences, and we shall know what to do with our summer. I might give you news of the Academy, but you already know all that can be of interest to you. In your absence we have received Sainte-Beuve, Saint-Marc Girardin, Mérimée; we have Vigny and Vitet to receive at your return. I do not wish for another vacancy, because I want you to be here in good health, quietly making your visits; besides, I fear that the next will be that of the venerable Royer-Collard, which would grieve me very much; he is eighty-three years old, and looks all his age. I might tell you of our religious discussions, but you will arrive in time for them; I hope you will take part in them with moderation. I am alone in my opinion, but I think the great and overpowering interest excited by discussions of this sort is marvellous; and so I am far from deploring them as many people do. God grant, however, that we may all learn moderation. Set your mind at rest; be assured that the health of all in whom you are interested is unimpaired; and that you will find that we all love you even better than ever, if that were possible, on account of the anxiety you have caused us.

“I embrace you warmly.”

Ampère was able, finally, to rejoin his friends, but the shock his constitution had received was great, and for more than a year he continued in an alarming condition. At that time he was living with M. Mohl, a





JULIUS MOHL  
*from a painting by Aug. Lemoine*



learned foreigner, subsequently naturalized in France, and one of the most distinguished orientalisists of our Academy of Inscriptions. In this household, composed of two bachelors, the phlegmatic temperament of the one formed an amusing contrast to the impetuosity of the other. But though outwardly very unlike, both were men of great good sense, and the profound esteem they had for each other led to mutual deference, and enabled them to maintain for a long time their association. During all Ampère's illness, M. Mohl gave him the most assiduous care.

Among the persons who at this juncture manifested a deep interest in Ampère, the Viscountess de Noailles must not be forgotten. This lady was no less remarkable for her kindness than for her brilliant wit, her perfect grace and elevation of character. Left a widow in early youth, and commanding the respect of all who knew her, she devoted herself to the care of her only child, a daughter, upon whom she concentrated all her affections. The Viscountess was quick at repartee, and very animated in conversation. She talked with great ease and naturalness, and it pleased her to meet young people able to encounter her in a war of wit. Consequently she was delighted with Ampère; nor was this all; by his noble traits of character he inspired her with a real affection.

The Viscountess de Noailles made the acquaintance of Ampère at the Abbaye-aux-Bois, where, in company with her son-in-law and daughter, the Duke and Duchess de Mouchy, she was a frequent visitor. The

Noailles had succeeded to the Montmorencies in the *salon* and in the friendship of Mme. Récamier. No one, it is true, could fill the place that the saintly friend of her youth, Matthieu de Montmorency, had held in her heart; but the Duke de Noailles, a much later comer, was immediately adopted by Mme. Récamier, and admitted among the number, now constantly growing less, of her intimate friends. This intimacy was shared by all who made part of the daily circle at the *Abbaye-aux-Bois*, for one of the results of the ascendancy exercised by Mme. Récamier was the bond of good-will which this remarkable woman knew how to create between all whom she loved.

As soon as Ampère began to gain a little strength, he went to pass a month with Mme. Lenormant in the pleasant valley of the Rille; a little later he established himself at Mouchy, the magnificent residence of the Viscountess de Noailles: he ever held in most grateful remembrance the delicate attention he received from the whole family. Years afterward he still spoke of it with emotion.

Ordered to observe a strict diet, obliged to remain constantly in a recumbent position, his habits of study broken up, Ampère was a very difficult patient to manage. No one ever needed to be amused so much as he; and, like an obstinate child, he could hardly be made to submit to the course of treatment prescribed. Consequently his convalescence was slow. He was still confined to his room at the beginning of the new term at the *Collège de France*, and was therefore obliged to

relinquish all thought of resuming at present the chair which he had held with such marked success. He chose for his substitute M. de Loménie, a clever writer, already favorably known by his critical and biographical work, "*La Galerie des Contemporains Illustres.*" In these sketches, treating of the writings and conduct of men of all nationalities, most of them still living, and very different in genius and character, the young author, who signed himself "*Un homme de rien,*" gave evidence, not only of a moderation and discretion rare at his age, but of a firm though kindly judgment. His literary criticism was ingenious, and the event proved that he had every qualification desirable in a professor. Ampère rejoiced sincerely in a success which he had predicted; henceforward, when either ill-health or his journeys obliged him to relinquish temporarily the duties of his professorship, it was always M. de Loménie whom he chose as his substitute.

When we consider the severe shock given to Ampère's constitution by his journey to Egypt, where he had conducted himself with so much imprudence, the question naturally suggests itself: What use did he make of the knowledge acquired at so great a cost? A few learned and able memoirs read before the Academy of Inscriptions, in which he examines with his usual acuteness the subject of the existence of castes in Egypt, and makes use of inscriptions from monuments to shed new light upon the social conditions of mankind in those remote ages; a series of articles published in the "*Revue des Deux Mondes,*" giving an account of his

journey, together with interesting observations on manners and customs, descriptions of monuments and natural scenery, — these were the only results.

His passion for Egyptian antiquities once satisfied, Ampère abandoned their study to follow in other directions the promptings of his inquiring spirit. He had done enough to prove that had he continued to give his attention to that branch of knowledge he might have produced a profound and original work; but with him it was a mere passing fancy, and he was no more constant to the study of hieroglyphics than to the Chinese language.

We must not, however, fail to recognize that if Ampère was often content to merely skim (though always with a vigorous wing) the surface of studies widely divergent, he had in all shown himself to be animated by a genuine literary spirit. Skilful in detecting analogies, he had a keen relish for the poetry of all nations; he had proved himself, in fine, not only a man of erudition, but a *bel esprit* in the best sense of the word. The French Academy had a claim upon him, and made good that claim. Alexandre Guiraud died in 1846; Ampère was elected to succeed him early in 1847.

My readers will pardon the profound emotion I experience in attempting to relate the events that followed closely upon Ampère's election to the French Academy. The last and most obscure relic of that circle which drew around Mme. Récamier, attracted by admiration of her intellect, grace, and goodness, my heart bleeds in telling how, one by one, all these illustrious examples

of genius and of friendship have passed away. I have seen them successively descend into the tomb; Ballanche, Chateaubriand, preceding her who was their good angel, and then De Tocqueville, Lenormant, Ampère. I have watched the gradual inroads of physical weakness in the man who will ever be considered the greatest writer of his age, and whose form will seem to our posterity to tower above the threshold of our century, one of those colossal figures which for ever mark an epoch. With the increasing weight of bodily infirmities, M. de Chateaubriand became more and more taciturn. The eagerness and curiosity which he always excited annoyed him; obliged to be carried into the *salon* of Mme. Récamier, the feeling he had was similar to that of Royer Collard, who, when he resigned his functions of deputy, exclaimed, "I do not want any one to see me go crawling to my seat." Like him, M. de Chateaubriand could not submit to be an object of pity, mingled though it were with admiration.

Dark, indeed, were the clouds now gathering over the poor *salon* of the Abbaye. Mme. Récamier, over whose eyes a cataract was slowly spreading its veil, would have been justified in giving a little more attention to herself, but she seemed to forget, and by her serenity sought to make others forget, the calamity which threatened her. The faithful Ballanche, whose health had been always very delicate, was failing day by day: his distress at Mme. Récamier's almost total blindness, and his anxiety in regard to the operation to

which she had resolved to submit, affected him most unfavorably. Hardly had the operation been performed when he was attacked by an inflammation of the lungs, which speedily became fatal. Mme. Récamier hastened to the dying bed of her friend, and lost in tears the sight she had just recovered. Amid these scenes of mourning and accumulated sorrow, Ampère played the part of the most affectionate son. In concert with M. and Mme. Lenormant, he aided Mme. Récamier to divert M. de Chateaubriand from his melancholy; and by his genial flow of spirits and enthusiastic republicanism he succeeded in the task. It was under these circumstances that his initiatory discourse was written, and the ceremony of his admission into the French Academy took place.

The effort made by Mme. Récamier to conceal her grief for Ballanche, so as not to increase M. de Chateaubriand's depression, had, however, so exhausted her strength that her niece, justly alarmed, insisted upon her going into the country, and actually dragged her away from Paris. Ampère followed them to Normandy. It was there that he prepared the volume which, so Mme. Récamier hoped, was to popularize the works of Ballanche, and perpetuate his memory as well as his talent and lofty soul. They read over the writings of the lamented philosopher, and together selected the passages to be quoted. To Mme. Récamier the occupation was a pleasing one, as, while it served to fix her attention, it did not divert her thoughts from the memory of the friend she had lost.



Ballanche, as a writer, is far from having the rank which is his due, and which will be his whenever a well-arranged edition of his works shall bring them within reach of the real public, by whom he is too little known. His style is everywhere superb, pure, and elevated, often powerful, and sometimes very picturesque; though it cannot always atone for the fault of a somewhat vague philosophy. The volume composed by Ampère at the instigation and, I may say, under the dictation of Mme. Récamier, is not and could not be, in the strict sense, a biography, for the career of Ballanche was marked by no events. He took no part in the political agitations of his time, and his whole life was made up of what he thought, felt, and wrote. The aim of the book was to reveal what was innermost both in the man and the author, and convey to the public "an emanation from that beautiful soul so full of hidden perfumes, by means of a few of his letters and extracts from his works, choosing those best fitted for extraction and indicative of the quality of his talent." The purpose thus expressed in the beginning of the work has been completely accomplished; and this volume of extracts throws the clearest light upon the very peculiar character of Ballanche.

The private loss which had made so sad a void in the circle of the Abbaye-aux-Bois was soon followed by a public catastrophe. The revolution of February, 1848, swept away in three days the throne that the revolution of July, 1830, had taken three days to erect. Civil war stained with blood the streets of our

capital, and the last agonies of M. de Chateaubriand had a sinister accompaniment in the terrible voice of the cannon of June. It was on the 4th of July, 1848, that the great soul of the author of the "Genius of Christianity" took its flight toward eternity. The noble old man fell asleep in the Lord with a placid confidence. His eyes, as they closed for ever, were still able to fix their gaze upon that incomparable friend who was not long to survive him. His last anxieties were for his country; dying, he followed with sad interest the strife of parties, of which he was eager to hear all the particulars. The self-sacrifice of the archbishop of Paris drew from him a magnificent burst of admiration, and great was his joy at the glorious issue of those terrible days.

M. de Chateaubriand had expressed the wish that his mortal remains should be buried beside the sea, whose waves had cradled his infancy, and the town of St. Malo had prepared for him during his lifetime a tomb upon a rocky islet not far from its walls. Upon this rock, called the Grand Bey, and facing the town, "where life was inflicted upon him," rests the body of the illustrious author. At high tide Grand Bey forms an island, at low tide it can be reached by the beach left bare by the receding waves. On the side looking toward the open sea, the spot chosen by the deceased, is his tomb, excavated in the solid granite rock. Above the tomb rises a massive cross, also of granite; and around, nothing but the sea and sky. There, on the 19th of July, 1848, were laid to rest the remains of M. de

Chateaubriand, amid an immense concourse of spectators, and with ceremonies which lent to the occasion all the character of a Christian apotheosis.

Ampère made it his religious duty to accompany the remains to Brittany. He was then chancellor of the Academy, and before his departure he intimated to the perpetual secretary that he would consider it a great honor if the members of that body would give him the authority to speak for them at the approaching obsequies. Before the time fixed for the funeral ceremonies he received at St. Malo the following note from M. Villemain : —

“Monsieur and dear colleague,” he wrote, “the Academy is not surprised that you should have anticipated her choice of a delegate for the pious duty which it is yours to fulfil. In paying the last funereal honors to the mortal remains of the illustrious man she has lost, she cannot be better represented than by you, and she accordingly charges you to speak in her name, both as her chancellor and as one of her most worthy representatives, and also as having won the friendship of the great author who has conferred upon her so much honor. In all that you say of the imperishable fame of M. de Chateaubriand, and of that generous nature which was so well known to you, our admiration and our hearts are with you.

“Receive, Monsieur and dear colleague, the assurance of my high esteem.

“VILLEMAIN.

“July 15, 1848.”

Ampère accordingly, in the course of these imposing obsequies, pronounced a few words, marked by deep feeling, such as he would naturally be inspired to utter by the religious and poetical aspect of this last scene in the drama of a poetic life.

The Countess de Boigne, the only friend of her youth still left to Mme. Récamier, was absent from Paris at the time of M. de Chateaubriand's death. At the breaking out of the revolution of February she had sought refuge at Tours, and had not yet returned. Sympathizing deeply with the grief in which she knew Mme. Récamier must be plunged, she wrote to her, August 12th, 1848:—

“VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I have heard simultaneously of your severe sufferings and of your recovery. I had no need of this additional anxiety about your poor dear life; but I do not recognize your usual strength of mind or your tender heart in the way you are giving up, to the despair of the faithful friends still remaining to you, and who have the right to beg you to help them in their efforts to sustain you in this painful event. I know that it is accompanied and has been preceded by much that is calculated to impair your strength and shake your courage; but, dear friend, you must get back a little of both, so that you may cherish and clothe anew in all its old strength and beauty that image of your friend which the past few months had somewhat defaced. I can understand— who better than I?— that your affectionate heart must bitterly regret what was

still left you to cherish, love, nurse, and husband, of a life so precious; I can understand that you must feel a sort of irritation, when you have reason to suspect that others think your grief out of proportion with what in these last days there was yet to lose of that illustrious existence; and yet, dear friend, I must say to you that you will finally admit yourself that it was not desirable that that life should be prolonged; for the hour of physical suffering had arrived, accompanied by no compensations, since the strength to support pain was gone. His mighty genius had worn itself out before wearing out its mortal frame. All that now remains of him is your love and his fame; it will not be difficult for you to confound the two together and make them one. You will by that means find greater comfort in your recollections. Alas! for a long time you have been living only in these recollections through a sad and painful present; for I have seen how cruelly you have suffered from the sight of infirmities which, in spite of the zeal and ingenuity of your affection, you could neither disguise to yourself nor conceal from others.

“Dear friend, I conjure you let your mind bridge over this arid desert, and beyond you will find pleasanter thoughts and more cheerful views. It is there, among images of the past, that you must pitch your tent, and allow your friends to rally around you. *Mon Dieu!* in this the whole world will help you, by bringing to you the tributes of admiration so long merited by him whom you weep. Do not make it a religious

duty to picture him to your heart such as he was in his last days; it is unworthy both of him and of you. Replace him upon the pedestal where he once stood, bear thither your loving suffrages; herein you will find the only possible consolation. Consider also that though his reputation has no need of extraneous support, the care of it has fallen into hands that are neither very well informed nor loving, and that you should not allow yourself to be so overcome as to lose all influence in the matter. M. de Girardin's position will probably render him very exacting. He is adroit and not over-scrupulous, and it is essential that in this direction no false steps should be risked. Your instinctive tact will be of more avail than all the quibbles of the law. I beg Amélie to accept this as an answer to her letter, thanking her for writing and for the pamphlet, which has interested me very much. I am sorry that you are unwilling to leave the poor Abbaye, which is becoming so sadly depopulated. No doubt you will carry with you everywhere the arrow which transpierces you, but it would be at least a change of air, which would give you a little more strength to bear your pain. I wish that you might decide to come to Tours."

M. de Chateaubriand's death was, alas! a mortal blow to Mme. Récamier. The sources of life seemed, as it were, dried up within her. We watched her languish for ten months, without one rebellious murmur, retaining her sweetness, her perfect grace, her angelic goodness; more loving than ever, perhaps, toward those

from whom she felt she would soon be obliged to part. It caused her a sort of melancholy joy to learn that the Duke de Noailles, who had been chosen for M. de Chateaubriand's successor at the Academy, was to pronounce his eulogy.

The cholera had reappeared. It was the only malady Mme. Récamier was ever known to really fear. She resolved to fly from the pestilence, which was raging in the neighborhood of the Abbaye-aux-Bois, and which had even penetrated within its walls, and took up her abode with her niece at the National Library, for the infection had up to that time spared the Rue Richelieu. But Mme. Récamier's state of depression and debility probably made her peculiarly susceptible to the terrible influence. She had only been a month at the Library when she was attacked by the disorder she so much dreaded, and to which she succumbed, after a few hours of frightful agony, on the 11th of May, 1849.

It is needless to recapitulate here the anguish of that terrible night, still less to try to paint the grief of her family and friends, who saw their guiding-star, their centre of life, disappear with this adorable woman. They scattered far and wide as people do who fly from a falling thunderbolt.

Ampère immediately left Paris; without a home, without relations, stricken in his dearest affections, he felt once more the urgent need to travel, thinking by this means to escape from the isolation, the void that had been made around him. But before going he re-

signed his position as conservator of the "Bibliothèque Mazarine." It was during the Republic of 1848 that this position had become vacant, and M. de Falloux, Minister of Public Instruction, had, unsolicited, appointed Ampère to fill it. A spacious and convenient apartment was attached to the place, and great had been the satisfaction of Mme. Récamier and her circle of friends at this comfortable provision for a man whose generosity often reached the verge of improvidence, and whose money seemed to belong to everybody else rather than to himself.

On her death, however, without taking counsel of any one, Ampère immediately sent in his resignation. He said nothing about it to M. and Mme. Lenormant until the deed was done, and he came to bid them good-by. Then he departed on his journey, hoping amid new scenes to forget himself.

He had never been in Spain. M. Roulin, the present librarian of the French Institute, who had long been his kind and faithful friend, the friend, too, of M. Lenormant, and with whom Ampère knew that he could talk of Mme. Récamier, was about setting out for that country. This circumstance determined his course. Wishing to see M. Barante, an old friend of Mme. Récamier, and share with him his grief, he went by way of Auvergne, where he made a short stay, joining M. Roulin subsequently on the frontier, whence they visited in company the Spanish peninsula. After his friend had returned to Paris, Ampère completed his trip by a tour through Portugal.



When Ampère left Paris, — June, 1849, — Alexis de Tocqueville had just been appointed by the President of the Republic Minister of Foreign Affairs. This office he held only until the following October, when he left Paris and proceeded to Sorrento, whither he had been imperatively ordered for the benefit of his health, seriously impaired in his country's service. He wrote to Ampère, who had meanwhile returned to Paris, begging him to join him and share his retreat. To be again with the best friend left to him on earth, to live in a sunny climate, where alone he could breathe freely, away from Paris, now become hateful to him, was an irresistible temptation to Ampère, and he accordingly joined De Tocqueville in the environs of Naples. Here was passed another happy period of his life. Long afterward he took pleasure in recalling and describing the terrace, with its orange trees, where, looking out in company with his friend upon that beautiful bay, that azure sea, he laid bare his heart to the man he both loved and honored. How many generous thoughts were there interchanged; of what noble sorrow was Ampère made the confidant; and how these conversations reanimated and restored his drooping courage! It was at Sorrento that he conceived the idea of visiting America, — a plan which he carried into effect the following year.

The winter of 1850–51, which Alexis de Tocqueville passed at Tours, brought back Ampère to Paris. He resumed his lectures at the Collège de France, and eagerly but sadly renewed his intimacy with the few

persons still remaining of the circle of the Abbaye-aux-Bois, — Paul David, M. and Mme. Lenormant and their children, whom he had known from their earliest infancy, and who were now in the bloom of youth; Ozanam, de Loménie, Léonce de Lavergne, M. Pasquier, Mme. de Boigne, the Duke and Duchess de Noailles, the Viscountess de Noailles and her daughter, the Duchess de Mouchy, M. Guizot, Mme. d'Haussonville, the Duke and the Prince de Broglie. "Alas!" he wrote to Mme. Lenormant, "all that was the present is becoming the past, and we must cling to what remains that we may be able to bear the loss of that which is no more."

It was not in Ampère's nature to be long despondent; he could feel, and had felt, the transports of violent grief; but for him, so long as life lasted, there was always something to do, something to be investigated, something to be thought out. In the month of August, 1851, he went to England with Ozanam (already in a state of decline) and his charming wife; it was their purpose to visit together the first Universal Exposition. Let us leave Ampère to relate this episode of his wandering life, which forms, in fact, the opening chapter of his book entitled "Promenade en Amérique." From this introduction the reader will be able to judge of the lively and easy style of the book, which is one of the most solid as well as one of the most charming of the author's works.

“SOUTHAMPTON, August 27, 1851.

“Yesterday I was in the Crystal Palace in London. I have just seen the Universal Exhibition, the first really universal achievement in the history of mankind. Yes, it is the first time since the world began that men have done something in common; that all nations, without distinction of country, race, or belief, have come together in the unanimity of one and the same enterprise; a memorable and prophetic event, for it proclaims and inaugurates, so to speak, the future unity of the human race.

“To-day I leave England for the United States, where I shall see, in the fullest freedom of active operation, those industrial forces whose world-wide results I have admired in London. But, before leaving behind me the shores of Europe, I beg permission to relate an incident which gave me a piquant and pleasant foretaste of America.

“In the railway carriage which took me from London to Southampton, in company with an eminent American — Mr. Theodore Sedgwick — who is to sail with me, was an English lady, who made immediately an impression upon me by her decision of speech and the original turn of her mind. It was Fanny Kemble, whose fanciful and romantic volume on the United States, a true girl's book, had delighted me; and, albeit it was somewhat severe on American manners, had first inspired me with a longing to undertake the voyage upon which I start to-day. The brow, the glance, the whole person of the niece of Mrs. Siddons glows with a light caught

from the Tragic Muse. Much has happened since she wrote what she now calls her 'impertinences' on American manners, since she talked of her horseback rides on the banks of the Hudson, and penned the charming verses suggested by those scenes. Although she brought back sad recollections from her adopted country, she appreciates better than she did the social advantages of a land where, she tells me, you feel that there is no one about you suffering from want. Her enthusiasm, however, for its natural beauties seems to have cooled. For my part, I prefer in that respect to trust to her youthful impressions."

Ampère remained eight months in the New World. He visited all parts of North America, Canada, New Orleans, the Island of Cuba, and completed this interesting tour of observation by a trip to Mexico. A passionate admirer of the grand in nature, a no less enthusiastic observer of the mighty results of human industry, in which, as in all the productions of man's genius, he did not fail to discover a lofty and poetic side, Ampère was well suited to enjoy the happiness of living under free institutions. Everywhere received as befitted a man of his merit, the inheritor of a name famous in science, heralded and accredited as the friend of Alexis de Tocqueville, Ampère saw not only the country of America but the people. His book, animated by the most genuine good feeling, is marked by no exaggerations; the frankest, perhaps, of all the travellers who have written of the Americans, his account

of them leaves upon the mind the most favorable impression of their country and its society. Nothing, moreover, could be more entertaining than this "Promenade in the New World," in the course of which Ampère dines with the President of the United States, in company with Kossuth; is charmed at Philadelphia by the accents of Jenny Lind; and as he listens to the "Swedish Nightingale," is reminded that twenty-five years before, in another hemisphere, he had heard another nightingale, Mme. Catalani, sing at Stockholm.

Entering Virginia, our critic on his travels sleeps at Petersburg, then an obscure town, since made sadly famous by the vast hecatombs of dead now sleeping in its neighboring fields. To come upon that name there is a shock to the imagination, "though," he adds, "one must get accustomed in this country to the most extraordinary surprises. 'Memphis,' 'Palmyra,' 'Rome,' 'London,' 'Paris,' lie along the route of the traveller in the United States,— a plain indication that this New World is the child of the Old, and proudly desirous to imitate her."

At Charleston, Ampère witnessed a hideous spectacle:—

"I have just seen in broad daylight in the public square a family of negroes sold at auction. They were mounted on a cart, as for an execution; on one side was displayed a red flag,— worthy emblem of crime and slavery. The negroes and negresses wore as unconcerned an air as the crowd of by-standers. The

auctioneer, in a playful style, set forth the capabilities of a very intelligent negro, a gardener, of the first class. The purchasers inspected the men, women, and children, opened their mouths, looked at their teeth; and then the bidding began. Near by, at the same time and in just the same way, a horse was sold, and people were bidding for an ass. The price of the man was sixty-nine dollars, the horse cost two dollars more. I make no comments upon the scene I have described. I finished the day, begun under such distressing auspices, on a slave plantation. It was the farce that follows the tragedy. The owner of the plantation is a German, and evidently the least cruel and least tyrannical of men. He seemed to me to be literally tyrannized over by his negroes. Mr. —, who is a humane man, is unwilling to whip his slaves; the slaves, little moved to gratitude, work without energy, and with great negligence. He entered a cabin where some negroes were busy cleaning cotton; he merely pointed out to them how badly their work was done, and explained to us the serious loss he should suffer through their indolence. The only effect of his reproof was a pout and low grunt. No old bachelor's housekeeper ever took reproofs with a worse grace. The wrong of which he complained was still another argument against slavery; paid servants can be forced to do their work well by threatening to turn them away; with slaves there are only two things to be done,— whip them, or be the victim of their laziness. Deplorable situation, in which one must be either cruel or ill-obeyed."

Ampère, it is plain, was not an advocate of slavery. While doing ample justice to the inestimable advantages of American institutions, he was under no illusion in regard to the dangers which threatened the great democratic confederacy. The difficulty of maintaining the union between the Northern and Southern States, so different in character, so opposed in interests; the formidable question of slavery; and, finally, the undue acquisition of territory, toward which the Americans are incessantly impelled, by the spirit of enterprise, and the temptation of their supremacy,—all these grave and almost insolvable difficulties, which very few statesmen recognized at the time Ampère visited America, were clearly seen by him, and his book prophetically pointed them out ten years before they led to the fratricidal strife of which we have been the witnesses.

After visiting Havana, Ampère proceeded to Mexico. This country, since watered with the blood of our soldiers, the object of so much anxiety, speculation, hope, and fear to France, the scene of so many blunders, is not, like the United States, without a past, or destitute of historic monuments.

The Aztec civilization has left deep traces behind it. Ampère did scarcely more than pass through the ancient empire of Montezuma, but the glance of the experienced traveller was so quick and sure that he was able to make observations, as novel as they were ingenious, upon the antiquities, the history, and especially the dialects of the country.

On the 10th of May, 1852, the indefatigable explorer,

having returned to Paris, resumed his duties at the Collège de France, where, during the first term of that year, M. de Loménie had supplied his place.

An absence need not be long for us to find upon our return that death has been making sad havoc in the ranks of our friends. Ampère was never to see again the brilliant Viscountess de Noailles, of whom Mme. de Boigne wrote to Mme. Récamier: "She has a remarkable wit that she often wastes, that she does not scruple to bestow upon the stupid, but there is so much of it, that enough still remains for fit occasions."

The friendship that the Viscountess de Noailles felt for Ampère reverted as a part of her heritage to her daughter, and the memory of it became a cherished bond of union between the two. At the time of Mme. Récamier's death, the Viscountess offered Ampère an apartment in a detached wing of her house in Paris, which he refused. The Duchess de Mouchy, with affectionate persistence, now renewed the offer. The following is Ampère's reply to this friendly proposal:—

"Saturday, August 30.

"How kind and generous you are to me, madame! I cannot tell you how much I am touched, nay, almost overcome, by your proposal to take me under your roof, — in that house, too, in the Rue d'Astorg, which has for me so many associations. Do not be offended if I cannot profit by it: aside from a rascally disposition of mine, which makes it impossible for me to cast anchor anywhere, such is my wild-cat nature that I am never



at home except in the region of the roofs and gutters, with no stationary domicile, and ever on the move (by the way, I brought in a thief guilty the other day<sup>1</sup> on charge of vagrancy; it was very mean of me not to have claimed for him the benefit of extenuating circumstances). I am, you see, a wild-cat, and for such worthless creatures nothing can be done; besides, the Rue d'Astorg is too far from my work, that is to say, from the Institute and its library. I am now lodging just opposite the other library, close by the room where my books and manuscripts are.<sup>2</sup> I must be near them. I hoped that in coming here I had drawn nearer to you, and now you are to be at Versailles this winter; it is you who run away from me. However, journeys have no terrors for me. I would willingly undertake much longer ones, provided you were at the end of them. I have to sit again on that tiresome jury. You can have no idea how much experience I have gained in the last week with regard to crimes. There is one class which has fallen considerably in my estimation,—that is, the witnesses; but I cannot say that the average juror has risen very high in my opinion.

“Day before yesterday, after punishing crime at the Palais de Justice, I went to reward virtue at the French Academy. Some time ago I had an interview with a candidate for this prize; but virtue, it seemed to me, was a matter which she knew very little about. Adieu,

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<sup>1</sup> Ampère had been on a jury.

<sup>2</sup> His books and MSS. were stored with M. Lenormant at the National Library.

madame ; I would fain make you smile, at least amuse you, as a return, however slight, for that charming kindness of which you have just given me another proof never to be forgotten."

At the close of the college term, Ampère set out for Tocqueville. He was impatient to communicate to his friend his vivid impressions of America. He announced his departure to the Duchess de Mouchy in the following letter : —

“PARIS, July 14.

“I am unwilling, madame, to leave Paris without saying good-by to you. Your own departure was somewhat hasty, and I found only the kind note for which I have to thank you. My lectures have at last come to an end, much to the satisfaction of my hearers, who would soon have come to an end themselves, melted by the heat. I intend to go to Tocqueville and write my “America” there. I shall stop a little while with Mme. Lenormant, then I have Mouchy in prospect, — a prospect both sad and pleasant, which dismays me, and yet invites. I think of it often, — of those whom I shall see there no more, and those who still remain. It is a spot painful for me to revisit, but never to see it again would be still more so.

“You must be congratulating yourself, madame, that you are just now at Dieppe ; it is, perhaps, the only place where it is not too hot. I remember to have passed a summer there, which was scorching everywhere else, but very agreeable there. Dieppe for me

is also a place of sweet and bitter memories. There have I strolled in company with M. de Chateaubriand, M. Ballanche, Mme. Récamier; it was there I first saw the Duchess de Mouchy, and heard her sing. I am beginning, I feel, to grow old, for I am constantly recurring to the past. But to consign it to oblivion would be to annihilate it; and, moreover, the present does not interest the imagination much; after having been unduly excited, we have now fallen into a state of languor which has also its drawbacks: first of all, it is tiresome; Paris, too, which is always odious in summer, is now more disagreeable than ever. Building is going on everywhere, consequently every thing is in disorder; nothing to be seen but stones and mortar, excavations, barred streets. It is like being in a city of the United States. For once it is permitted me to leave Paris without regret, for it is hot, disagreeable, and empty. I am going to plunge into my reminiscences of travel with Mouchy in perspective. I shall try to make you like America a little. As for the Duke de Mouchy, he and I are perfectly agreed on that point."

When the Duchess de Mouchy made her kind proposition to Ampère, the possibility of forming any alliance other than a closer one with De Tocqueville had never entered his mind, for he was still a stranger to the sentiment which was to determine all the rest of his life. M. de Tocqueville, on his part, earnestly hoped that the similarity of their tastes and pursuits would in the end fix at his side his erratic friend. Fate ordered

it otherwise. During his stay at Sorrento, in 1850, Ampère met a French family with whom he had some pleasant intercourse, that did not, however, at that time ripen into intimacy. Subsequently, the health of a beloved daughter<sup>1</sup> brought M. and Mme. de Chevreux back every winter to Italy, where they finally took up their abode permanently. Ampère, drawn to Rome by his historical and archæological studies, met them again in this his favorite city. Invincibly subjugated by a person of angelic nature, he attached himself to her devotedly, as was always his wont, and gave himself up wholly to her family,—sharing, first, their long, unceasing anxiety, then the anguish of their grief, and finally their worship of a sainted memory. Henceforward he divided his life very unequally between Rome, Tocqueville, and Paris, giving to the latter city the smallest possible share consistent with the fulfilment of his duties at the Collège de France. The distaste Ampère had for Paris was further increased by the memory of the many bereavements he had suffered there. Thus, during the year following his voyage to America, when he seemed to be recruiting his energies and recovering his former cheerfulness, he met again with two heavy blows. One was the death of Adrien de Jussieu, “my earliest and one of my best friends,” he wrote; the other that of Ozanam. In the bitterness of his grief he exclaimed, “One more void in my life, another great sorrow. We have need,

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<sup>1</sup> Mme. Guillemin. — TR.

indeed, of courage to struggle on when we see our loved ones falling around us. Truly it is not worth while to live."

No sooner, therefore, had he completed the twentieth year of his professorship, which entitled him, according to rule, to appoint his successor, than he gladly relinquished his chair to M. de Loménie, who had already shown himself so well calculated to fill it.

From Rome, Ampère wrote to the Duchess de Mouchy, February 14, 1855: —

"Imagine, madame, with what gratitude and emotion I received your precious parcel, and read over again that charming and noble production!<sup>1</sup> I have read the simple and touching lines with which you accompany it; and then the portrait and the view of dear and desolate Mouchy! I have recognized the window of that room where I was so kindly nursed in my illness. Many memories, both sweet and sad, came crowding upon me. Each line, each word struck me with new force. I seemed to hear, to see her who penned them. I thank you also for the article (on his "Promenade en Amérique") which you have sent me; while it is kindly as all the others which I have seen, it blames me for not being liberal enough. I think I never de-

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<sup>1</sup> "The Life of the Princess de Poix, *née* Beauvau," by the Viscountess de Noailles, a very delightful book, which gives a charming picture of the most refined society of the last century. The Duchess de Mouchy had a few copies of this book printed for private circulation after the death of her mother. It is a *chef-d'œuvre* of typography.

served the reproach so little, and there is some merit in it, as the opposite principle is certainly now triumphant; but I am too old and too obstinate to change.

“I have seen the Abbé Roux, and have enjoyed very much talking with him about his uncle; he intends to pass three years in Rome: I scarcely regard him as an object of pity: if I could transport hither certain persons that I know, I should regret Paris and its peace celebrations but little.

“Meantime, I am doing my best to get away, hunting up antiquities by day and writing by night. But I am not yet at the end of my task, and as the longer it is the longer I shall have to stay here, you will permit me to be of the opinion that there are too many *Roman* Emperors.

“Adieu, madame; many, very many affectionate respects. You know the friends to whom I should like to be remembered.”

In October of this year, the last of his professorship, Ampère was present at the marriage of his friend and successor, M. de Loménie, with the great-niece of Mme. Récamier. Writing from Rome, May 6, 1856, to his amiable and *spirituelle* correspondent, the Duchess de Mouchy, to whom he delighted to give an account of his labors, he says:—

“After having officiated as a witness on this to me very pleasant occasion, I took passage by the direct line of steamers which sail three times a week, and in a wonderfully short time found myself in Rome.

“I have been working for a year as I never worked before in my life, and shall have heaps of prose and verse to bring away with me.

“Madame, your mother, whom I love to talk of with you, of whom I so often think, and whose delightful book I have just read over again, was kind enough to think, and often told me, that I ought not to study quite so much what has been done by others, but devote myself somewhat more to original composition. So I have undertaken to produce something of my own; I have written a comedy, an historical play, and a novel. This is not bad for a beginning, and I look upon myself as a very promising youth of fifty-six.

“‘Dans ma tête un beau jour ce talent se trouva,  
Et j’avais cinquante ans quand cela m’arriva.’

“I can apply to myself these lines of ‘*La Métromanie*,’ and so make myself still younger. Roman history has suffered somewhat from these poetical and romantic infidelities; nevertheless, I do not mean to be divorced from her; and if for a time I have neglected her, and yielded to the fascinations of other loves, I have now repented of my errors and returned to my allegiance.”

At no time, indeed, had Ampère accomplished more work than during these last nine years of his life. Sustained and stimulated as it were by the devoted friendship which engrossed him wholly, no sooner had he seen his “*Promenade en Amérique*” through the press than he set to work with ardor to collect materials and

write his "Histoire Romaine à Rome." While engaged in making the extensive researches required for that work, he also composed a long poem on the life of Cæsar, another upon Alexander, and, finally, a third epic, of which St. Paul was the hero. All this did not prevent him paying a short visit to his friends in France; he passed a few days in Paris, whence he announced to M. de Tocqueville his intention to join him in Normandy. The latter replied, August 3, 1856:—

"DEAR FRIEND, — Your approaching arrival fills us with a joy too great for words. Do you know that it is almost a year since we have seen you? In truth, it is not well that you and I, who are advancing in life, should give one another so rarely the pleasure of each other's society. Your arrangement to stay three weeks adds much to our satisfaction, for we shall thus have you alone with us for more than a week. We feel extremely grateful to you for consenting to come and help us entertain our guests; but what we really enjoy when you are here is the coming together of three persons between whom there exists such entire freedom of intercourse, united to so mutual but unconstrained a desire to please. And so we look forward with especial pleasure to your long visit at the end of the autumn.

"My wife has taken particular pains to make your room more endurable; and while she has let it remain a *garret*, she has made it, I think, a warm and commodious garret. How I long to see you installed in it for a



long time! You say nothing of Cousin: he sent me word through Beaumont that he thought of coming to see me on his way to Broglie. Thereupon, in order to persuade him to come at the same time with you, I sent him a beautiful letter, to which he has not replied. Please let me know what he means to do.

“What you tell me of the sale of my book seems so fine and astonishing, that I can only think that you must have made a mistake in the number — 1,800 — of copies sold. Before giving myself up to the joy of so great a success, I must have your assurance that you heard and have remembered rightly, and that it is not 800 instead of 1,800. I still constantly receive letters of congratulation and sympathy. I should not be telling the truth if I did not own that the whole thing has given me great delight, and my wife still greater. The fact is, that if the book had fallen flat, it would, with my natural inclination to despondency, have had a very serious effect upon all the rest of my life. I had made an immense effort, and if it had been absolutely in vain, it would have been very difficult for me to begin any thing again. Now, on the contrary, I am eager to be at work once more, even though I foresee that in this part of my work I shall have far more difficulties of all kinds to overcome than I had in that just finished. I have notes, already a great many ideas, on this part of my work, which, as you know, is the one which first occurred to my mind. Notwithstanding my eagerness, I do not wish to begin again until a certain time has elapsed; it has always been my intention to wait until

you should be fairly settled here, for I depend upon the benefit of your advice, and the charm which even your presence throws over our whole life, for putting me into a favorable condition to labor. Until then I have a little leisure time on my hands, which I should like to devote to Buloz;<sup>1</sup> I promised him something long ago. But here again I have great need of your advice. I have written to Buloz that I should ask you to talk with him about a subject for me: do not leave Paris, I beg of you, until you have had this conversation; but, above all, give the matter some little thought yourself. I wrote to Buloz that the life of Stein (the celebrated enemy of the French at the close of the Empire), and that of Frederick Perthes, written by his son, might, perhaps, afford scope for an interesting article. They are both eminent men, each in his way; both lived in stirring times, and played a prominent part in them. There are, moreover, in the private lives of these men many features generally characteristic of Germany. I think they have these two books (they are very voluminous) either in the library of the Institute or in the National Library. You would oblige me very much if you would bring them with you, even if you have a better subject to propose to me, for the books are interesting in themselves, and, at all events, would serve to brush up my German.

“What you tell me of the Loménies’ friendship for us gives us pleasure; we cordially reciprocate it. I

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<sup>1</sup> Buloz was editor of the “*Revue des Deux Mondes*.”

cannot tell you how much we are interested in that young household. The friendship between you and them does not, you may be sure, lessen our regard. I have no time to say more on this subject, but only to embrace you."

The winter found the historian of Rome back again in Rome. The state of the dear invalid, the object of so much solicitude, was seemingly no worse; and in the spring following she was taken to Lake Como, where Ampère rejoined the Cheuvreux family. A letter addressed to Mme. de Mouchy from that place appears written with a much lighter heart than usual. It seems, as it were, to breathe of hope:—

"BORGOVICO, NEAR COMO,

"July 27, 1857.

"I might, and perhaps I should, madame *la duchesse*, fill a page or two with excuses for having so long neglected to write and thank you for the kind and entertaining letter which I received at Rome. But you would find it very tedious reading, and would be sorry that I had broken silence. So I will spare you the enumeration of the causes which led to that silence, — my work at Rome, then my removal hither, my indolence on the shores of this enchanted lake, you may ascribe it to what you will except to forgetfulness and ingratitude. So we have lost that kind and excellent M. Brifaut! although I had long apprehended it; this loss has been a painful one to me. You, too, must have mourned his death; his memory, which I shall ever

cherish, is for me linked with many recollections, and especially with days passed at Mouchy, when I had not yet recovered from my illness, and was the object of such affectionate and delicate care, and used to rebel against your mother when, for my good, she tried to keep me from eating, for her intellectual gifts never detracted from her goodness of heart or prevented her from attending to the smallest details. You are now, I suppose, at that same Mouchy, of which I so often think. You must suffer from the heat there, as we are suffering from it everywhere, and you have no lake to give you night breezes, — this lake whose natural curiosities only I explore, but upon whose happy shores all sorts of curious things are to be seen. Mme. S——off, who has just gone, sailed upon it every day in company with the same Austrian uniform, if not with the same officer. Mme. Pasta, who is much liked here, no longer girds on the sword of Tancred, but plies the spade in her garden at four in the morning, and has had a trap-door arranged in her bedroom through which she can see her rabbits. Mme. de V——, a fugitive from the villa Pliniana, has changed shores in changing friends.<sup>1</sup> The Prince of Belgiojoso is in his dotage. Mme. de Bocardmé, whose son has had a misfortune, has taken the strange notion of coming here to hide her grief close beside the châlet of Mme. Taglioni, in a house which she has had painted black. The Taglioni house is itself rather peculiar; but all this is on the right shore,

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<sup>1</sup> “Mme. de V——, fugitive de la Pliniana, a changé de rive en changeant d’ami.”

and I live on the left, where the company is more moral and more to my taste. In constantly scribbling, I try to forget the sorrows of my country, and not to think too much about those of the country I am in. We see by "Les Débats," whenever we are allowed to get it, that they are all still quarrelling about parties and religion, as though politics were not dead, and religion very sick. As for literature, I do not hear much about it: there is nothing thoroughly alive except *Mme. La Bourse*.<sup>1</sup> This does not make Paris very interesting, and you did not lose much, I think, in quitting it as you did last winter. I mean, however, to return; but at this season I should find nobody there, and shall remain for the present beside my lake, but on the *Left* bank. Should your generosity ever incline you to write to me, I shall be all the more grateful, because I confess I do not deserve it. But a letter from you, madame, would be a great kindness, and a great delight to the *émigré*. I should be glad to know how you do, and to have news of your son, of the Duke and Duchess de Noailles, of M. de Vêrac, and particularly of *Mme. Standish*. I would like also to be remembered to all the above-named persons, to whom I beg permission to express, through you, my respectful attachment."

The following letter from M. de Tocqueville will end the selections from Ampère's correspondence, — a correspondence that death, alas! was soon to interrupt, for it was not long before he was bereft of the Duchess

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<sup>1</sup> The Stock-Exchange.

de Mouchy and M. de Tocqueville, as well as other friends:—

“PARIS, April 11, 1858.

“I arrived here ten days ago, my dear friend, and I leave you to judge how often I have spoken of you to the large number of people who, in various degrees, have for you a regard you so well deserve. Of course they are sorry not to have seen you, but they can easily understand why you remain absent; and, above all, they hope not to be wholly deprived of the pleasure of seeing you in the course of the summer. You know that there are at least two persons in the world who are most warmly and sincerely devoted to you. I think I can answer for that in my wife’s name as well as my own, although she is not with me here; I have left her at Tocqueville for another fortnight, and you will forgive her for letting me come away without her, when you know what is keeping her there. She is having built under her own eyes that famous gallery in which we are to take our walks sheltered from the ‘down channel wind,’ as they say here; and at the same time is arranging some little papers.<sup>1</sup> Alas! when shall we see again those little papers of yours? I dare not flatter myself that it will be soon, nor, indeed, that

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<sup>1</sup> By these little papers is meant the series of satirical verses in which, during the continuance of the Empire and until his death, Ampère was in the habit of giving vent to his patriotic indignation and his hatred of the Bonapartes. He wrote them upon small loose sheets, and as he was very careless he often lost them out of his pockets.

when the time comes, it will be for long. At all events, I assure you that in the mean time your place will be kept warm for you. I found the Loménies well, and full of the warmest affection for you. I wish that our good Loménie might succeed in producing a new book which would draw attention to him. I think we should have no great difficulty in getting the doors of the Academy opened to him; great men are beginning to be terribly scarce; and among the men of talent there is no one who, by his life and character, better deserves to be chosen than he.

“I saw Lévy yesterday. The printing of your ‘Cæsar’ is getting on. More than two-thirds of my third edition are exhausted, and the book continues to sell well. This encourages me to go on with my work; and indeed I came here with no other purpose than to work. I perform my task conscientiously. I pass my time at the archives or in the libraries. But thus far the effort has been greater than the result. I brought quite a number of chapters with me from Tocqueville, but in such a rough-draught and sketchy state that it would be useless for me to read them to any one, even to you; they are too shapeless. I try to console myself for your absence by this reflection. I saw at the Loménies your portrait, a copy of which you intend for me: thank you for this remembrance. The portrait looks like you, but, like all your portraits, it gives the features but not the expression. I do not know whether, all things considered, the medallion which is at Tocqueville, in the billiard-room, is not the best

thing that has been done of you. No news to tell you that is not in the newspapers. It is hard to say what is passing in men's minds; the only thing we can see with any certainty is that there is a disposition to find fault, great embarrassment in industrial affairs, and, above all, a feeling of instability which appears strange in view of such apparent strength. It is my opinion, however, that nothing important of any sort is to be expected for some time to come. We can hardly quarrel with England, since we give up to her in every thing. I know from good authority that the newspapers have been warned to say no more about the island of Perim. I can understand that the English may sometimes think that there are some good things in our constitution after all. Adieu; I embrace you with all my heart."

In another letter of some weeks' earlier date, which also found Ampère in Italy, Tocqueville says to him:—

"Happy mortal that you are, to be able to produce, off-hand, works which first satisfy yourself and then delight the public! It is a real pleasure for me to see you at work, to watch that active and clear-sighted mind, prompt, and, at the same time, sure, turning from one subject to another, finding at once the right thing to say on each, and how to say it agreeably. As I read your letter, I fancied I could see you visiting your friends, looking for a lodging, beginning a chapter of the '*Histoire Romaine à Rome*' at a table in a *café*, and finishing it out on the Roman Campagna; in the



morning writing prose about the great rascals of antiquity, and in the afternoon poetry on the little rascals of our day."

At the close of the year 1858, Alexis de Tocqueville, warned too late of his danger by an attack of bleeding at the lungs, set out for the South of France, whither he should have gone to reside permanently years before. He passed the winter at Cannes, alternating between better and worse until every one but himself had given up all hope. Misled by the sick man's letters, Ampère shared his delusion to the last: he was, moreover, detained in Rome by other painful anxieties, to which I have already alluded; but in the spring of 1859 he resolved to go and pass a few weeks with his friend. Full of pleasant anticipations at the thought of again seeing De Tocqueville, he went to Provence as confidently as in former years he had gone to Tocqueville. The terrible news of the death of the man he was going to see met him at Marseilles, and he reached Cannes barely in time to be present at the funeral.

He had at least the consolation of bringing Mme. de Tocqueville back to Paris, and accompanying to Normandy the remains of his dear and deeply lamented Alexis. In the month of September following, he was called upon to bear another and, perhaps, a still more poignant grief,—a grief penetrating and profound, which riveted the chains that bound him to the desolate hearth-stone of his friends the Cheuvreux.

Not long after, as if to complete the list of blows

death was to inflict during that pitiless year, Charles Lenormant died at Athens, a victim to his ardor in the pursuit of knowledge, stricken down in the land he had loved so well, and where Ampère had been his sympathizing companion. Crushed and stunned as it were by all these successive catastrophes, Ampère, as he afterward declared, thought that his mind would give way. He recovered, nevertheless, from the shock: two things helped him to live on,—his love of work, and the sublime hopes of religion. He returned to France in company with the friends from whom he never again separated, passing the winters with them in Paris and the summers at the chateau de Stors, near Ile-Adam. He did not altogether abandon Rome; the historical labors which he bravely continued would have obliged him to return thither, even if his old love for that noble city had not made him wish to do so. But they were only visits of a few weeks at a time.

The son of an ardent Catholic, Ampère had from his childhood learned to respect the faith of his illustrious father; but, as with most men of the present century, his youth had been assailed by doubt; his soul no longer found repose in faith, still less could it reconcile itself to unbelief. His was the state of mind described by a great poet in immortal lines:—

. . . “Malgré moi l’infini me tourmente;  
 Je n’y saurais songer sans crainte et sans espoir,  
 Et quoi qu’on en ait dit, ma raison s’épouvante  
 De ne pas le comprendre et pourtant de le voir.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred de Musset, *L’Espoir en Dieu*.

This yearning after the infinite long tormented Ampère, and during the first part of his life he was a prey to the most painful spiritual anxieties. In a letter addressed to him at Bonn by Mme. Récamier, in reply to one wherein the young sceptic of twenty-five spoke of the impression made upon him by the German exegetical works, the reader may have noticed this passage: "Since you can no longer believe with the simple believe with the learned; thus by different ways we shall reach the same result." The mind of our friend drifted long amid the perplexities of doubt, but he ever sought the truth with ardor and good faith. The chosen confidants of these mental difficulties were Mme. Récamier and Ballanche; the faith of the latter in the supernatural was so firm that he was wont to say, "As for me, I am more sure of the other life than I am of this." One of Ampère's letters from Dieppe, in 1854, contains the following passage, which testifies to his strong aspirations after complete certitude:—

"I still pursue my readings, and continue to be in the same well-disposed frame of mind, but I have not at all times the same fervor. There are moments when what I thought I held fast seems to fly from me and hide itself. As Fénelon says: 'This is the greatest trial; this, too, we must endure, and turn constantly in the direction whence the light has shone so brightly, although for the moment it may be pale or even hidden. He who waits with faith and hope will see it shining again upon the hill.' The beacon which I see

to-night gleaming in the distance is also not a fixed light; by turns it shines and then seems to go out. But the mariner keeps his eye fixed upon the point where the light appears at intervals, and which at times an intervening wave conceals. The wave subsides, the light-house still stands; its light, an instant obscured, reappears, seemingly more brilliant than before, and reveals the harbor to the little bark bewildered amid the waves. I am the seaman in the little bark, and you are its patron saint."

In another letter of the same period, we read :—

"There is service in the church here every evening. I go and ensconce myself in a dark seat in the beautiful, dimly-lighted church; there I sit, I listen to the chants, with my head bowed in sincere humility I receive the benediction; then I go out and listen by the sea-shore to another harmony and another prayer,—the concert of the winds, the waves, the stars, the night."

Thus we see Ampère exclaiming, like the man in the Gospel: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Nothing so prepares the mind for the reception of religious faith as a great sorrow. More forcibly than the most eloquent pages of philosophers, the voices of the friends we mourn bring home to our souls the conviction that there is a God and a life beyond the grave. The death of M<sup>me</sup>. Récamier marked a great step in Ampère's religious progress; the loss of

the object of his latest affections, — of one who had captivated alike his imagination and his heart, — a still greater one. Ampère loved to confound in one regret the two memories. On the 1st of January, 1862, he wrote to one who had been the friend of his youth : —

“DEAR, VERY DEAR MME. LENORMANT, — I was going to write to you — for I was unwilling that the first day of the year should go by without communicating with you, sole relic of the friends of other days — when the letter came which you, moved by a feeling similar to my own, were happily impelled to write to me. It has touched, it has moved me ; I thank you from the bottom of my heart for having written it. Like you, I thank God for having given me what he has given me and for what he has taken away. I have known and loved very beautiful souls here below, — your adorable aunt and another person worthy to be named with her, who was as obscure as *she* was famous, but not unlike her ; also my dear Tocqueville, he, too, was kneaded of that finer clay, and cast in a mould which God apparently has seen fit to break.”

All who have known Ampère will bear witness that his ever-growing interest in the hopes and concerns of another life went hand-in-hand with his moral development. Little faults of temper disappeared ; his interest in others became more constant, more affectionate ; his generosity, always admirable, grew greater and greater, until he had no thought of himself. As flowers at the

coming on of night fill the air with a more pervading fragrance, a sweeter charm, so his fine nature toward the end of his earthly career poured forth its treasures in greater profusion.

For several years Ampère had suffered, if not from an affection of the throat, at least from an excessive delicacy of that organ, — and the craving he had to pass all his winters at the South was only the instinct of a constitution fatally susceptible to cold. He would not allow himself sufficient sleep, working usually until four and five o'clock in the morning, in spite of the urgent remonstrances of his friends. His mental vitality blinded himself and others to the rapid decline of his physical strength; nevertheless, we thought him very much changed when he started for Pau to join Monsieur and Madame Cheuvreux in December, 1863. But far from taking any rest, he continued with feverish activity the publication of his "Roman History," writing the last chapters of the fourth volume while correcting the proofs of the third; and it was only by dint of unexampled labor that he succeeded in completing this monument of his genius.

Early in March, 1864, believing himself in full health, and without any presentiment of his approaching end, he made his will, recommending himself, in terms wholly Christian and with a touching confidence, to the Divine mercy, and concluding with the following words addressed to the friends with whom he was living: —

"In conclusion, I bless them tenderly for their friend-

ship, which has been the charm and consolation of my life. I firmly trust that we shall meet again by the side of her whom we have all loved, and who gave us to one another."

Only a week after, a sudden death, which gave him no time even to say farewell, cast its pall over the last earthly aspirations of his spirit, and hid the secrets of that mercy to which no sincere suppliant has ever appealed in vain.

The friends to whom Ampère bequeathed his very small fortune, together with the copyright of his works, and the care of publishing them, have applied it to a purpose which reflects honor upon him as well as themselves. M. Cheuvreux has created a fund, the income of which, two thousand francs, is to be at the disposal for two years of any young artist, writer, or student of science, a native of Lyons, to whom it shall be awarded by the Academy of that city.

This prize bears the name of Ampère.

THE END.







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