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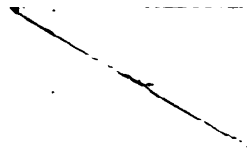


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1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for transparency and accountability, particularly in the context of public administration and financial management. The text notes that without reliable records, it is difficult to track the flow of funds and ensure that resources are being used effectively and efficiently.

2. The second part of the document addresses the challenges associated with data collection and analysis. It highlights that while modern technology offers powerful tools for gathering and processing information, the quality and consistency of the data can vary significantly. The document suggests that organizations should invest in training and infrastructure to ensure that data is collected in a standardized and reliable manner. Additionally, it stresses the importance of regular audits and quality control checks to identify and correct any errors or discrepancies in the data.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the role of leadership in driving organizational success. It argues that effective leaders are those who can inspire and motivate their teams, set clear goals, and provide the necessary support and resources for their employees to succeed. The text also discusses the importance of communication and collaboration, noting that these are key factors in building a strong, cohesive organization. Finally, it emphasizes the need for continuous learning and improvement, suggesting that organizations should regularly evaluate their performance and seek ways to enhance their operations and services.

LETTERS

CONTAINING

A SKETCH

OF THE

SCENES WHICH PASSED IN VARIOUS DE-
PARTMENTS OF FRANCE DURING THE
TYRANNY OF ROBESPIERRE,

AND

Of the Events which took place in Paris on the
28th of July 1794.

BY

HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR G. G. AND J. ROBINSON,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.



1795.

L E T T E R I.

Paris.

MY DEAR SIR,

MY pen, wearied of tracing successive pictures of human-crimes and human calamity, pursues its task with reluctance; while my heart springs forward to that fairer epocha which now beams upon the friends of liberty — that epocha when the French republic has cast aside her dismal shroud, stained with the blood of the patriot, and bathed with the tears of the mourner; and presents the blessed images of justice and humanity healing the deep wounds of her afflicted bosom: when the laws of mercy are but the echo

VOL. III.

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of

All those who tell us they were on the fatal list destined for the guillotine on the 13th of Thermidor, the day after Robespierre's execution, we must suppose that his appointed hecatomb for that day consisted, instead of his ordinary sacrifice, of half Paris at least. But after all the cruelties that have passed, how soothing is the moment when pity becomes the fashion, and when tyranny is so execrated that to have been its victim is glory! The tears of compassion now flow even for those objects whom once to commiserate was death. A republican may now, unsuspected of royalism, lament the fate of the innocent and interesting sufferer at the Temple; she, whose birth-day was a day of triumph, whose cradle was strewed with flowers, and who now, immured within a living tomb, remains the sole survivor of her unfortunate family. The prospect of her speedy release from

captivity

captivity gives perhaps as general pleasure at Paris as at Vienna. This sympathy is not confined to those persons who wish to replace her family upon the throne; for cruelty is no longer the order of the day, and the most determined lover of democracy may now, without offending against its laws, profess his pity for a blooming beauty confined in gloomy towers, although she happens to be a princess. That fair mourner, while she waits the hour of liberty and happiness, is no longer enclosed in dismal solitude within the walls of her apartment. For some weeks past she has spent as much of the day as she chooses in the gardens of the Temple, and her confinement has been cheered by the society of an amiable and accomplished lady, madame de Chatrenne, to whom she is much attached, and who cheats the hours of their length by teaching her Italian and drawing. She often

enquires after her unhappy family, of whose fate, except that of her father, she is altogether ignorant ; but every enquiry she makes concerning them, madame de Chatrenne is obliged to answer in conformity to the orders she has received from the committee of general safety, by telling her, " this is a secret of state." And surely it is merciful to conceal from her events which have passed, till she is placed in a situation where her tears will be wiped away with the tenderness of assiduous attention, and the sympathy of congenial sorrow.

Paris once more reassumes a gay aspect, the poor again have bread, and the rich again display the appendages of wealth. The processions of death which once darkened the streets, are now succeeded by carriages elegant in simplicity, though not decorated with the diazonry of arms, or the lace of liveries. The cheerfulness habitual to parisian physiog-

now, again lights up its reviving look; and the quick step, the joyous smile, the smart repartee, the airy gesture, have succeeded the dismal reserve, and the trembling circumspection which so ill suited the national character. With the careless simplicity of children who after the rigours of school hasten to their sports; the Parisians, shaking off the hideous remembrance of the past, fly to the scenes of pleasure.

The Tuilleries and the Champs-Elyées are again crowded with the sprightly circles seated on each side of their broad alleys, and beneath the shade of their majestic trees. At the period of great scarcity of bread, when crowds assembled every morning at the doors of the bakers shops, the people called it going *à la queue*. Those *queues*, or ranks, in search of bread have long since ceased, and are succeeded by *queues* in search of pleasure. There is a *queue* every even-

ing at every theatre ; and the late persecution of the roman catholic church having produced the usual effect of persecution, there is a *queue* at the churches every sunday to hear mass. For some time during the spring, there was a violent schism at Paris between those who chose to make a holiday of sunday, and those who observed the decadi as a festival. The town was nearly equally divided between what were called the *Dominicans*, and the *Decadists*. One half of the tradesmen shut up their shops, and one half of the mechanics refused to work on one day, the other half on the other. At length the matter has been compromised in the manner most agreeable to a people so fond of amusement as the Parisians, by making merry both on sunday and decadi. Each day is become a holiday, on which churches, theatres, and public gardens are alike crowded, and all the world appears satisfied.

The

The women indulge in their dress the full extent of female caprice, as well as extravagance. This day the peruke blonde* converts the dark-complexioned nymph into a fair beauty; tomorrow she reassumes her jetty locks, and thus varies her attractions.

“ How many pictures of one nymph we view,
 “ All how unlike each other, all how true !”

Some lances were shivered lately between the lovers of the Marseillois hymn, and the *amateurs* of the *reveil du peuple*; but hostilities have now ceased in the same manner as between Sunday and Decadi, by making it a rule to sing both.

In the mean time literature and the arts, covered with sack-cloth and ashes during the reign of our jacobin vandals, again revive, the national library offers every other day its treasures of literature to the public, and its long galleries and ample tables are filled with persons of

* A light-haired-periwig.

both sexes, who, amidst the silence which is there observed, enjoy the charms of meditation, or the pleasure of study.

The noble gallery of the national museum filled with the master-pieces of art, is crowded three times a decade with citizens of all classes, the poor as well as the rich; who cannot fail to humanize their souls, as well as improve their taste by such contemplation. The celebrated sculptured horses of Marly now decorate the entrance of the Champs-Elysées; the porticoes of the Louvre are filled with statues; the public walks are preserved with attentive care; and Paris, so lately besmeared with blood—Paris, the refuge of barbarism, and the den of carnage, once more excites the ideas of taste, elegance, refinement, and happiness.

But whither am I wandering? Before we reach those fair and cheerful regions, we must pass through the nethermost abyss

“ Of

"Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
 "Wide on the woe-ful deep; with him enthroned
 "Sat sable-vested Night, and by them stand
 "Orcus and Ales; and the dreaded name
 "Of Demogorgon; Rumour next, and Chance,
 "And Tumult and Confusion all embroiled,
 "And Discord with a thousand various mouths—
 "Alone, and without guide, half-lost, I seek
 the readiest path."

In the conclusion of my last letter I mentioned that plan of spreading devastation, through the wide territory of the Vendée, which had entered into the councils of the committee of public safety. The sad task remains of relating how successfully they accomplished their purpose. The character of the Vendean has been always represented as simple, humane and rustic; the dupe of the priest, and the slave of the noble. Had the convention, instead of sending the sword, sent peace; instead of bayonets and soldiers, had they dispatched apostles with missals of republicanisn,

there is little doubt but this numerous and valuable part of community would long since have formed an integral part of the republic. "These people," one of the mountain deputies, Dubois Crancé, observes, in speaking of the Vendéans, "are the most respectable I have ever known; they attend to justice and reason, when you speak to them with mildness and humanity." Chodieu, who was another of the jacobinical missionaries, tells us, that "nothing was wanting but to spread instruction through that country, to open the eyes of the people, and unmask and punish those who misled them." And Lequinio, who had so far destroyed his "prejudices" and his shame as to write a history to the convention of the massacres he was about to commit near Rochelle, and of his familiar revels with the executioner, informs us that had discreet and rational men been sent to preach the doctrines of liberty, to de-

velop the principles of moral and political philosophy, to invite the people to enquiry, to enlighten their minds and interest their feelings, that fanaticism which had hitherto kept them in ignorance would have disappeared, and the love of liberty would have taken place of their attachment to the debasing system under which they had lived.

The evidence of this man will not be suspected of partiality to that unhappy race, when we find him with all the frigid composure of a calculator reasoning hypothetically, that, if the population which remains amounted only to thirty or forty thousand souls—certainly the quickest way to finish the war would be to cut their throats. “So,” adds he, “I thought at first, but the population is immense, it amounts to four hundred thousand men,—If there be no hopes of success in any other mode, without doubt we must cut the throats of the whole,
did

did they amount to five hundred thousand men; I however am far from thinking it necessary—but—we must make no prisoners, and wherever we find men armed or unarmed, if there appear any hostile disposition, shoot them without any farther examination!”

When a man, who writes philosophical works to destroy prejudices *, tells us, that the best practical mode of destroying them is to destroy those who cherish them, he instructs us only in the art of the executioner. It is melancholy to see into what monsters men may be transformed by the possession of power; or the grovelling passion of fear. Lequinio weighs with calmness the advantage or disadvantage of butchering five hundred thousand men; and Garat and Lindet, men of temperate and philo-

* Lequinio is the author of a philosophical work intitled “Prejudices Destroyed.”

phical minds, become actors in the 31st of May.

It is pretended that the plan of the committee was in reality that of the general extermination of the inhabitants of the Vendée. Lequinio hints at this design several times, and often deliberates how far it would be advantageous in certain circumstances to continue the system of destruction; and a writer whom I have already mentioned, Vilate, a confidant of Barrere, Robespierre, St. Just, and other conspirators, tells us, that it was a serious object of discussion with these great legislators, how to diminish the population of France in the shortest given time. Rousseau asserts, that it is the perfection of a state, when every citizen has enough, and no one too much; and the provident policy of these reformers, it seems, amounted to this conclusion, "that as in the present state of property, which was but in few hands, the
majority

majority could be in possession but of a little, and where this inequality of fortune existed, there could be no equality of rights, the only way of destroying this inequality was to let the government seize on the whole; that in order to execute this plan all the great capitalists must be sacrificed, that the rest might be induced to yield up their possessions more readily; that a certain depopulation became also necessary, in order that France might furnish from its own produce enough to feed its inhabitants; and that even after the extirpation of the people of fortune, those incumbrances of the soil, if the population should still exceed the produce, means must be found, to use Barrere's words, "to sweep away the rubbish," so that a certain number only should remain. In the mean time the conventional arms were every where unsuccessful. This ill success was probably at first, as I have already mentioned,

a part

a part of the plan of the committee of public safety, in order to complete the ruin of the party of the Gironde, and those who were eye witnesses of the events that took place furnish us with additional causes that finish the discovery of all those mysteries of which Philippeaux complains.

“ The generals of this army,” says Lequinio, a man not at all to be suspected of affection to the cause of the royalists from what has just been said, “ have from the beginning made this war an object of speculation and particular interest.” Their immense pay and funds for extraordinary expences, their calculations on the produce of pillage, the licence they gave the soldiers to excuse their own rapacity, increased the love of plunder, and destroyed all discipline. This habit of pillage not only introduced disorder into the army, but prompted to the commission of every other crime.

“ The

"The most shocking barbarities," says Lequinio, "presented themselves at every corner. We have seen republican soldiers shoot or stab rebel women in the public roads. We have seen others carrying infants torn from the breast, on the ends of their bayonets, or the pikes that had pierced with the same blow the child and the mother.

"All these horrors," adds Lequinio, "have sharpened resentment, and increased the number of the malcontents; who were compelled to acknowledge that our troops often displayed less virtue than the rebels, of whom some, it is true, committed massacres; but the chiefs had always the policy to preach virtue, and to affect a sort of indulgence and generosity towards our prisoners." His colleague Chodieu declares also, "however gross and superstitious our governors have been pleased to paint our brethren, we might have easily succeeded in bringing

ing them within the pale of liberty." The Vendéans, it is certain, spared nothing to draw over the republicans to their side, and sent them back on their simple parole not to bear arms against the king or religion. The convention answered this humane policy by their proclamation to rob and massacre; and all who came in the way of their troops were robbed and massacred.

Municipalities, with their civil officers in republican costume, and who were received with all the appearances of fraternity, have been murdered the hour after. Cavaliers armed and equipped, who had travelled many miles to surrender themselves, had been shot without mercy. That such a conduct should increase the armies of the royalists was natural; and however well inclined a part of the inhabitants might have been to republican principles, driven to despair by the atrocious and barbarous policy of the convention,

vention, they were compelled to take an active part with the royalists.

In order to exterminate the inhabitants of the Vendée, it was necessary to destroy their abodes. Towns and villages were delivered to the flames; the peopled streets and the insulated cottages were doomed alike to devastation; and so great was the fury of those messengers of destruction, which Lequinio calls "*les égarements des patriotes,*" that they destroyed immense quantities of corn and forage, not only driving the inhabitants to the necessity of increasing the royalist army from want, but depriving themselves of those resources which were necessary to their own existence.

These are not the tales of the cruelties of Roman emperors and tyrants in the history of martyrs. They are horrors which have passed at our very doors, and of which we daily saw the witnesses and sufferers; and some of the great ac-

tors

wars in those scenes of ruin and desolation, till their crimes were expiated by their punishment after the events of the first of Prairial, continued to live amongst us; they paraded our streets, they sat in our assemblies, they raised their audacious fronts in the legislature.

It was not only to the savage soldier that the execution of this plan of extermination was committed: the convention entrusted to its own members the superintendence of this devastating system. We have seen the fidelity with which it was executed by Collot d'Herbois at Lyons. The Vendée was not yet sufficiently punished, and Carrier was sent thither—Carrier! “at the name of Carrier,” says the eloquent reporter of the Robespierrian correspondence, “the smoking chart of the Vendée unrolls itself beneath our eyes. Thousands of salamanders from amidst the furnaces of the Vendée feed the fire which consumes
the

the republic. You hear the crackling of the flame which devours both manufactures and hamlets, cities and men; the ruins of castles mingle with the wrecks of cottages; melancholy and deplorable equality, which exists only in desolation! I see by the glare of the blaze, those who have kindled it, darting across the burning beams of falling houses, like birds of prey, on the treasures they contain. Even the asylum of patriotism is not respected; the enemies taken with arms in their hands, and those who lay them down, are precipitated into the same gulph; the common foe; and the friend who leads our soldiers to victory, who procures them by sure indications the means of necessary subsistence, perish alike; and the same respect is paid to the patriot and the rebel."

If we cannot hear the name of Carrier without the strongest sensations of horror, will not our judgment look somewhat further

further than this ferocious instrument of guilt? The *whole* of the committee of public safety were his direct accomplices, and who will absolve the convention? Carrier's instructions arrive. "We have received your letter," say the committee, "which gives us true satisfaction. We conjure thee to go to Nantes immediately. We send thee a decree which charges thee to purge that city. It must be emptied without delay. Liberty never trifles. We can be humane when we are conquerors." What services Carrier had already rendered to the committee, does not appear; but they found in him, no doubt, a mind sufficiently capacious for wickedness to serve their purposes.

Carrier arrived at Nantes the 9th of October. The prologue to the tragedy had already been delivered. Gentin, the secretary of the national commission, had already written to the intrepid mountaineers

↙ **tainers forming the committee of inspection at Nantes: "Republican brethren, the representatives send me the inclosed pieces, which I hasten to convey to you. Examine, and strike hard and quick, like true revolutionists, otherwise I shall not be pleased. You want arms, you told me yesterday, to execute your orders; speak, ask, and you shall have every thing—military force, commissaries, couriers, clerks, and spies, if it be necessary. Speak one word, one word only, and I will engage that you shall be furnished instantly. Adieu all. I love you all. I shall always love you, because your principles are mine. Think of a vessel or houses proper to form a prison; secure depositories, &c. &c."**

Such are the first instructions for Nantes. Without its walls murder had already begun its work; the peaceable inhabitants of a village near Clifin, with the instruments of husbandry in their hands,

hands, were massacred by Lufignan, a general of brigade, with other peasants who had been employed for some weeks in supplying Nantes with provisions. In the adjoining communes, near a thousand men and women had been shot without examination, and without trial; and of these massacres two commissaries only had been the superintendants and directors. Carrier remained but a day or two at Nantes. He nevertheless staid long enough to open his commission, which consisted in the most atrocious invectives and execrations against the inhabitants, and particularly against the tradesmen and merchants; declaring that, if he did not receive lists of charges against the latter, he would in a short time arrest the whole, and then shoot and guillotine one person in ten. After having made them this paternal visit, and given his instructions, he took his leave

for a few days to go and electrify the city of Rennes.

It was at this period that the committee of public safety, through the organ of Barrere, published the happy accomplishment of their prophetic decree, that the " Vendée existed no longer." At Paris, as no one dared to doubt of the infallibility of the committee, or suspect its veracity, we imagined that the royalists had been completely crushed, because the committee informed the convention that the Vendée existed no more. We learned, however, very soon, what this annihilation of the Vendée meant. It was not altogether one of those agreeable figures of rhetoric with which Barrere was wont to harangue the convention, since there was some truth in the declaration, which we did not discover at the first glance: for the great army of the royalists had indeed evacuated

ated the feat of the war in the Vendée, if that could be called an evacuation which was a triumphal march across the Loire. This passage was accomplished without any loss, and the royalist army remained on the northern side without molestation for three days ; after which they began their march towards the sea-coasts, across the departments which form the eastern part of the province of Brittany.

It might have been expected that their passage would have been opposed, or their march harassed : and that this did not happen was another of Philippeaux's mysteries ; but the royalists were suffered to take uninterrupted possession of the country as far as Laval, having surrounded four thousand men who were sent in pursuit of them, and whom they cut in pieces ; the sans-culotte general Oignier, who was ordered to march against the royalists, and protect the pa-

tricts, having thought it more prudent to keep at ten leagues distance.

From Laval they marched to Vitri, a place which was represented as a most advantageous and formidable pass, of which also they took possession, as the conventional generalissimo had effected its evacuation, though he had every means of resistance, and might have stopped the march of the enemy, since the place was fortified, had a garrison of four thousand men, and was provisioned for more than a month. This place, which the inhabitants, after the departure of the garrison, would have defended, if they had not been forbidden, was taken; and the royalists, after defeating some other corps which were sent successively against them, marched on without further resistance to the coasts through Avranches to Grandville.

Grandville is a sea-port town on that
part

part of the coast which fronts the islands of Jersey and Guernsey, stretching north and south, and forming a right angle with the coast that goes towards St. Maloes and Brest, of which the famous mountain of St. Michel is the point. It is the only port on that coast; and the possession of it would have given the royalists the advantage of immediate communication with their allies, the emigrants and the English, and the means of securing the most effective succour.

As they had passed through a large tract of country with so little interruption, they did not expect much resistance where the means of making it were so few; and therefore concluded they could repulse the garrison of Grandville which had marched out to meet them, and make themselves masters of that important place as easily as they had gained the rest. They took possession of the suburbs; but when they prepared to scale

the walls, they found a resistance which they had little expected. The first hero that fell was the mayor in the habit of his office, who had taken the command of the principal post. The royalist artillery made great ravages, and the houses in the suburbs afforded the assailants considerable shelter. The besieged set fire to these houses, and the attack became still more desperate; the royalists were often driven down the ramparts, and the rocks that overhung the town streamed with blood.

This battle lasted near thirty hours; and I have been told by one of my acquaintance who fought on the republican side, that the spectacle was truly sublime. Not only every man, but every woman and every child, was that day a warrior: the artillery was served by the children, who, forming chains from the arsenal to the ramparts, conveyed the ammunition, while the women were

em-

employed in assisting their husbands, brothers, and fathers, and preventing the flames of the houses in the suburbs from communicating to those in the town.

The royalists were at length repulsed with great loss by this handful of republicans, and all the important advantages which they reasonably expected from this expedition failed. They were forced to retreat back to the Loire, and in this retreat they might have been completely cut off: but the cowardly and debasing genius of sans-culottism again presided; for Rossignol kept at seven leagues distance with his army at the moment of the perilous passage at Dol; and when the royalists had effected it, he brought up his troops, who were completely routed, and driven back to Rennes.

The royalist army in their retreat laid siege to Angers, which was defended

bravely by the garrison, and the inhabitants, in the absence of Roffignol. At Meaux, the royalists were defeated with great loss by Westerman. Having divided themselves into two columns, they attempted to pass the Loire at Chateaubriant and Ancenis; but their good fortune fled when the sans-culotte general had ceased to command. At Ancenis they were again routed with great slaughter, and the passage of the Loire was effected with a very considerable loss.

The republicans were thus delivered from an apprehension of seeing the royalists at Paris, which, from the treason or ignorance of the generals, they had at one moment fully expected. While Westerman was pursuing the advantages he had gained on the north side of the Loire, the army in the west defeated the royalists at Sallais, near Chollet; where the heroic Barra, a youth of thirteen years
of

of age, was killed. The island of Noirmoutier, the key of the insurgent departments on the side of the sea, which had served not only as a depôt, but also as the place of retreat for those who, though attached to the cause of royalty, did not like to share its dangers, was attacked ; and after a severe conflict, in which the conventional troops had to contend with the waves as well as the fire of the enemy, the town was taken, and great quantities of stores fell into their hands.

After the capture of the island, the generals and representatives, Bourbotte and Turreau, ordered it to be surrounded ; and a strict examination brought forth a great number of priests and other royalists, men and women, chiefly of high rank—the essence, as they were called, of the catholic army, who had hid themselves in the woods and the rocks from the fury of the conventional soldiers. These

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unhappy fugitives were dragged to the tree of liberty, with general Delbec at their head, where in presence of the army they were coolly murdered.

LET.

L E T T E R II.

THE inhabitants of Nantes had not long to meditate on the horrors which were approaching, for Carrier returns.

The convention had already decreed, that every city which either gave protection to the rebels, or did not repel them with all the means in its power, should be razed to the ground, and the property of its inhabitants be confiscated to the profit of the republic. To exterminate "the royalists of the Vendée" it was necessary to conquer them; but here the peaceable inhabitants of cities were to be destroyed, and the evidence of the crime was only to be found in the conscience of the executioner. Nantes, seated on the Loire, which empties itself into the sea some leagues beyond it, was one of

the most considerable and most commercial cities in France. Its inhabitants were rich, and, what is not always the concomitant of riches, were distinguished for their disinterestedness and patriotism. They had beheld with the same horror as every other friend to liberty the success of the conspirators of the 31st of May, and the tyrants had marked their persons for vengeance, and their immense property for pillage.

A revolutionary committee was first appointed to examine into this "aristocracy of commerce and wealth;" and this committee, as might have been expected, was composed of those whose characters stood highest, in the estimation of the representatives, for cruelty or wickedness. To give this committee its proper energy, a company of revolutionary soldiers was formed, who were to be the sbirri of the committee, and whose occupation was sufficiently marked by the name they assumed,

fumed, which was that of the company of Marat. Thus armed with the decrees of the convention, and having troops of murderers of various denominations at his command, in revolutionary committees, popular societies, administrative bodies, and Maratist soldiers, Carrier began his operations in Nantes on the priests who were condemned to banishment. Those men were waiting to undergo the punishment to which the law condemned them, for obstinate perseverance in honest ignorance ; a punishment which it is asserted the circumstances of the times required. As the law was pronounced, it does not appear that the convention had authorised Carrier to change the sentence. This, however, he undertook ; the priests were put on board a lighter which had a sous-pape, or false bottom, and then conducted into the middle of the Loire ; where, except two who escaped by swimming, they were all drowned.

drowned. Carrier wrote an account of this expedition to the convention, and, with a kind of self-complacent exultation, claimed merit for the novelty and effect of the measure.—“*Quel torrent révolutionnaire que la Loire !**” The convention applauded the idea, and ordered Carrier’s dispatches to be inserted in their gazette, the bulletin.

The committee of public safety, though it might think the drowning of refractory priests a pleasant thing, were not perhaps aware that Carrier would take advantage of their good humour. Unfortunately for the inhabitants of Nantes, Carrier misconstrued their approbation as an invitation to proceed in his career; and having, with his sword drawn, at the tribune harangued the jacobins of Nantes on their duties, explaining and enforcing the instructions

* What a revolutionary torrent is the Loire !

he had himself received, in order to inflame them with the same revolutionary zeal, he began to extend his plan of operations. The revolutionary committee had determined that a great conspiracy existed in Nantes, and that the rich, who were aristocrates *par privilege*, were the conspirators. They ordered accordingly all persons suspected of having been concerned in this conspiracy to be arrested, and to be sent to Paris to be tried ; decreeing, that whoever resisted should be shot, whoever fled should be declared an emigrant, and ordering all those whose names were published to surrender themselves in three days ; forbidding every one, wives, sisters, or daughters, under severe penalties, to solicit their release. Three hundred and thirty-two persons were arrested on this pretence. About one hundred of them we saw brought to Paris in waggons; bound like felons, for the rest had perished from the
excessive

excessive cruelties which they had undergone ; and we were made to believe that these men, who were distinguished in Nantes for their probity and patriotism, were rebels of the Vendée whom the representative had sent up to treat the Parisians with a *spectacle*, knowing their present taste for bloody fights ; and it was expected that they would have been shot in the plain of Sablons, under the direction of Collot ; but this never took place.

In the mean while Carrier swelled the *revolutionary* torrent at Nantes with other noyades, of which it appears that there were twenty-three expeditions. These noyades, or drowning scenes, were at first shrouded in the darkness of night ; but familiarity with crimes having worn off all shame, they were afterwards executed in open day. There was also some appearance of regard for the sufferings of these unhappy victims in the beginning,
since

since they were left ignorant of the fate that awaited them till the moment of execution ; believing that they were only going to be transferred to Belle-Isle, an island at the mouth of the river. There was something like mercy also in the construction of the drowning-boats, since the drawing of a bar of iron ingulphed the victims in an instant ; and Carrier, in his first dispatches to the convention, had the modesty as well as the ingenuity of his prototype Anicetus, who, history says, proposed this mode to Nero, and furnished him with excuses for drowning his mother *. But the

* The freedman Anicetus furnished an expedient. He proposed to construct a vessel, which when at sea should suddenly open in the middle, by which means Agrippina would instantly perish. That a number of accidents happened at sea ; and that if Agrippina lost her life in a shipwreck, who would be so malicious as to call that a crime which was the fault of the winds and waves ?—See *Morceaux Choisis de Tacite*, par M. d'Alembert.

crimes

crimes of these monsters being at length naturalized into manners, they grew weary of common murders, and invented new modes of destruction. Other vessels were fitted up for the reception of prisoners, which had various conveniences, among others a *salle à manger* (a dining-room), where Carrier and his committee sometimes feasted. In these vessels the prisoners were confined till a noyade was to take place. At one time eight hundred persons of both sexes, and of different ages, from fifteen to fourscore, were precipitated into the river. Where the love of life discovered itself in these unfortunate victims by clinging to the barges, when in the struggle their hands became untied, the murderers amused themselves with cutting them with their sabres, or knocking them on the head with their poles. Some of those victims were destined to die a thousand deaths; innocent young women were unclothed
in

in the presence of the monsters; and, to add a deeper horror to this infernal act of cruelty, were tied to young men, and both were cut down with sabres, or thrown into the river; and this kind of murder was called a republican marriage.

These noyades, where simple drowning was the only suffering, might be considered as happy deliverances compared with the sufferings of those that remained in prison. The wretched prisoners were heaped on each other in such numbers, that the air became absolutely pestilential, and the keepers were employed continually in removing the dead.

Delicate women, the wives and daughters of those who were made prisoners in the royalist army, exposed to the inclemency of the winter in the damp of a dungeon, crowded together upon their straw in order to shelter themselves from the cold; and many a heart-breaking family scene presented itself to those
whose

whose humanity led them to take away the children of royalists under thirteen years of age, which the law permitted. A mother with four daughters, of which one was under fourteen, formed one of these groups. A citizen of Nantes went into the dungeon to see if there was any object on which he might exercise his charity. He took up this young girl, crawling for weakness at her mother's feet, with the intention of conveying her home; while her sisters, being a few years older, were doomed to perish. But to perish together now seemed their only consolation; they refused to part; and some degree of violence was used to force away the child, who soon after the murder of her family died of a broken heart.

But noyades were not the only mode of murder: the fusillades were introduced at Nantes as they had been practised at Lyons. Men, women in a state of pregnancy, boys and girls were killed with
the

the bayonet, or shot without discrimination, and without the formality of a sentence; and the executions were so multiplied, that the national guard were employed for six weeks in burying the persons whom they had massacred: Among the multitudes destined to die, some have as it were returned to life, and given us their history; a few escaped by swimming; others recovered after having been shot. A young married woman of rank, who was put into a fusillade with her husband, although she received three balls in her body, was found alive the next morning by those who came to throw the dead into the pits. She had sufficient strength to implore their mercy, and they had the humanity to refer her case to the commissary. The commissary at first ordered the sentence to be again put into execution: but falling at his feet she represented the injustice and cruelty of making her undergo a second death, and

and that the unskilfulness or negligence of the executioners ought not to subject her again to punishment. The commissary was softened, and consented that her life should be spared, provided she would become a sick nurse in the hospitals, where the person who related the anecdote to me saw her employed.

Some slight forms were observed in the execution of the decrees of the convention in the beginning of these massacres, and the ferocity of Carrier was sometimes checked by the representations of the constituted authorities, and sometimes arrested by the opposition of the judges. Carrier had named two wretches to the office of head executioners, who had *general* orders for drowning whenever they had leisure. The public accuser, who, though a timid old man, had opposed a second general noyade which these ruffians were about to make, was sent for by Carrier, who said to him,

“ It is you then, you old wretch, who take upon you to oppose my orders ! Take notice, that if the prisons be not emptied in two hours, I will guillotine you and the whole commission.” The poor old man was affrighted, fell sick instantly, and died imprecating curses on Carrier.

After this lesson to the judges, no one thought of resisting Carrier’s revolutionary impulse. The royalists who were made prisoners, and those who laid down their arms, came into Nantes and met with the same fate. Pregnant women, who were under the protection of a special decree, were murdered, and more than six hundred children, formally excepted by the law as being under the age of fifteen, were drowned, notwithstanding the observation hazarded by the president of the tribunal, who was answered by the monster, “ All, all without exception ;

ception ; there can be no difficulty in the case."

Even these are but slight offences compared to certain atrocities that are alleged against him ; the tyrants of antiquity are "quite shorn of their beams ;" Caligula, Nero, and all that antient history records of strange murders, is obscured in our remembrance by the cruelty of Carrier. Former tyrants and assassins when compared to him appear but *modérés* ; and Caligula's famous exclamation respecting the people of Rome is lost in the affliction of Carrier, when he regretted to his colleague Laingelot, who passed through Nantes in his way to Brest, the limits by which he was confined in the execution of national justice, having only the Loire for the extent of his operations : " Oh, what a happy fellow will you be," he adds, " happier far than I am ! You will have the *sea* for your expeditions,

expeditions, and a fleet of *ships* at your command !”

This revolutionary, or rather counter-revolutionary, impulse was not confined to Nantes. The country around was subjected to the same horrors. Whole communes were extirpated ; and the peaceable inhabitants of different places, whom the murderers had assembled together, and who had never taken arms or given encouragement to the rebels, were massacred without distinction ; women and children, magistrates dressed in their scarfs, going out to meet and welcome the conventional troops ; thousands of citizens under arrest, insurgents who had surrendered themselves, peasants working in the fields, all fell alike the victims of this desolating fury.

The scent of blood was become so instinctive with those revolutionary missionaries in the Vendée, that though none of them could raise themselves to

Carrier's sublimity of wickedness, there were many who, according to his own declaration*, practised very successfully as *amateurs*.

Of the various calamities inflicted on this unhappy country, my imagination, melancholy as it is, could never furnish me with images strong enough to paint the horror, nor can any beneficial effect be produced on the mind by dwelling on evils so terrible ; since I believe that the heart grows hard, that the feelings become deadened, by the long contemplation of so wide a waste of ruin. As the wretch who is stretched under the hands of torturing executioners is said to feel pain but to a certain point, except

* “ Vous voyez,” dit Carrier, “ que cette déclaration ne s'applique pas à moi, mais à tous les représentans du peuple dans la Vendée.”

“ You see,” says Carrier, “ that this declaration is applicable not to me, but to all the representatives of the people in the Vendée.”

when

when some life-string, that has submitted only to the general compression, becomes more poignantly affected by some partial application ; so we hear of *noyades*, *fusillades*, *mitrillades*, and *guillotinades*, with the dullness of settled sorrow, unless when roused to exertion at some tale of particular and atrocious horror.

But when the historian, whose faithful pencil must trace the hideous features of this Vendean war in all their deformity, shall describe scenes which I dare not name, let no one, because he may consider such crimes as scarcely within the verge of human possibility, doubt that they have been committed ; since the events of the last five years, which have sometimes led us into regions of hitherto undiscovered beauty and sublimity, have also dragged our reluctant steps into dens of undescribed and unknown monsters, whose existence we had never till now believed.

L E T T E R III.

THE committee of public safety, having secured its permanence in the dictatorship through the complaisance of the convention, which with loud and lively applauses renewed its powers, for the sake of form, at the end of each month as they expired, grew bolder in its projects, and, not satisfied with revolutionizing the republic after their own manner, asserted that their neighbours ought also to be made happy by tasting the *sweets* of the same *inestimable* liberty. It had generally been understood, that the present war was the war only of the English minister; and that the people of England, though well wishers to the cause of freedom, were not sufficiently powerful to counteract the designs of the administration.

As

As long as this opinion of the apathy of the English prevailed, we had lived in tolerable security; for it was difficult to persuade the French, notwithstanding the experience they had of the late war, that a free people would twice waste its treasure and its strength, in so short a period, against nations struggling into freedom. The treason of Toulon, however, awakened the French from their dream of the *bonhomie* of the British nation towards them; and nothing was now talked of but the cowardly and ferocious English, and marching to Carthage.

In this language more was meant than was obvious to a common observer; for it was the business of the committee of government to work up the people to a strong degree of national hatred, in order to carry into effect a plan of invasion which they were meditating, although its impracticability had been demonstrated by those with whom they advised, and who

were more conversant on the subject than themselves; and at length they received the fullest and most satisfactory evidence that the English were not at all inclined to make the experiment to which they were invited. In the mean time the crimes of the English government were the standing order of the day at the jacobins; and had it not been for the spur given to malignity by these declamatory harangues, nothing could have been more amusing than their style.

One of the most distinguished of these performers in politics was the tragedian of Lyons. "We are now entering," says Collot, "into the conscience of Pitt, into that volcano which vomits forth every crime. We have traversed this mortiferous and pestilential lava; let us now march up to the crater, I mean the English government. If this government was not inherently bad, Pitt could not have found the means
of

of being so abominable. I would not put this government into competition with that of France. This would be comparing the excess of every vice, with the assemblage of every virtue; a government," adds this orator, just returned from Lyons reeking with the blood of thousands of innocent victims, "such as Heaven ought to have given to all nature; while the other is vicious, wanting all the virtues which we esteem, and filled with every thing that is held in abhorrence amongst us."

Although Robespierre had for certain reasons thrown off his pack, the jacobins, in pursuit of the crimes of the English government, he did not permit any of them without chastisement to follow too close. One orator proposed sending instantly a hundred cannon to establish liberty on the banks of the Thames; and, as a preparatory step, to put to death all

the remains of the Brissotine faction, and all the *toads of the marsh* who were endeavouring to creep up the *mountain*. Such were the denominations of the seventy-three imprisoned deputies, and those of the republicans who still remained in the convention. As Robespierre had not been consulted, there was an audacity in the proposition which provoked his warmest indignation. He admitted that the proposition was extraordinarily popular, and revolutionary to the twentieth degree; but, as a punishment for its rashness, he condemned the speaker to an exclusion from the society; as well as another member who took up his defence, and talked of the despotism of opinion. Robespierre immediately marked him on the spot with the seal of reprobation, by declaring, as a proof of the culprit's criminality, that, when a jurymen of the revolutionary tribunal, he had given

given his verdict in favour of Miranda, who was known to be the great and firm support of the Briffotine faction.

The jacobins were astonished that so well-informed a nation as the English should be reduced to so pitiable a condition as that of being ruled by monsters and volcanos; and this wonder grew till Robespierre, who had hitherto kept silence except when a member became ultra-revolutionary, told them they were all in the wrong. “It is to no purpose,” says he, “to talk to the English about their government, or attempt to make them better; for you are all very much deceived if you think that either the morals or understanding of the English nation are at all to be compared with the French. They are two hundred years behind you, and hate you with a very constant and perfect hatred. If therefore you wish to inform them, you must accommodate yourselves to their

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their incapacity, and adapt your language to their comprehension *."

Robespierre put an end to this jacobinical discussion, so kindly meant for the information of their unhappy neighbours,
upon

- * It appears that Voltaire was of a different opinion from Robespierre. "The Italians," says he, "till the time of Muratori, have never been thinkers; the French have thought only by halves; but the English, because their wings have never been clipped, have flown to heaven and become the preceptors of the world, &c."

Had Voltaire lived at this period, and escaped the guillotine, he would perhaps have applied to Robespierre the observation he made on Marat, who had just then written a great book in order to demolish the Newtonian philosophy, and make a revolution in all sciences, particularly the science of anatomy; "that he was more fitted to calumniate mankind, than to analyse them."

It is not in the heat of revolutions that the true characters of their actors can be appreciated, and perhaps calumny never sported with reputations more strangely than during the political conflicts which have happened in France. *Robespierre* and *patriotism*
have

upon seeing new dangers pressing round him which it was necessary for him to make the order of the day. He had arrived

have been synonymous terms ; Marat lost his own name in that of *the friend of the people* ; and the new term for robbery and pilfering was *brissot-er*. Of the extent of Robespierre's patriotism the evidence has been written in the blood of the innumerable victims of his tyranny. Marat is now considered as a mischievous madman ; but his character has never been well analysed, except in a sketch which Brissot has drawn of him in a work written during his last captivity, which I have read in manuscript, and from which I shall transcribe the portrait of Marat. See Appendix, No. II. I take this opportunity of mentioning that this posthumous work of Brissot, which will soon be published for the benefit of his amiable widow and her children, is written with the most affecting simplicity, candour, and truth. It is the history of an honest man, who was devoted to liberty from his earliest years, and whose life was one continued struggle in its cause.

It appears from this work, that Brissot had been from his youth a republican in his political principles, and a sceptic in religion. He was one of

arrived to such a point of despotism in the society, that those who had any courage were disposed to revolt, and those who were cowards were in a constant

the subverters of the French monarchy; but with the same firmness with which he had rejected the millions offered to him by the court, he refused to participate in the crimes which stained the republic, and preferred being their victim. His sceptical errors in religion he shared in common with all men of letters in France; who universally consider infidelity as inseparably connected with philosophy, and whose ignorance in matters of religion is only equalled by their arrogance in rejecting what they have not examined. Brissot's Memoirs are replete with anecdotes of celebrated characters, both in France and England: they are written in the manner of Rousseau's Confessions: the writer develops himself to the world, and takes the same liberty with his acquaintance.

The French republic has already reinstated the memory of Brissot. Already his name is pronounced with reverence, as one of the founders of that republic, as the benefactor and the martyr of his country.

state

state of terror. He had fashioned the society to his own purposes by an *epuration*, in which all those who were not deemed to have opinions conformable to his own, or energy sufficient to execute great designs, were excluded. But it was not without murmur that he was suffered to bear his faculties so imperiously : there were some who looked back to their high estate with shame, that so contemptible a tyrant should have outrun their popularity.

Among the follies of the day were the reports of Barrere ; who, as he was professedly the lacquey of the tyrants, was appointed to be their trumpeter at the tribune. His reports were so extravagant, and so full of falsehood, that they at length became proverbial ; and when we meant to express our disapprobation of any thing at once silly and atrocious, we were accustomed to observe that it was a

carmagnol* à la Barrere. "For a free people to have peace," says he, "the only way is to exterminate all despots. The French republic can only secure peace by dictating that peace to the world; then it will be lasting. Let us take a view of the forces in array against us—Look at them—there are the English—the Irish—the Scotch—the Hanoverians" (He might have added the Shetlanders, and the people of the Isle of Man)—"Austrians, Bohemians, Hungarians, Flemish"—(He might have enumerated the people of the Black Forest, and the prince of Furstenburg)—"Neapolitans, Piedmontese, Italians, and Papists, &c." In this mode of enumerating, Barrere might have counted enemies

"Thick as the leaves that strew the brooks

"In Vall' Ombrosa:"

* The epithet which, in contemptuous pleasantry, he himself bestowed upon his reports.

and

and a plain man, who had no great skill in those matters, would have fallen into the same error as the host, who being called up on a dark night by a Spanish traveller, and informed that don John-Jerome-Francisco-Pedro, with a multitude of other christian names, surnames, and titles, was arrived, answered from his chamber-window, that they must go on to the town at a few miles distance, for that he had not room for a twentieth part of the company.

The commune of Paris, who had hitherto met with no opposition to the variety of reformation which they had proposed, who had co-operated in the overthrow of government on the 31st of May, and who had since, of their own authority, annihilated the religion of the country, conceived that they might with equal facility take the regulation of both church and state into their own hands, and disburthen the convention of the weight.

weight. They thought that those who had contributed to gain the victory ought to share in the spoils; they beheld with uneasiness the growing influence of their accomplices in the convention, and resolved not to suffer the continuance of this usurpation without remonstrance. The ambitious members of the commune were not supported upon this occasion by their allies the jacobins; for Peyreira, Proly, and Desieux, who had hitherto influenced that club, had now objects in view more gratifying to their feelings than disputes about the division of supreme power, since they had gained a sufficient portion to enable them to conduct the operations of that share of the government which they had taken under their more immediate protection, which was the regulation of the finances.

Robespierre, whose aim was permanent authority, did not suffer the depredations of his jacobin agents to pass unnoticed.

He

He found that the stability of his government would be endangered if such encroachments on his administration were suffered to continue; and accordingly took a revolutionary measure, and put them into prison as dilapidators of the public fortune. Among these dilapidators were the most active persecutors of the fallen party of the Gironde. The chiefs of the municipality, who had hitherto been the agents of Robespierre, were alarmed at the imprisonment of their co-adjutors, the chiefs of the jacobins; and did not well brook returning to their primitive insignificance, and leaving their accomplices in tranquil possession of the power they had helped them to usurp. The first symptom of rebellion was the denunciation which Hebert made against Barrere at the jacobins'. It was not sufficient to lull the nation into despotism by promising it the freest of all possible constitutions; the

the conquest of all the kingdoms of the world, and kings brought in fetters to Paris, were also promised with as much facility to the good people of the republic, as the knight of La Mancha disposed of governments and islands to his trusty squire. Among other splendid assurances, Barrere had proclaimed from the tribune, that the war in the Vendée should be finished on the 1st of November. To save his credit, the prophet appeared at the tribune at the appointed time; and because the royalists were marching victoriously from the Vendée across the country, to the northern coasts, he confidently assured the convention that the Vendée existed no longer. Hebert's assertion was well founded, that at the moment when Barrere pronounced their destruction they were in greater force than ever; but as to doubt the reports, the infallibility, or the reasoning of the committee of public safety was an act of treason against
the

the republic, this crime of Hebert was not forgotten. The commune of Paris perceived that the committee of public safety had obtained an absolute power over the convention, and took measures to provide against it, by advertising a system directly opposite to that of the committee, which they judged would be more acceptable to the people, and establish their own popularity. They, who had been the contrivers of every insurrection; who had prompted to every murder, and had demanded at the bar of the convention that *terror* should continue to be the order of the day; that all priests whatever should be dismissed from all functions civil and *military*; that the prisoners of the Temple, the children of the late king, should be sent to the common prisons on the ground of equality, and that all persons who had gone to their country houses should be ordered, on pain of being suspected,

pected, to come into town, in order probably to be massacred more conveniently ; became at once mild and tender-hearted. “ There exists,” says Chaumette *, the procureur of the commune, “ a conspiracy to divide patriots. *We* and the mountain-members of the convention have been from the beginning of the revolution the firmest supports of liberty, and it is also against us that calumny directs its principal efforts. The revolutionary committees, led astray by perfidious men, are often the instruments of these abominable machinations. We must assemble the members in a general council ; we must tell them that it is time for despotism to cease ; for the father no longer to demand in vain the liberty of his son.

* Chaumette was at the beginning of the revolution a shop-boy, and afterwards a hackney-writer. Hebert was a candle-snuffer at one of the theatres ; and afterwards a receiver of the entrance money ; from which place he was driven for his dishonesty.

unjustly

unjustly torn from him; the husband that of his wife, and the brother that of his brother. Let us teach tyrants that man is the citizen of his country, and not the slave of despotism." The procureur in consequence demanded that ten members of each revolutionary committee should be called to the general council, to labour conjointly with the committee of public safety, and that two members only should remain in each committee to watch over the execution of the measures to be taken. The sensibility of the committee of public safety was less awakened than that of the commune by Chaumette's pathetic eloquence. One of the members talked of Brutus and his sons, and another remarked on the danger of rival powers, and invited the convention to annul the decree of the commune. The convention, finding one tyranny sufficiently burdensome, immediately obeyed; and the commune, like the

the rest of the republic, submitted to the yoke.

The commune was not the only rival with which Robespierre had to contend; for though a feeling of common danger had produced between men who were discordant in every thing but wickedness, an alliance—when that danger was past, there was no tie remaining by which they might continue to be united. It is the punishment of tyrants and villains to live in continual terror of each other; and this was the fate of those who had conspired to overturn the republic, and who had destroyed those virtuous friends of liberty by whom it was founded. Robespierre feared, that the same means which he, with the aid of the commune of Paris, had employed against the Gironde, might be again put in practice to overthrow himself; and as he saw that the commune aspired to independence, and had already given signs of an ambitious spirit,

spirit, he dreaded lest some rival might start up, who, with more generosity and larger promises, might push him from his seat. This rival he saw in the person of Danton, who, with greater talents than Robespierre, and with a mind somewhat less atrocious, had from natural indolence neglected to cultivate that sort of popularity which would soon have raised him to be the chief of this cabal. Of this party were Camille Desmoulins, the author of the libel against the Gironde, which was published at the time as an address from Paris to the departments; Fabre d'Eglantine, who was an intriguer, with more address and less honesty than Camille; La Croix, who was a wretch covered with crimes—venal, base, and treacherous; a compound of the most shocking vices; who had been successively paid by the court and the foreign powers, and whose services were at the disposal of those who could best reward

reward them. There were others of less note, such as Philippeaux, who had been a mountaineer of the lower region, and who, though sharing in the iniquity of his party, had been less active than the rest in the commission of crimes. He had incurred the suspicion of honesty from the account he published of the iniquity of the war in the western departments; but he strongly contended for his share in the general villany, as the friend of Marat, and the murderer of the Gironde. These men had only hinted disapprobation at the excess of the tyranny which was then exercised. But Robespierre collected the whispers of the party before any plan was actually arranged, and declared loudly, though mysteriously, both in the convention and the jacobins', that the republic was in danger from the combinations of seditious and perverse men; whom he represented as new men, patriots of yesterday,

day, who were eager to lay hold of the pillars of the revolution, and, by climbing to the height of the mountain, precipitate those who had hitherto sat there with so much success. The height of the mountain, was another figure for the summit of his kingdom, where many of those whom he was about to accuse had long aspired to the loftiest feats, which it was impossible all could obtain ;

“ Devil with devil damned

“ Firm concord holds ;” MILTON.

but here, as the supremacy was to be undivided, no two parties could exist on equal terms at the same time. The party of Danton had lost much of its influence with the people by the indolence of the chief, and the rapacity of the subalterns ; while Robespierre had neglected no means to obtain that dominion on which he had perseveringly bent his

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mind. Under Robespierre's banners the great majority of the committee had enlisted; but his sworn and sacred allies were St. Just and Couthon, whose souls were of adamantine temper. Barrere had not yet taken all his degrees in atrocity, being only their lacquey, and having nothing very original in wickedness, except the phraseology he made use of in its justification.

Robespierre now thought that it was necessary to his safety to be disencumbered of the faction of the commune, and the faction of Danton. It was not difficult to bring a thousand charges against them, of which one alone before the great tribunal of national justice would have been sufficient to have directed the sword of national vengeance; but as the accusers could proffer none of those charges without criminating themselves, they had recourse to the expedient of their being accomplices of the faction

de l'étranger*, which was a most inexhaustible source for the fabrication of all indictments and bills for conspiracies. When the committee of public safety had marked their victims, it was necessary to inform the convention, that they were going to prepare the sacrifice; not that they feared any opposition or remonstrance, but for the sake of regularity. The convention, therefore, was instructed by St. Just, that a conspiracy was framed by foreigners, who were about to commit a number of horrible things, starve, plunder, and murder the good people of the republic; that this faction had already overthrown religion and morality, and was about to form a new sect of immorality, and the love of sensual enjoyments, from which innocence and virtue had every thing to dread; that the great directors of these machi-

* The faction of foreigners.

rations of the English court, were foreigners then at Paris, who had corrupted the agents of government; and that it was necessary they should all be punished together.

The convention was seized with horror at hearing those things, and with the same unanimity with which they had applauded Carrier's revolutionary wit; decreed, as their committee ordered, that whoever, by any act whatever, should attempt to degrade, destroy, or put obstacles in the way of the national convention, should be punished with death.

The faction of Hebert, Chaumette, and Danton, were led successively to the guillotine, as I have before related.

In order to facilitate the clearing of the prisons, and to put in force a law just before passed, that the property of all persons who should be deemed enemies of the revolution should be confiscated to the profit of the republic, and that the
 criminals

criminals should be confined in prison till the peace, when they were to be banished for ever ; the convention decreed, that six popular commissions should be formed to try those persons speedily, and shorten the labour of the revolutionary tribunal. Other decrees of the same colour passed at this period, such as making the person who should conceal a conspirator liable to the same punishment. All these decrees the convention passed, on the simple proposition of the committee, to whose fatherly protection the state was in full confidence consigned.

Had the vengeance or jealousy of the tyrants been directed only against their own accomplices ; had only their associates in wickedness, their Heberts and their Dantons fallen, though the accusations on which their condemnation was founded were absurd and groundless, there was no one who would not have rejoiced at those steps towards na-

tional deliverance. But these acts of justice were very rare, while those of murder were increasing every day. Among the mass of victims which at this period were sacrificed were the farmers-general of France. These men had never been favourites with the people at any period; their profession was in itself unpopular, though I have never heard that any of the persons who suffered had been guilty of any acts of oppression not allowed by the law. These men were accused of various crimes, but none wore a more heinous appearance than a plot which, it was asserted, they had formed against the health of the citizens in preparing and vending bad snuff. There was little hope that, when the guillotine was the minister of finance, farmers-general could escape: all were guilty of possessing riches; all therefore perished.

The municipality of Sedan was led to death *en masse*, at the same period. They
 were

were accused of being partizans of La Fayette at the epocha of the 10th of August. Ignorant of the events which had been passing in Paris, and under military constraint, they had for a few days supported La Fayette's pretensions; but they soon discovered their error, and accepted the amnesty that was offered them. No new cause of impeachment could be brought against them except their great wealth, on account of which they were sent to the tribunal at Paris; where forty of them were condemned to die. Sedan was famous for its manufactories, and these men were the proprietors of the chief establishments. Their wealth, while it circulated throughout Europe, furnished food to thousands who were now reduced to want, and their own hitherto opulent families were devoted to beggary and ruin.

The tyranny of these monsters was not the only evil with which the people of

France had to struggle. Famine was pressing on with hasty strides. The law of the maximum had not only driven away the foreign merchant, but also kept at a distance the dealer, who was accustomed to provide for the daily returning wants of the inhabitants. The grazier no longer drove his oxen to Paris, where the maximum, on entering the barriers, diminished half their value; nor could the butcher furnish meat, when the maximum allowed him but half the purchase money of the cattle. Des caremes civiques*, and other revolutionary measures of the like sort, were recommended to the fasting multitude; but one wag, more indignant than the rest, painted well the state of want and cruelty to which Paris was then abandoned, by writing on the pedestal of the statue which was placed on the spot of the pub-

* Patriotic Lents.

lic executions : * Il n'y a de boucherie à Paris, que sur cette place. v

This melancholy period was the full completion of that prophetic moment when Vergniaud poured out his eloquent soul against those murderers, in his famous speech on the trial of Lewis XVI, “ And ye, industrious citizens, who have made the revolution ; ye, whose sacrifices are multiplied every day in proportion to the wants of your country ; what will become of you ? What will be your resources ? What hands will wipe away your tears ? Who will give comfort to your families ? Will you go and seek for your pretended friends ? Ah, rather fly from them ! I will tell you what they will answer, when you shall ask them for bread. They will say, “ Go to the charnel-houses, and tear from the earth the palpitating limbs of the corpses which M

* The only butchery in Paris is at this place.

we have there heaped together." Blood and corpses—these are all they will have to offer you! "You shudder, my fellow citizens; O! my country, I call thee to witness the efforts which I make to snatch thee from the horrible crisis into which these men would plunge thee!" But his prophetic spirit failed, when he assured his auditors that those days of mourning would never arrive. "Those assassins are too cowardly," says he; "those little Mariuses, grovelling in the mud of the marsh, where fled that conspirator, who had at least some virtues." Vergniaud was mistaken: the modern chiefs had indeed less courage than Marius, but the citizens of Paris were more cowardly than the citizens of Rome.

LET-

LETTER IV.

THE cities of Paris and Lyons, and the extensive department of the Vendée, were not the only scenes of horror which France exhibited during the tyranny of Robespierre; alas, there was scarcely a valley of that desolated country, "whose flowerets were not bruised with the tread of hostile paces!" Robespierre could not have so long maintained his iron sceptre, had he not found, to use the words of Shakespeare,

"Slaves that took his humours for a warrant,

"To break into the bloody house of life,

"And, on the winking of authority,

"To understand a law."——

while Carrier ravaged the country of the west, and Collot d'Herbois laid the

opulent city of the east in ashes, Le Bon hung like a destroying vulture over the north, feasting his savage soul with the sight of mangled carcases; and Maignet consumed the lovely villages of the south in the flames of a general conflagration. The scene of Maignet's proconsulate was the departments of Vaucluse, and the mouth of the Rhone — those celebrated regions for ever dear to the lovers of the elegant arts, where, cheering the gloom of gothic barbarism, to use the language of Ossian, “ the light of the song arose;” where the Troubadours strung their early harps, and where the immortal Petrarch poured forth his impassioned strains. Divine poet! no more shall the unhappy lover seek for consolation in shedding delicious tears on the brink of that fountain where thou hast wept for Laura!—no more shall he haunt with
 pensive

pensive enthusiasm' that solitary valley,
 those craggy rocks, those hanging woods,
 and torrent-streams, where thou hast
 wandered with congenial feelings, and
 to which thy tender complaints have
 given everlasting renown!—those en-
 chanting dreams, those dear illusions
 have for ever vanished—that delicious
 country, the pride of France, the gar-
 den of Europe, the classical haunt of
 Petrarch no longer presents the delight-
 ful images of beauty, of poetry, of pas-
 sion; the magical spell is broken, the
 soothing charm is dissolved; the fairy
 scenes have been polluted, the wizard
 bowers profaned; the orange-groves are
 despoiled of their aromatic sweetness;
 the waters are tinged with blood; the
 hollow moans of calamity issue from the
 caverns, and the shrieks of despair re-
 echo from the cliffs; the guillotine has
 arisen amidst those consecrated shades
 where love alone had reared its altars!—

no longer with the name of Vaucluse is associated the idea of Petrarch; that of Maignet, the destroying Maignet, presents itself to the shuddering imagination; and the astonished soul starts back with horror—

“ I see, where late the verdant landscape smil'd,
A joyless desert, and a dreary wild;
O'er all the air a direful gloom is spread;
Pale are the meads, and all their blossoms dead;
The clouds of April shed a baleful dew,
And nature wears a veil of deadly hue.”——

One of the first acts of Maignet, upon his arrival in the department of Vaucluse, was the destruction of the village of Bedouin, situated in a country of the most romantic beauty, and where the benign climate fosters all the rich productions of summer, and forms a striking contrast to the eternal snows which cover the mountain of Ventoux, at the foot of which the village is placed.

A small tree of liberty which had been

been planted on a solitary spot near Bedouin, was, during the night, torn from the ground by some wretches who knew that this incident would furnish a pretext for pillage and devastation. At break of day the very persons who were the perpetrators of this act, one of whom was the president of the popular society, founded a general alarm, and accented the guiltless inhabitants of Bedouin of the sacrilege committed against the hallowed symbol of freedom.

Revolutionary troops were instantly summoned to carry fire and sword through the village and territory of Bedouin. A municipal commission was immediately organized by Maignet, which presented itself wherever there was the hope of spoil, spreading every where desolation and death. Five hundred habitations were delivered to the flames; the fruits of the harvest were consumed, and the mandate of Maignet, fatal as the fabled

fabled wand of an evil magician, struck the rich and luxuriant soil with sudden sterility. The flourishing manufactures of Bedouin shared the fate of its desolated fields; and all that was saved from the general wreck were the treasures spread by the fruitful silk worm upon the tops of the trees by which it is nourished. A tribunal of blood was formed by the order of Maignet; every day the destined number of victims were marked by the public accuser; and the inhabitants, who were unable to name the guilty persons, were all involved in one proscription. Those who escaped the knife of the guillotine sought for shelter in the depths of caverns, after the conflagration of their habitations, on the ruins of which placards were fixed, forbidding any person to approach the spot. The hollow cliffs re-echoed the moans of the widow and the orphan. Two hundred and eighty young men of
Bedouin

Bedouin who had flown to the frontier even before the requisition in order to defend their country, in vain dispatch successive letters, enquiring with fond solicitude after their parents. Those gallant young soldiers will return to their native village, their brows bound with the laurels of valour. Alas ! they will find their native village but one sad heap of ruins !—in vain they will call upon the tender names of father, of mother, of sister :—a melancholy voice will seem to issue from the earth that covers them, and sigh, *they are no more !* For those victorious warriors no car of triumph is prepared ; no mother's tears of transport shall hail the blessed moment of their return ; no father shall clasp them to his bosom with exulting joy, proud of their heroic deeds. Ah, no ! their toils, their dangers, and their generous sacrifices shall find no recompense in the sweetness of domestic affection,

fection, in the soothing bliss which, after absence, belongs to home!—alas! their homes are levelled with the ground; they will find no spot upon which to repose their wearied limbs but the graves of their murdered parents.—

The village of Bedouin was too confined a sphere for the destroying genius of Maignet. His thirst of blood was not yet allayed, his taste for desolation was not yet gratified. A wider scene of ruin fired his imagination, and his creative genius furnished the committee of public safety with a model for the law of the 22d of Prairial, which banished all judicial forms from the revolutionary tribunal of Paris. Maignet, after the destruction of Bedouin, caused what he termed a popular commission to be erected at Orange, for the purpose of trying all the counter-revolutionists of the departments of Vaucluse, and the mouth of the Rhone, without any written evidence,

dence, and without a jury. "Twelve or fifteen thousand persons are imprisoned in those departments," says Maignet, in a letter to Couthon; "if I were to execute the decree which orders all conspirators to be brought to Paris, it would require an army to conduct them, and they must be billeted like soldiers upon the road." Maignet therefore obtained the sanction of the committee of public safety, which was given without the consent of the convention, to his plan of forming a popular commission at Orange.

The committee of public safety named the judges, who by their conduct justified the discernment with which they were chosen, and proceeded with revolutionary rapidity in their work of death. "You know," says the secretary of the commission, in a letter to Payan, "the situation of Orange; the guillotine is placed in the front of the *mountain*, and it seems as if the heads in falling paid it the

the homage it deserves." Sometimes however the majority of the judges of Orange complain in their letters of two of their colleagues, whose consciences had not altogether attained the height of the revolution. Faurety, the president of the commission, says in a letter to Payan, "Ragot, Feruex and myself are *au pas*;"* Roman Fouvosa is a good creature, but an adherer to forms, and a little off the revolutionary point which he ought to touch. Meillerit, my fourth colleague, is good for nothing, absolutely good for nothing in the place he occupies; he is sometimes disposed to save counter-revolutionary priests; he must have *proofs*, as at the ordinary tribunals of the antient system."—Those troublesome scruples of

* The military expression of marching *au pas*, to the beat of the drum, became a sort of cant term, much in use during the tyranny of Robespierre; and adherence to the principles and doctrines of the day was signified by saying *je suis au pas*.

two of the judges were however so completely over-ruled by the majority of their colleagues, that the departments of Vaucluse and the mouth of the Rhone became the scenes of the most horrible outrages against humanity. Multitudes had already perished by the murderous commission of Orange, and multitudes in the gloom of prisons awaited the same fate, when the fall of Robespierre stopped the torrent of human blood.

Amidst the mass of far-spread evil, amidst the groans of general calamity, no doubt many a sigh of private sorrow has never reached the ear of sympathy, and many a victim has fallen unpitied and unknown. Some of the martyrs of Maignet's tyranny have, however, found a "sad historian of the pensive plain;" and the fate of Monsieur de M——'s family, which I have heard related much in detail by an old female servant who was the companion of their misfortunes,

is not the least affecting of those tales of sorrow.



M. de M——, formerly a noble, lived with his son an only child at Marseilles, where he was generally respected, and where during the progress of the revolution he had acted the part of a firm and enlightened patriot. After the fatal events of the 31st of May, he became suspected of what was called federalism by the jacobin party, which usurped the power in that city, and punished with imprisonment or death all those who had honourably protested against the tyranny of the mountain faction. M. M—— was warned of the danger by a friend time enough to fly from the city, accompanied only by an old female servant who entreated to share the fortune of her master. His wife died some years before the revolution, and his son, an amiable and accomplished young man of twenty-four years of age, had a few weeks before

before his father's flight been called upon by the first requisition, and had joined the army of the Pyrenees.

M. de M——, after wandering as far as his infirmities would permit, for although only in his sixty-third year his frame was much debilitated by a long course of ill health, took refuge in a solitary habitation at a few leagues distance from Arignon, and in one of the wildest parts of that romantic country. The mountains seem to close the scene upon the traveller, till by a narrow cleft it again opens into a small valley, where this little hermitage, for such was the aspect of the dwelling, was placed. This unfrequented valley was rich with pasturage, and bounded by lofty hills, wooded cliffs, and in some parts by large grotesque rocks with sharp peaks, that rose above the foliage of the hanging forests. Not far from this rustic habitation a clear torrent rolls with no scanty stream down
a bold

a bold rock, into which its fall had worn
 grotts and caverns, which were luxuriouſly
 decorated with ſhrubs for ever watered
 by the ſpray. The torrent not falling
 from a very conſiderable height, pro-
 duced ſounds more ſoothing than noiſy,
 and without having the power of exciting
 the ſenſation of ſublimity, awakened
 that of penſive pleaſing melancholy.
 This ſequeſtered valley, rich in the wild
 graces of nature, had eſcaped the deco-
 rations of French art, and no jets d'eau,
 clipped trees, and "alleys who have
 brothers," deformed its ſolitary receſſes.
 Far above, and at ſome diſtance, aroſe the
 lofty mountain of Ventoux, covered
 with its eternal ſnows; that mountain
 which Petrarch climbed in ſpite of the
 ſteep rocks that guard its aſcent, and
 from the ſummit of which he gazed upon
 the Alps, the boundary of his native
 country, and ſighed; or caſt his looks
 upon the waves of the Mediterranean
 which

which bathe Marfeilles, and dash themselves againft Aignes-Mortes; while he faw the rapid Rhone flowing majestically along the valley, and the clouds rolling beneath his feet.

Such was the fcene where M. de M— fought for refuge, and where he sheltered himfelf from the rage of his ferocious perfecutors. He had foon after the anguish of hearing that his brother, who had a place in the adminiftration of one of the fouthern departments, and who had taken an active part on the fide of the Gironde, had perifhed on the fcaffold. M. de M—— found means to inform his fifter-in-law of the place of his retreat, to which he conjured her to haften with her daughter, and fhare the little property which he had refcued from the general wreck of his fortune. His old fervant Marianne, who was the bearer of this meffage, returned, accompanied by his niece: her mother was no more: ſhe

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had survived only a few weeks the death of her husband. The interview between mademoiselle Adelaide de M—— and her uncle produced those emotions of overwhelming sorrow that arise at the sight of objects which interest our affections after we have sustained any deep calamity; in those moments the past rushes on the mind with uncontrollable vehemence; and mademoiselle de M——, after having long embraced her uncle with an agony that choked all utterance, at length pronounced, in the accents of despair, the names of father and of mother.

M. de M—— endeavoured to supply to his unfortunate niece the place of the parents she had lost, and forgot his own evils in this attempt to sooth the affliction of this interesting mourner, who at nineteen years of age, in all the bloom of beauty, was the prey of deep and settled melancholy. She had too much sensibility

bility not to feel his tender cares, and often restrained her tears in his presence because they gave him pain. When those tears would no longer be suppressed, she wandered out alone, and, seating herself on some fragment of rock, soothed by the murmurs of the hollow winds and moaning waters, indulged her grief without control. In one of those lonely rambles, sacred to her sorrows, she was awakened from melancholy musing by the sudden appearance of her cousin, the son of Mr. de M——, who, after having repeatedly exposed his life during a long and perilous campaign in the service of his country, returned—to find his home deserted and his father an exile. Such were the rewards which the gallant defenders of liberty received from the hands of tyrants. The young man flew to his father's retreat, where the first object that met his eyes was his lovely cousin, whom he had a few

months before beheld in all the pride of youthful beauty ; her cheek flushed with the gay suffusion of health, and her eye sparkling with pleasure. That cheek was now covered with fixed paleness, and that eye was dimmed with tears ; but *mademoiselle de M*—— had never appeared to him so interesting as in this moment.

Two young persons placed together in such peculiar circumstances, must have had hearts insensible indeed, had they conceived no attachment for each other. The son of *M. de M*—— and *Adelaide*, who both possessed an uncommon share of sensibility, soon felt, that while all beyond the narrow cleft which separated the little valley from the rest of the world was misery and disorder, whatever could give value to existence was to be found within its savage boundary, in that reciprocal affection which soothed the evils of the past, and shed
a soft

a soft and cheering ray over the gloom of the future. The scene in which they were placed was peculiarly calculated to cherish the illusions of passion; not merely from displaying those simple and romantic beauties the contemplation of which softens while it elevates the affections—it had also that local charm which endears to minds of taste and sentiment spots which have been celebrated by the powers of genius. Petrarch, the tender, the immortal Petrarch, had trod those very valleys, had climbed those very rocks, had wandered in those very woods—and the two young persons, who both understood Italian, when they read together the melodious strains of that divine poet, found themselves transported into new regions, and forgot for a while that revolutionary government existed. From those dreams, those delightful illusions, they were awakened by a letter which a friend and fellow-soldier of young de M—— conveyed to him, in which

he conjured him to return immediately to the army, if he would shun being classed among the suspected or the proscribed.

Young de M—— considered the defence of his country as a sacred duty which he was bound to fulfil. He instantly prepared to depart. He bid adieu to his father and Adelaide with tears wrung from a bleeding heart, and tore himself away with an effort which it required the exertion of all his fortitude to sustain. After having passed the cleft which enclosed the valley, he again turned back to gaze once more on the spot which contained all his treasure. Adelaide, after his departure, had no consolation but in the sad yet dear indulgence of tender recollections ; in shedding tears over the paths they had trod, over the books they had read together. Alas, this unfortunate young lady had far other pangs to suffer than the tender repinings of absence from a beloved object ! Some weeks
after

after the departure of her lover, the departments of Vaucluse and the Mouth of the Rhone were desolated by Maignet. Two proscribed victims of his tyranny, who were the friends of M. de M——, and knew the place of his retreat, sought for an asylum in his dwelling. M. de M—— received his fugitive friends with affectionate kindness. But a few days after their arrival their retreat was discovered by the emissaries of Maignet; the narrow pass of the valley was guarded by soldiers; the house was encompassed by a military force; and M. de M—— was summoned to depart with the conspirators whom he had dared to harbour, in order to appear with them before the popular commission established at Orange. This last stroke his unhappy niece had no power to sustain. All the wounds of her soul were suddenly and rudely torn open; and altogether overwhelmed by this un-

expected, this terrible calamity, which filled up the measure of her afflictions, her reason entirely forsook her. With frantic agony she knelt at the feet of him who commanded the troop; she implored, she wept, she shrieked; then started up and hung upon her uncle's neck, pressing him wildly in her arms. Some of the soldiers proposed conducting her also to the tribunal; but the leader of the band, whether touched by her distress, or fearful that her despair would be troublesome on the way, persuaded them to leave her behind. She was dragged from her uncle, and locked in a chamber, from whence her shrieks were heard by the unfortunate old man till he had passed the narrow cleft of the valley, which he was destined to behold no more. His sufferings were acute, but they were not of long duration. The day of his arrival at Orange, he was led before the popular commission, together
with

with his friends, and from thence immediately dragged to execution.

In the mean time mademoiselle de M——, released by Marianne from the apartment where she had been confined by the mercilefs guards, wandered from morning till evening amidst the wildest recesses of the valley, and along the most rugged paths she could find. She was constantly followed in her ramblings by her faithful servant, who never lost sight of her a single moment, and who retains in her memory many a mournful complaint of her disordered mind, many a wild expression of despair. She often retired to a small nook near the torrent, where her uncle had placed a seat, and where he usually passed some hours of the day. Sometimes she seated herself on the bench; then started up, and, throwing herself on her knees before the spot where her uncle used to sit,

bathed it with floods of tears. “ Dear old man,” she would cry, “ your aged head !—They might have left me a lock of his grey hairs. When the soldiers come for *me*, Marianne, you may cut off a lock of *mine* for Charles—Poor Charles !—It is well he’s gone—I see the guillotine behind those trees !—and now they drag up a weak old man !—they tie him to the plank !—it bends—oh heaven !”—

The acute affliction with which young de M—— heard of the murder of his father was still aggravated by the tidings he received from Marianne of the situation of his beloved Adelaide. Her image was for ever present to his mind ; and, unable to support the bitterness of those pangs which her idea excited, he again found means to obtain leave of absence for a few weeks, and hastened to the valley. He found the habitation deserted—all was dark and silent :

silent ; he flew through the apartments, calling upon the name of Adelaide, but no voice answered his call.

He left the house, and walked with hasty steps along the valley. As he passed a cavern of the rocks, he heard the moans of Adelaide—he rushed into the cavern—she was seated upon its flinty floor, and Marianne was sitting near.—Adelaide cast up her eyes as he entered, and looked at him earnestly—he knelt by her side, and pressed her hand to his bosom—“ I don’t know you,” said Adelaide.—“ Not know me !” he cried, “ not know Charles !” —“ If you *are* Charles,” she resumed sullenly, “ you’re come too late—’tis all over !—Poor old man !” she cried, rising hastily from the ground, and clasping her hands together, “ don’t you see his blood on my clothes ? I begged very hard for him—I told them I had no father and mother but *him*—If you *are* Charles, begone, begone !—

They're coming—they're on the way—
I see them upon the rock!—That knife—
that bloody knife!"—

Such were the ravings of the disordered imagination of this unfortunate young lady, and which were sometimes interrupted by long intervals of silence, and sometimes by an agony of tears. Her lover watched over her with the most tender and unwearied assiduity; but his cares were ineffectual. The life of Adelaide was near its close. The convulsive pangs of her mind, the extraordinary fatigues she had suffered in her wanderings, the want of any nourishment except bread and water, since she obstinately refused all other food, had reduced her frame to a state of incurable weakness and decay.

A short time before she expired, she recovered her reason, and employed her last remains of strength in the attempt to console her wretched lover. She spoke

to him of a happier world, where they should meet again, and where tyrants should oppress no more—the grasped his hand—she fixed her eyes on his—and died.

With the gloomy silence of despair, with feelings that were denied the relief of tears, and were beyond the utterance of complaint, this unfortunate young man prepared with his own hands the grave of her he loved, and himself covered her corpse with earth.

The last offices paid by religion to the dead, the hallowed taper, the lifted cross, the solemn requiem, had long since vanished, and the municipal officer returned the dust to dust with unceremonious speed. The lover of Adelaide chose to perform himself those sad functions for the object of his tenderness, and might have exclaimed with our poet,

“ What though no weeping loves thy ashes grace,

“ Nor polish'd marble emulate thy face ;

“ What

" What though no sacred earth allow thee' room,
 " Nor hallowed dirge be mutter'd o'er thy tomb!
 " Yet shall thy grave with rising flow'rs be dress'd,
 " And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast :
 " There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,
 " There the first roses of the year shall blow ;
 " While angels with their silver wings o'ershade
 " The ground now sacred by thy reliques made."

Young de M—— pass'd the night at the grave of Adelaide. Marianne followed him thither, and humbly entreated him to return to the house. He pointed to the new-laid earth, and waved his hand as if he wish'd her to depart, and leave his meditations uninterrupted.

The next morning at break of day he entered the house, and called for Marianne. He thank'd her for her care of Adelaide ; he assur'd her of his everlasting gratitude. While he was speaking, his emotion choked his voice, and a shower of tears, the first he had shed since the death of Adelaide, soothed his oppress'd heart. When he had recover-
ed

ed himself, he bade Marianne farewell, and hastened out of the house, muttering in a low tone, " This must be avenged." He told Marianne, that he was going to rejoin his battalion; but all enquiries after him have since been fruitless: this unhappy young man has been heard of no more!

LET.

LETTER V.

AT the fearful climax of revolutionary government which we have now reached, we find no soothing objects which can repose the weary eye, or cheer the sinking heart: An historical sketch of this period is no common picture of human nature, tinged with the blended hues of vice and virtue: it is like the savage scenery of Salvator, where all is wildly horrible, and every figure on the canvass is a murderer. We are forced to wander through successive evils; to turn our eyes from the popular commission of Orange to the revolutionary tribunal of Arras, from the crimes of Maigret to the atrocities of Lebon.

This revolutionary chief took his place in the national convention as the second
suppléant.

suppléant of the department of Calais, a few weeks after the memorable 31st of May. It appears that the committee of public safety had penetration enough to discern his extraordinary capacity for evil, since he had appeared a very short time at the convention, when he was sent upon mission, with full plenitude of revolutionary powers, into the department of the Pas du Calais, of which he was a representative.

Lebon seems to have determined to distinguish himself, and merit the applause of his employers, by exercising new modes of oppression, and trying new experiments of cruelty. One of his preliminary strokes of tyranny was that of dragging in succession the multitude he had arrested, from their respective prisons, and obliging them to appear before the popular society, placed on an elevated seat, where the men were exposed to all the indignities his agents could

could inflict, and the women to the coarsest ribaldry and the most barbarous insults. These examinations were the usual prelude to an accusation before the revolutionary tribunal which he established at Arras, and a section of which he sent, for the sake of expedition in his work of death, to Cambray. The judges and jury of those tribunals were composed of his own relations and his creatures; and, together with the executioner, they lived in his house, and dined at his table.

In the mean time he caused the following inscription to be written over the door of his apartment: "Ceux qui entreront ici pour solliciter l'élargissement des prisonniers, n'en sortiront que pour être mis en arrestation *." Thus did this unrelenting tyrant seek to repress the ge-

* Those who enter here to solicit the release of prisoners, shall only go out to be themselves put in confinement.

nerous efforts of friendship, and congeal the tears of sympathy by the sense of personal danger.

The large and populous city of Arras soon wore the aspect of an unpeopled desert. No cheerful sounds were heard in the streets: all was solitary and silent. The town appeared widowed of its inhabitants; the few who remained at liberty having found themselves, when they ventured to go out, exposed "to meet the rudeness and swilled insolence" of Lebon and his inebriated jury, who paraded the streets armed with sabres and pistols, insulting, and often arresting, persons with whose countenance or figure they happened to be displeased.

The mountain-leaders had all a congenial thirst for blood; but while others contented themselves with issuing mandates for its being shed, Lebon was unsatisfied unless he beheld it flow. At the hour of execution he used to appear
at

at a balcony of the theatre, near which the scaffold was placed, and sip his coffee while the heads of his victims were falling. Sometimes he ordered the military bands to play revolutionary airs during the executions. Sometimes he apostrophized the persons who were about to die; and the last sounds which met their ear were the outrages against humanity which issued from his polluted lips.

The former marquis de Vieux-fort was tied to the fatal plank, with the knife suspended over his head, when Lebon appeared upon the balcony of the theatre, commanded the executioner to stop, and obliged the unfortunate sufferer to remain in that situation while he read to the people a newspaper he had just received, and which contained the account of a recent victory. He then, addressing himself to monsieur de Vieux-fort, told him to carry to the other world his
despair

despair at these tidings of success, and at length ordered him to die.

Among the multitudes who were sacrificed to the barbarous caprices of Lebon, some were put to death upon pretences so trivial, that nothing can perhaps furnish a stronger proof of the absolute, the unblushing tyranny he exercised, than the daring effrontery with which he insulted the understanding as well as the feelings of the people, in the motives he alleged for inflicting the punishment of death.

The former marquis of Viefville, an old and gallant officer, had retired to end his days in privacy at a solitary spot called Steenmonde, in the department of the North. To this retreat he was accompanied by his daughter, an only child, who watched over the infirmities of his advanced age with unwearied tenderness, and whose filial piety shed a ray of happiness on those years which have no pleasure

pleasure in them. This venerable old man and his amiable daughter were the objects of general respect and esteem. But virtue, which was a tacit reproach to the monsters who then devastated this unfortunate country, was as offensive to them as the light of day to the sullen bird of darkness. It happened that this family had for twelve years past been in possession of a parrot, whom different persons had taught its mimic lessons. The estate of the marquis was situated on the limits of the German empire; part of his grounds belonged to that territory, and the parrot had been instructed to cry "Vive l'empereur!" and also to call the "petit Louis," the name of a young child who lived in the house. The agents of Lebon received intelligence, that those forbidden words had been uttered by the parrot; the bird was denounced, seized as a criminal of importance, and deposited in the house

of a revolutionary commissary, where the feathered culprit repeated the guilty sounds. The tidings spread through the city, of the arrest of an audacious counter-revolutionary parrot, who boldly cried "Vive le roi!" and who, it was asserted, had even carried his effrontery to such a length as to exclaim, "Vivent les prêtres! Vivent les nobles!" So far we may smile at the absurdities of our tyrants; but that disposition is converted into feelings of indignant horror, when we learn that an act of accusation was immediately issued against M. Vieville, his daughter, and her waiting-woman, who were dragged from their retirement, and led before the revolutionary tribunal.

The jury unanimously declared that those persons were convicted of being the authors or accomplices of a conspiracy against liberty and the French people; and of unlawful resistance to revolutionary

lutionary and republican government ; having assiduously taught a parrot to utter the detestable phrase of “ Vive le roi ! vive l'empereur ! vivent nos prêtres ! et vivent les nobles ! ” and, by so doing, having provoked the re-establishment of royalty and of tyranny ; for which reasons they were condemned to die.

The old man summoned all his fortitude, and went to the scaffold with the calmness of innocence ; often lifting up his head, which was bowed down with age, to gaze upon his admirable daughter, who met death with the same courage, and who seemed to forget her own situation in that of her beloved parent.

Such are the crimes which cannot but excite horror in those who have lived at a distance from their sanguinary influence, but the reflection on which, to those who have been witnesses of their enormity, renders existence hateful.—

Such

Such are the monsters into which men are transformed by unlimited power; whether arrayed in imperial purple, and surrounded by pretorian guards; or wearing for a diadem a *jacobin cap*, and followed by an executioner and a *revolutionary jury*.

A peasant of d'Achicourt, a village near Arras, came to sell her butter in the town. As she walked along a street, she met a cart filled with victims who were going to execution.—“Voilà,” said this poor creature with naïveté, “voilà des gens qui meurent pour bien peu de chose * !” She was instantly seized, and led to the tribunal of Lebon. During her trial she held in her arms her infant of three months old, whom she suckled. When she heard her sentence of death, “Quoi!” said she, “quoi, pour un mot †

* Those people there die for very little.

† What! for that one word I said, will you part the child and its mother?

que j'ai dit, vous allez séparer l'enfant d'avec la mere!" When she received the fatal stroke, the streams of maternal nourishment issued rapidly from her bosom, and, mingled with her blood, bathed her executioner.

Among the numerous victims of Lebon, none excited more general sympathy than the family of monsieur de Mayoul, a former noble, who lived at Arras with his wife, his two daughters, and an infant son. Monsieur de Mayoul was altogether confined to his house by the gout; and his daughters, two elegant and accomplished young women, who both touched the piano-forte with admirable skill, endeavoured to make the talents they possessed subservient to the amusement of their infirm parent, and established concerts at their house every week; when he was soothed with the pleasures of music. Sometimes they sought to vary his amusements

ments by dancing in his presence with their companions; and the motive of filial piety which animated the diversions of those amiable young women, excited in the spectators a sentiment like that of Sterne, when, at the peasant's cottage, he fancied he saw "Religion mingling in the dance."

Two of monsieur de Mayoul's sons had emigrated; but the family continued to live undisturbed, and unsuspected of having had any previous knowledge of that circumstance. It happened that general Custine, in passing through Arras, had shewn some civilities to madame de Mayoul and her daughters. When Custine had perished, and when Lebon arrived at Arras, this circumstance was imputed to the family of Mayoul as a crime. It was asserted that they were notorious aristocrats, and also that the young ladies had danced and sung the very day when the news arrived of the defeat of one of

the republican armies. Upon this pretext, madame de Mayoul, her two daughters, and a female servant were arrested, and thrown into prison. They were accused of being the authors, or accomplices, of a conspiracy framed against the liberty of the French people, of being the enemies of revolutionary government, of having held assemblies at their house in order to rejoice at the success of the armies of the tyrants, and of having approved of the emigration of the two young Mayouls.

Upon these accusations they were ordered to appear before the revolutionary tribunal; but notwithstanding the number of judicial assassinations which took place at that period, the young ladies, with the consciousness not merely of innocence, but of the motives of filial duty which had consecrated their amusements, fondly believed they had nothing to fear.

But

But madame de Mayoul was well aware of their danger.

The night preceding their appearance at the tribunal, after having been rigorously searched by the jailors, they were not, as was usual, thrown into a dungeon, but were allowed the indulgence of passing the night in the society of their fellow prisoners. One of those prisoners relates, that madame de Mayoul, addressing her children, said to them, "You know, my dear, my tender friends! you know that my first care in your education has been to excite in your minds such sentiments as might secure you the esteem of others, and the happiness of self-approbation."—"Ah yes," interrupted her daughters, "we have only been taught virtue by your precepts and your example." "I may die then," resumed madame de Mayoul, "with the satisfaction of thinking that I have never given you any improper counsel, and that my fel-

low citizens will believe I am altogether incapable of having led you to rejoice at the misfortunes of your country in the loss of a battle." "Never, never!" they exclaimed, "you and we are alike incapable of such conduct—we call upon the world to witness our innocence—it is impossible we can fail to justify ourselves from such an inculpation—and we shall be restored to liberty." "Ah, my children," resumed madame de Mayoul, "instead of indulging that soothing hope, this is the moment to summon all your fortitude, and prepare for the worst—for resigning—" "Is it possible," they cried, "that a calumny so absurd, so atrocious, can expose us to the pangs of seeing our mother perish?—We think not of ourselves—how could we wish to survive you?" and throwing themselves upon their mother's neck, they bathed her with their tears.

Madame de Mayoul then told them, that
the

the only hope she had left, was, that she alone should perish, and that they would not be involved in the same proscription.—“But if,” she continued; “they should carry their barbarity to that excess, without consideration for your youth, and for the authority which I may be supposed to have over your minds; if you must indeed share my fate—then, my dear children, my beloved friends, arm yourselves with my fortitude;—place all your confidence, as I do mine, in eternal justice. Perhaps the sacrifice of our lives will be useful to our fellow citizens—will shew them the necessity of suppressing these tribunals of blood:—this idea animates my mind. Besides, at all events, we ought to learn how to die. Let us throw ourselves into the bosom of God. Oh my children, what gratitude we shall owe to the supreme being!—we shall die innocent!”

In such conversation this unfortunate

family passed the night—their last night !
 The next morning they were led to the
 tribunal, and from thence to the scaffold.
 They died with the serenity of virtue,
 and with the hope of immortality.

¶ The unfortunate monsieur de Mayoul,
 bereaved of all that endeared existence,
 is bending with sorrow to the grave. In
 vain his infant son would recall him to
 the enjoyment of life by his tender caref-
 ses. There are evils too terrible for the
 weakness of humanity to bear, and which
 admit of no remedy but the grave.

LETTER VI.

AFTER the execution of the faction of Danton and that of the commune had taken place, both of which had been condemned on the most absurd and ill-founded accusations, as I have already related, the decemvirs found no longer any opposition to their tyranny, but saw the lives and fortunes of the people of France laid abjectly at their feet. But instead of employing their power to any useful purpose, or even to that of giving stability to their own government, by favouring the weak after having overthrown the mighty; they became more profuse in the waste of blood, and atrocious without motive or end. Whether the tyrants suspected the fidelity of their tribunal,

or whether they thought that the business of death was not readily enough dispatched, those six commissions which I have before mentioned were also put into activity. The prisoners in general rejoiced at this institution; for they had the credulity to think that the evidence of civism which some could exhibit, and the exemption from any positive counter-revolutionary charge which others could prove, would obtain their release by these commissions, without undergoing the formality of a hearing before the tribunal; and as these commissions were not invested with the power of life and death, every one was anxious to gain an audience. The administrators of police, and the revolutionary committees, were ordered to procure printed lists, which in successive columns displayed the parentage, birth, and education, principles, conduct, and connections of every prisoner under their respective care, together

ther with the motives of their arrest, and the opinions entertained of them by their accusers. Each prisoner was to undergo a sort of political interrogatory before the commission; and as most of them had been long confined, and so many contradictory principles and standards of patriotism had succeeded each other since their captivity began, a prisoner must have had more than common sagacity to have answered his catechist agreeably to the fashion of the day. For, had he declared his belief in the divinity of reason, and asserted that priests were impostors, he would have been immediately condemned as a *Cbaumettiß*: or, had he professed his patriotic faith in a black wig, dirty shirt, and pantaloons, he would have been sentenced as a conspirator of the *Hebert faction*. Indeed, to the great majority of prisoners, which consisted of people of former rank, this Babylonish language was unknown in al-

most all its dialect; and their interrogatory was altogether useless, their fate being previously decided. A friend of mine saw one day in the hands of a revolutionary commissary, one of those blank lists which he was going to fill up. "We have," says he, "in our *pigeon-house*," meaning the *maison d'arrêt* of his section, "about one hundred and twelve old birds and young; of these, about twenty or thirty we shall send to the *little window*, and the rest shall set out on their *travels*." Such were the cant terms for death and banishment.

The operations of the popular commissions were altogether unknown till after the 10th of Thermidor, when their papers and lists of sentences were found among the manuscripts of the tyrants. Some persons, on whom only sentence of deportation had been passed by the commission, were afterwards condemned by the committee of public safety to death :

such was the Maleffi family, the father, mother, and two daughters, whose story I have related. Their crime was stated in the papers of the commission, and they were sentenced to be banished for being “excessively fanatical, and connected with priests; which connection *might* propagate the spirit of counter-revolution.” Some were condemned for being enemies of the revolution, others for being of the cast of nobility; some for what they had done, others for what they had not done; “n’ayant jamais rien fait pour la révolution*.” One gentleman whom I knew, was doomed to banishment for having asked with some impatience, a second time, for his certificate at the section—“redemandant une seconde fois avec de menaces †.” The two

* Having never done any thing for the revolution.

† Asking for it a second time with menaces.

young St. Chamands, beautiful girls of fifteen and nineteen years of age, ex-nobles, were condemned to deportation for *their opposition to the establishment of civil and religious liberty*; “ beaucoup prononcées en fanatisme, et contre la liberté, quoique très jeunes*.” And also the family of Sourdeville, consisting of a mother and two daughters, whose only crime, as stated by the judges, was, that madame Sourdeville was “ the mother of an emigrant, an ex-noble, and aristocrate, having her husband and another son struck by the sword of the law ;” and the two young ladies were likewise condemned with her, for standing in the relation of sister and daughter to the unfortunate father and brother who had perished.

The Robespierrian faction having thus seized on all the administrative powers,

* Strong fanatics, and enemies to liberty, although so young.

which

which they dispensed with their own hands ; having crushed the chiefs of the other factions, and terrified their adherents into the most submissive silence, had arrived at the summit of their ambition ; at a point where a few months before the most extravagant imagination would scarcely have placed them, and believed that their power was settled on a basis which could never be shaken. The departments also being now under the influence of the same terror as the city of Paris ; the great instrument of its instruction and discipline, the revolutionary army, was broken as useless and cumbersome. The chief of this army, Ronfin, who had been one of the conductors of the war in the Vendée under the title of general minister, or minister general, had perished in what was called in the dialect of the time the Hebert *batch* ; accused of alienating the affections of his troops from the committee
of

of public safety; which was probably true, since there was another faction in great vigour at that moment, which was the war faction, or the party of Bouchotté, and his secretaries Vincent and others, who perished at the same time as Hebert; this faction being not a little dangerous to the despotism of the august decemvirate. The revolutionary army, which was now broken, had fulfilled its mission agreeably to its institution and instructions, though it does not appear that the numerous and wanton acts of cruelty which it committed were either approved or sanctioned by the convention; on the contrary, some very severe animadversions were there made upon its conduct, and some strong accusations were brought against it, which were confirmed by the most authentic evidence. The execution of the Danton faction, and the dismissal of this army, were followed by other measures equally revolutionary,

lutionary, in which we were ourselves included ; for it was at this period, the beginning of April, that the law took place which banished nobles and foreigners from Paris, and which ordered all suspected of conspiracy to be sent from all parts of the republic to be tried at Paris. As it was said of Greece, that you could not move a step without treading on a history, so it might now have been said of Paris, that you could not pass along a street without viewing some object of horror. Our banishment therefore, had it not been attended with the consciousness of what was passing in the scene we had left, would have been bliss, compared to our residence in town.

Nothing perhaps contributed to mislead the people of Europe so much, with respect to the state of the French nation at this period, as the intelligence which was conveyed to them by the public papers. It required a more intimate
 knowledge

knowledge of French affairs than foreigners in general could find the means of obtaining, to reconcile the intelligence given in those newspapers with the atrocities which they heard were committed. While pillage and murder, under the name of confiscation and punishment, blackened every part of the republic; the papers presented us with the most elegant and philosophical reports on agriculture, literature, and the fine arts. But for the long catalogue of victims which closed the evening paper, we might, even in our retreat at Marly, have fancied that the reign of philosophy had begun, and that, where there was apparently so earnest a desire to civilize and succour mankind, there could not be so monstrous an assemblage of treason, atrocity, and carnage.

Most of these interesting and instructive reports, which tended to soften the hideousness of the general outline, were made

made by men who had not the means or the courage to stem the torrent, who sighed in secret over its ravages, and employed their moments in doing something which might tend to rescue their country from the barbarism into which it was hastening. I particularly allude to the reports of Gregoire on the improvement of the language, on the public libraries, and on the establishment of national gardens throughout the republic.

Sometimes the decemvirs themselves relaxed from their habitual ferocity, and a report escaped from their lips, in which there was neither conspiracy nor murder. Barrere, in a momentary caprice of virtue, pronounced a discourse on the means of rooting out mendicity from the republic, replete with humanity and ideas of general benevolence.

Barrere, however, soon made the *amende honorable* to the system he had abandoned for a moment, by delivering immediately

Immediately after his famous decree, "to make no English or Hanoverian prisoners," calling on the army, who happily for Gallic honour refused to hear him, "When victory shall put the English in your power, strike; let no one return to the land of Great Britain, nor one remain on the free soil of France." It is not generally known, that the reward held out to him for this act of boldness was, that although he had been a Feuillant, a Girondist, and of all parties in their turn, he was, immediately upon this report, thought worthy by Robespierre to be admitted into the *sanctum sanctorum* of the patriots, and was enrolled a *jacobin*.

The chief himself, who affected to stand aloof, and never to mingle personally in the wars of the lesser factions, but reserved himself for high exploits, having acknowledged the existence of the supreme being in the overthrow of the commune and the Dantonists, condescended.

descended to give the convention a long lecture on theology in his report on national festivals.

I have already mentioned Voltaire's observation, that atheism might prove a greater scourge to mankind than sanguinary superstition; but probably a greater scourge than either is powerful hypocrisy. We can guard our reason against sophistry or violence, but from the tribute which hypocrisy pays to virtue, of wearing her semblance, we are more easily deceived. It was probably on account of the great danger of this vice to society, that the saviour of mankind, while he looked on failings with indulgence, and on crimes with pardon, poured forth all the anathema of indignation and vengeance against hypocrisy. The trembling criminal whom the law condemned to death, saw mercy beaming in his eye, and the weeping penitent found reconciliation at his feet, while

while he placed an eternal line of demarcation between the hypocritical Sanhedrim and the Almighty.

While Robespierre behind the scenes was issuing daily mandates for murder, we see him on the stage the herald of mercy and of peace—we see him affecting to pour the balm of consolation into the wounds which he was himself inflicting; and, like the unrelenting inquisitor, recommending to mercy the wretch whom he was delivering to torture. “Consult,” says this finished actor, “only the good of the country, and the interests of mankind. Every institution, every doctrine which consoles and elevates the mind, should be cherished; reject all those which tend to degrade and corrupt it. Re-animate, exalt every generous sentiment, every sublime moral idea, which your enemies have sought to obliterate; draw together by the charm of friendship, and the ties of
 2 virtue,

virtue, those men whom they have attempted to separate. Who gave thee a mission to proclaim to the people that the Divinity exists not? Oh thou, who art enamoured of this sterile doctrine, but who never wast enamoured of thy country! what advantage dost thou find in persuading mankind that a blind fatality presides over their destiny, striking guilt and virtue as chance directs; and that the human soul is but a fleeting breath, extinguished at the gates of the tomb?

“ Will man be inspired with more pure and elevated sentiments by the idea of annihilation, than by that of immortality? Will it produce more respect for his fellow creatures, and for himself? more attachment to his country? stronger resistance to tyranny? greater contempt of death? You, who regret a virtuous friend, you love to think that the nobler part of his being has escaped from death!

death ! You, who weep over the grave of a child, or of a wife, does *he* bring you consolation who tells you that all which remains of them is but dust ? Unhappy victim, who expirest under the stroke of the assassin, thy last sigh is an appeal to eternal justice ! the tyrant turns pale upon his triumphal car at the sight of innocence upon the scaffold. Would virtue have this ascendancy if the tomb placed on the same level the oppressor and the oppressed ? Wretched sophist ! by what right dost thou wrest the sceptre of reason from the hands of innocence, to intrust it to those of guilt ? to throw a funereal veil over nature, to aggravate misfortune, to sooth vice, to depress virtue, and degrade the human race ?

“ In proportion to the degree of genius and sensibility with which man is endued, he clings to those ideas which aggrandize his being, and elevate his heart ; and the doctrine of such men becomes that
of

of the universe. Ah ! surely those ideas must have their foundation in truth ! At least I cannot conceive how nature could have suggested fictions to mankind more useful than realities ; and if the existence of God, if the immortality of the soul, were but dreams, they would still be the most sublime conceptions of the human mind !”

Though we were not deceived as to the habitual character of Robespierre, we imagined that the overthrow of all the rival factions might have softened in some measure his obdurate heart. Every prisoner fondly looked forward to the festival of the supreme being as the epocha of liberty, or at least of mercy.

“ All the virtues,” says Robespierre, “ shall contend for the right of precedence at our festivals. Let us institute the festival of glory ; not of that glory which ravages and enslaves the world, but of that which enlightens, comforts,

and gives it freedom; of that which, next to their country, is the chief object of worship to generous minds. Let us institute another festival more affecting still; the festival of misfortune. Wealth and power are the idols of slaves: let us honour misfortune; misfortune, which humanity cannot chase from the earth, but which it can soften and cheer. Thou also shalt receive our homage, divine friendship! thou who didst heretofore unite the hero and the sage; thou who givest additional strength to the lovers of their country; for whom traitors, associated for the purposes of guilt, have worn only the hypocritical marks of pretended respect; divine friendship! amongst republican Frenchmen thy power shall be acknowledged, and thy altars revered!"

However well Robespierre performed the hypocrite, he had not sufficient address to preserve the character; for hu-

manity, and misfortune, and glory, and friendship, enlightening and consoling the world; and all the mockery and show of the festival, with all the hopes and expectations of the unfortunate prisoners, vanished into thin air. The festival, as has been related, took place on the 20th of Prairial; and on the 22d the law for condemnation *in mass*, without witness or defence, passed the convention, and the work of death went on with redoubled speed.

Had the tyrants who were thus successful in their usurpation, after crushing their immediate rivals, established a more humane system of government, of which they would have been the protectors, the world might still have remained ignorant at least of the excess of their crimes; and might have attributed their severity to the perilous circumstances in which they were placed, by the coalesced powers without, and the intrigues of the

royal and aristocratical party within. In this case, none of those atrocious acts which the fall of Robespierre has unveiled would have been known, and what is now the subject of general horror would have been regarded only as necessary evil.

The historian, therefore, who should have taken the public acts, or the papers relating the transactions of the day, as the basis of his information, would have deceived himself and posterity. And even now the task will be difficult to transmit with accuracy and impartiality the history of that extraordinary epocha; which furnishes a most awful and stupendous monument of all that is sublime, and base; of all that is most virtuous, and most vile; of all that can excite mankind to the daring heroic act, and of all that can melt the heart with unutterable horror fly from the eye as from a pestilence.

The march of the revolution, however, was approaching the crisis of humanity.

avenged of its tyrants for that long scene of multiplied crimes, of which what pen can make the recapitulation? "There are times," Voltaire observes, "of horrors and of madness among mankind, as there are times of pestilence; and this contagion has made the tour of the world." France has just seen one of these epochas, which are the astonishment, the terror, and the shame of human nature. Happily they are rare in any history; and in the course of the ordinary calamities which are the scourge of civil society, those epochas may be considered as mortal maladies, amidst that crowd of habitual infirmities which are inseparable from our organization.

When we are reflecting on the ill-
Servan,
repeat
e know
ish—the
commit,
or



or those which it can suffer ; at the horrible wickedness of the few, or the stupid patience of the whole.

“ We have seen what a wicked man would have blushed at foreseeing, and what a good man would have feared to imagine ; we have seen what those who have committed would not have believed in the history of others ; we have seen in one moment, and as it were by a thunder-bolt, the whole of France become only one frightful chaos, or rather one vast conflagration ; every principle, consecrated by necessity in every place, at all periods, and in every heart, spurned at or annihilated ; the overthrow of every custom, nay of prejudices and even habits ; the almost total exchange of property, which is more astonishing than its ruin ; beggary taking place of wealth, and wealth not daring to put itself into the place of beggary ; in the midst of which, a band of villains, but a handful compared

pared to the whole nation, scattered throughout the republic, subdued a people victorious without, and armed within. And this band of monsters were still greater in impudence than crimes; parading from city to city, from street to street, from place to place, from house to house, with robbery, pillage, famine, and assassination in their train; striking with the same poniard the prudence which was silent, or the truth that had the boldness to speak; pursuing the fearful man in his flight, after having murdered the intrepid citizen who scorned to fly. We have seen indeed the moment, when every man in France who was not a decided villain could not, without risking death every hour of the day, either be silent or speak out, either stay or fly;—and this was suffered by Frenchmen at the very period when they were the conquerors of the world.”

It was impossible that this state of ex-

treme violence could be permanent. The first dawning hope of deliverance arose from the quarrels of the different factions ; it was therefore with satisfaction, the cause of which the friends of liberty were cautious to dissemble, that they saw the party of the commune, of the war-minister, and of Danton, sent to the scaffold ; for there seemed no reason why other factions should not arise to displace, and also to bring to punishment, those who now wielded the revolutionary sceptre.

Though Danton was destroyed, his party was still numerous in the convention ; and it was asserted, that had he appeared at the tribune when he was accused, and denounced Robespierre, he would have sent his rival to the scaffold. Robespierre, who was conscious that he had not subdued the spirit, though he had taken off the head, of the faction, thought, like Cæsar, that nothing was done while any thing remained unfinished.

ed. He saw the difficulty that would attend his operations, if, to use Camille Desmoulins' expression, he continued to make "des coups réglés" in the forest of the convention, and therefore conceived, it seems, the hardy project of felling the whole wood at one stroke; of breaking up the convention as a gangrened body not worth partial applications, and taking the care of the state into his own hands.

The committees of public and general safety, which were the committees of government, were absolute in their administration, and the convention had dwindled into the most contemptible insignificance. The deputies met to hear a report for the sake of form, to clap their hands on the re-election of their tyrants when the periods arrived, or huzza at a carnage of Barrere; and were sent away at four o'clock to dinner, to call again the next morning at twelve.

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Although

Although Robespierre had succeeded in breaking them into this subordination, he had not so entirely checked the ambition of his fellow riders ; for there were some, who, though better dissemblers than the members of the late commune, beheld with as unsatisfied an eye the stretches which Robespierre's faction were making ; and which they saw would push them from their seats, as they had aided him in removing others.

The first step towards the acquisition of absolute power was the concentration of all authority in the committee of public safety. Robespierre had filled the vacant places in the commune with his own creatures, and the jacobins were his devoted subjects. All that remained, therefore, was to annihilate the powers of the committee of general safety, which took care of the lives and properties of the citizens, while the other was charged with the external affairs and the general

ral weal of the state; and unite in this last both individual and public welfare. To this proposition the members of the committee of general safety did not discover any readiness to assent; and though Robespierre had reigned with uncontrolled sway since the death of the Gironde, his ascendancy over his associates had not reached so far as to prevail with them to bend their necks, like the herd of the convention and the people, to his yoke.

These struggles had made a formal division at this period in the two committees, which had consisted for some time of two-parties; but whose coalition had been cemented hitherto by crimes and by blood. Robespierre's party in the committee of public safety was composed of St. Just, Couthon, and Barrere; in that of general safety, of David, Vadier, and some others; and though these committees were at hostili-

ties with each other, the interest of the ruffians was too closely united to bring their quarrel before the public. The ambition of Robespierre embarrassed them much, and it was more than once proposed that recourse should be had to the poniard. This plan, which was highly relished by many members of the committee, was vehemently opposed by a citizen, who, having been admitted into their councils, was often an instrument in the hands of providence of lessening individual horrors, and of saving many from destruction. He represented to them all the evils that would necessarily result from such an act of premature violence; that they might indeed kill the tyrant, but that they would infallibly be the victims themselves; that he would be considered by the people as a martyr, and they would be reputed his murderers; while forbearance and temporizing would push him on to some act of in-
consideration

consideration and folly, which they, who knew his treasonable designs, might lay hold on as an attempt to destroy the liberty of the republic; and the people would send him with execrations to the scaffold, whom, in the present state of things, they would perhaps be ignorantly induced to honour as a saint.

LET.

L E T T E R . V I I .

ROBESPIERRE, finding the committee so little inclined to pay him that submissive homage which was yielded to him by the rest of France, absented himself both from them and the convention during some weeks ; and began to prepare for open hostilities, with the assistance of the jacobins, the revolutionary tribunal, and the regenerated commune. The united strength of these bodies was very formidable, and the convention had nothing to oppose to them but the possibility of exciting rebellion against the constituted authorities ; for the military force was in the hands of Henriot, who was the devoted slave of Robespierre ; and the civil and revolutionary concerns of the sections of Paris

cen-

centred in the commune, the directors of which were of his immediate appointment. The jacobins bore sway over the whole, and he was the absolute monarch of the jacobins.

When Robespierre thought that his plan was sufficiently matured, he appeared at the tribune of the convention, which he had not entered for some time, and made a vehement harangue on the oppression which was exercised over himself, and against the operations of the committees; promising the convention, that he would propose the only means fitted to save the country.

His speech excited much agitation; the members appeared to listen to him with sensations similar to those of the inhabitants of some great city, who hear the murmurs of the earthquake, and feel the ground shake beneath them, but are ignorant where the gulph will open, and what part, or if the whole, will be swallowed

lowed up. The convention, although alarmed, and doubtful how to act, yet seeing the prospect of irremediable ruin before their eyes through the thin covering which the tyrant had thrown over his designs, assumed sufficient courage to debate on the prominent parts of his speech, which they ordered to be printed.

Having opened himself thus far to the convention, Couthon explained the speech more fully at the jacobins' in the evening. There he denounced the two committees of government as traitors, and insisted that the persons who composed those committees should be excluded from the society. The president of the revolutionary tribunal was the next commentator on Robespierre's speech, and pronounced without any reserve, that the convention should be purified also; which implied the entire dissolution of the representative body.

This purification was not to be confined

fined to the convention ; for the conspiracy against the republic had, to borrow the language of these regenerators, its authors and accomplices in every quarter of Paris. The fate of one description of those conspirators was so certain, that their graves were literally dug before their eyes, and graves of no ordinary extent. These were the multitude of prisoners who were waiting a more formal, but not less certain death, before the revolutionary tribunal. It had been proposed to build a scaffolding in the great hall of the Palais, resembling the hall of Westminster; where two or three hundred might be tried at once, instead of *fifty* or *sixty* as was the present mode. But it was now thought the great ends of national justice might be better answered by what was called emptying the prisons at once ; and that, as the sentence of these conspirators was already passed, the formality of their appearance

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ance at a tribunal might be dispensed with. For some days therefore labourers had been employed in several prisons of Paris, in making large excavations in their respective court-yards; and it was not concealed from many of the prisoners by their keepers, and even by the administrators of the police, how they were to be filled up. We cannot hesitate in believing this new instance of atrocity, when we compare the revolutionary language held by the chiefs on the necessity of quick expedients to get rid of traitors, together with the changes made just at this period in the keepers of the various prisons; since those who had most distinguished themselves for firmness of nerve in the commission of murders, had succeeded the ordinary ruffians* ;

and

* The jailor most celebrated for his atrocities was Benoit, who had been an executioner under the orders of Collot d'Herbois at Lyons, and who
at

and also, what is more certain evidence, the information of many of the prisoners, who, confined in different prisons, agree in relating the same facts. There is also little doubt that the nobles and strangers, who by the law of the fifteenth of Germinal were dispersed through the various communes of the republic, under the eye of tyrants, who were informed of their residence by the decennial returns of the several municipalities which they inhabited; would have shared the fate of the prisoners.

The convention in the mean time observed their usual submissive silence, although they well knew that certain

at this period was appointed keeper of the Luxembourg. His ferocious manners formed a lamentable contrast with the gentleness of the *good* Benoit whom I have mentioned in my former letters. I shall subjoin an article concerning him, which I have just received from the gentleman who has translated those letters into the German language. See Appendix, No. III.

portions.

portions of them were designated, lists of proscription having been discovered from the carelessness of those who were to co-operate in the bloody work. One was found by accident among the papers of Vilate, one of the revolutionary jury, who, being refractory on some particular point, had been arrested.

The same state of stupefaction which had led the convention to see former masses torn from their body, seemed still to benumb their faculties. Robespierre, whose secession from the committees had not rendered him less the master of their operations, flattered himself that the task was now perfectly easy; for, independent of his irresistible phalanxes, the jacobins, the revolutionary committees, the regenerated commune, and the military force of Paris, the terror which he had infused into the convention came powerfully to his aid.

The hours of the tyrant were nevertheless

theless numbered, and the moment approached when he was to make his account with eternal justice. The attack of Robespierre upon his colleagues on the morning of the 8th of Thermidor, and the commentary made by his accomplices at the jacobins' the same evening, roused the convention from their dishonourable lethargy, and they became bold from desperation.

The eventful day at length arrived, and both parties took their places in the hall of the convention with an air of affected calmness, while some ordinary business of the day went on; for no one even of the proscribed members seemed anxious to become the Curtius of the rest, although the next meeting of the jacobins, or the next motion of the municipality, might have decided the arrest of the whole of the convention, except Robespierre's faction. But St. Just having ascended the tribune, and begun a
speech

speech in the same whining tone which Robespierre had used the preceding day, complaining of the bad treatment he had received, and of the treason of his colleagues in the committee; Tallien, and Billaud Varennes, the former of whom was on the list of proscription, and the latter Robespierre's rival in the committee, overpowered his voice by their denunciations against the perfidious and horrible designs of the tyrants, which they unveiled to the convention. Robespierre, who was ignorant of this counter conspiracy, though he saw a disposition the preceding day to mutiny, was struck as with a thunderbolt. He made at length some attempts to speak; but his voice was drowned in the denunciations poured forth against him. Tallien insisted on his arrest: but the convention, under the impression of its habitual terror, contented itself with pronouncing that of his inferior agents; and

and it was not till Robespierre had mounted the tribune, and, with the air of a chief, called the convention a band of robbers, that Vadier, one of his former accomplices, obtained the vote of accusation, by turning evidence against him. Robespierre, seeing himself beset on every side, threw a look of piercing indignation towards his brother mountaineers, and reproached them for their cowardice. Hearing curses poured down upon him from every quarter, and seeing that his kingdom was departed from him, he called out in the fury of desperation to be led to death ; which the convention virtually decreed, in an unanimous vote of accusation against him. His colleagues St. Just, Couthon, Le Bas, and his own brother, were arrested at the same time, and after some resistance were led away to prison.

Thus far the convention had been successful ; for all parties had concurred
in

in the humiliation of a tyrant, by whom all had been equally oppressed. But the scene which the city presented was truly alarming. The jacobins, hearing of the insurrection against Robespierre, immediately assembled. The commune, which was ordered to the bar of the convention, instead of obeying, rang the tocsin to call the citizens to arms. Henriot, the commander of the military force, who had been arrested and led to the committee of general safety, was released, and parading the streets on horseback, while the cannoneers under his orders had loaded their pieces. Robespierre with his colleagues was delivered from prison by the administrators of the police, and, being installed at the hotel de ville, had outlawed the whole convention.

Had the conspirators acted with ordinary sagacity; had they immediately marched their cannon against the convention, which for some hours was only guarded

guarded by a small number of armed citizens, the triumph of Robespierre and the municipality would have been complete. But, happily for humanity, they wasted those moments in deliberations and harangues; whilst the convention, taking courage at the goodness of its cause, and in the hope of some sparks of remaining virtue in the people, discovered a disposition to defend themselves, and in a short time thousands flew to their aid. The hall of the jacobins was cleared by the energy of Legendre; and seven deputies were named as generals for the conventional cause against the commune, who were now declared to be in a state of rebellion, and put out of the law. Such at this moment was the state of Paris, when the commander of the military force, Henriot, appeared in the court of the convention, and ordered it to surrender. But he came too late: the convention was now prepared for de-

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fence, and answered his summons by putting him out of the law as well as his employers.

This "hors la loi" has the same effect on a Frenchman as if it were the cry of the pestilence : the object becomes civilly excommunicated, and a sort of contamination is apprehended if you pass through the air which he has breathed. Such was the effect which this decree produced upon the cannoneers, who had planted their artillery against the convention : without receiving any further instructions, except hearing that the commune were "hors la loi," they instantly turned their pieces. Henriot, seeing this unexpected resistance, and finding that the sections meant to deliberate before they put the convention to death, flunk back to the commune, who were also in a profound state of deliberation. In the mean time the convention had sent deputies into every quarter of the town,

town, to rally the citizens around the assembly; and they succeeded so well, that in a few hours the convention had an hundred thousand men to march against the commune. The hotel de ville was now besieged in its turn; and might have made a formidable resistance, had not the cannoneers of that quarter also heard of the "hors la loi," and refused to fire their pieces; while the immense multitude that were idly assembled in the place de Greve before the hotel, had taken possession of the carriages of the artillery to serve as ladders, from which they could stare into the windows, and crowds were mounted on the cannon to enjoy the spectacle. The conspirators now, abandoned, and, like Nero, having no friend or enemy at hand to dispatch them, had no means of escaping from ignominy but by a voluntary death, which they had not the courage to give themselves.


Catiline, it is said, was found at a con-

siderable distance from his friends, mingled amongst his enemies, with a countenance bold and daring in death. It is somewhat remarkable, that nearly two years since a writer, drawing the parallel, or rather the dissimilitude of character between Catiline and Robespierre, observed, that whenever the decisive moment of contest should arise between the parties which were formed after the 10th of August, Robespierre would perish; not plunged into the ranks of his foes, but be struck by some ignoble hand, and die from a wound in his back.

The conspirators, seeing that all resistance was fruitless, hid themselves or took to flight. Robespierre was found in an apartment of the hotel, and was sternly reminded by a gendarme that a supreme being really existed. Robespierre held a knife in his hand, but had not courage to use it; the gendarme fired at him with a
pistol,

pistol, and broke his jaw-bone; he fell, without uttering a word. His brother threw himself out of a window, and broke his thigh by the fall. Henriot had given his associates the strongest assurances that he was secure of the military force of Paris; and Coffinhal, a judge of the revolutionary tribunal, when he saw that all was lost, poured forth the most-bitter invectives against Henriot for having thus deceived them; and at length seizing him, in a fit of rage and despair, threw him out of a window. Henriot concealed himself a short time in a common-sewer, from whence he was dragged after having lost an eye. These criminals, with their accomplices, were brought, some on biers and others on foot, to the convention; from whence they were all sent to the Conciergerie, except Robespierre, who was carried into the anti-chamber of the committee of public safety, where those who attended him told me he lay stretch-

ed motionless on a table four hours, with his head bound up, and his eyes shut; making no answer to the taunting questions that were put to him, but pinching his thighs with convulsive agony, and sometimes looking round when he imagined no one was near. He underwent the operation of dressing his wounds, in order to prolong his existence a few hours; after which he was sent, with the rest of his associates, to the tribunal. The identification of their persons was all that was necessary, since they were *bors la loi*, and the sentence of execution against them was demanded by their former friend, Fouquier Tainville.

 On the evening of the 10th of Thermidor (the 28th of July 1794), these criminals were led to the scaffold. The frantic joy which the Parisians discovered on this occasion was equal to the pusillanimous stupor into which they had been hitherto plunged. The maledictions that

that accompanied the tyrants on their way to execution were not, as usual, the clamour of hireling furies; they proceeded with honest indignation from the lips of an oppressed people, and burst involuntarily from the heart of the fatherless and the widow. These monsters were made to drink the cup of bitterness to the very dregs. Many of them were so disfigured by wounds and bruises, that it was difficult to distinguish their persons, and little attention had been paid to alleviate these intermediate sufferings. In the mass perished Robespierre, his co-adjutors Couthon and St. Just; Henriot, the commander of the military force of Paris; the mayor of Paris; the national agent; the president of the jacobins; the president of the revolutionary tribunal; the sans-culotte preceptor of the young dauphin; and the agents of these leaders, to the number of twenty-two. The following day the members of the commune of

Paris, to the amount of seventy-two, were beheaded on the place de Greve; and twelve, on the day after, completed the list of the chiefs of the present conspiracy.

The bar of the convention, which had hitherto been the echo of the tyrants, applauding every barbarous measure, and sanctioning every atrocious deed, now resounded with gratulation and triumph upon the victory, and assurances, since it was gained, that those who offered the address would have shed the last drop of blood to have obtained it; or, according to the accustomed phrase, "have made a rampart of their bodies." This inconsistency on the part of the Parisians will not appear surprising, when we reflect that the city was divided into two parties—the murderers, who were now overthrown, and those who were to have been murdered, and who now exulted in their deliverance.

Considering the immense influence
which

which the terrorist faction, the denomination now given to Robespierre's supporters, had obtained both in Paris and in the departments, the whole of the administrations, both civil and military, throughout the republic being put into their hands, it is scarcely credible that so mighty an host should have been overthrown by one single effort, and in which no measures were prepared or combined.

The inhabitants of those *living sepulchres*, the prisons of Paris, felt with most ecstasy this happy revolution. Hope had entirely forsaken them; they had resigned themselves in fixed despair to that fate, which they believed to be inevitable.

The prisoners knew that some extraordinary scenes were passing in the city; for in all the prisons they had been ordered to retire to rest one hour earlier than usual, and to leave their doors unlocked; and at the same time they ob-

served an air of mystery on the faces of their keepers, which seemed to bode some near and dreadful evil.

The ringing of the tocsin during the night served to increase their apprehensions; they imagined a great tumult agitated the city, but concluded that it was only some stroke of more extensive tyranny that was about to be inflicted, and that would consolidate more firmly the power of the tyrants. In this state of torture they passed the night, and waited the light of the morning in all the pangs of terror and dismay. At length the morning returned, and the important secret had not yet penetrated the walls of the prisons; but a feeling like hope animated the sinking spirits of the prisoners, when, with the searching eye of anxious expectation, they sought to read their fate in the countenances of their jailors, and there discovered evident marks of disappointment and dejection, while

while some relaxation from their habitual severity succeeded the extraordinary precautions and rigour of the preceding day.

They were not however long held in suspense. In some of the prisons the newspaper of the past evening was procured at an enormous price: but who could rate too high the purchase which brought the tidings of deliverance? In some of the prisons, the citizens who were obliged to perform the painful office of guards within their gloomy courts, contrived to tell the prisoners in monosyllables breathed in whispers (for all intercourse between the guards and the prisoners was sternly prohibited), that the hour of hope and mercy beamed upon their sufferings. In other prisons they were informed of what was passing, by women who displayed upon the roofs of houses, which overlooked at a distance

the prison walls, the names of Robespierre and his associates, written in such broad characters that the prisoners with the aid of glasses could read them plainly; and after presenting the name, the generous informer shewed by expressive gestures, that the head of him who bore that name had fallen.

A military gentleman who was confined in the prison of the Abbey told me, that, after having passed the night of the 27th of July, in the immediate expectation of being massacred, all his fears were instantly relieved by a very slight circumstance. The prisoners had long been denied the consolation of any interview with their friends; the utmost privilege allowed them was that of writing upon the direction of the packets of linen, when they were sent to their houses to be washed, or received from thence, after a very strict examination, “ Je me
 I porte

porte bien *.” The wife of this gentleman, to whom she was tenderly attached, used every day to write with an aching heart upon the packet, “ Je me porte bien.” On the morning of the 28th of July, the packet arrived as usual; but one monosyllable and one note of admiration were added to the direction: “ Ah, que je me porte bien † !” With an emotion of transport which told him his misfortunes were at an end, he read those little words, and hailed the blessed augur.

During many hours the fall of the tyrant was repeated with cautious timidity through the dreary mansions of confinement, and the prisoners related to each other the eventful tale, as if they feared that

“ More than echoes talked along the walls.”

Even the minds of those who were at li-

* I am well.

† Ah, how well I am!

berty,

erty, were too strongly fettered by terror to bear the sudden expansion of joy ; and the gentleman who first brought the tidings to my family that Robespierre was arrested, after having been blamed for his imprudence in mentioning such a circumstance before some strangers who were present, said in a tone of resentment, " This is the fourth family which I have endeavoured to make happy by this news ; and instead of being thanked for the intelligence, all are afraid to hear it."

At length, however, the clouds of doubt, mistrust, and apprehension vanished, the clear sunshine of joy beamed upon every heart, and every eye was bathed in tears of exultation. Yet those overwhelming emotions were empoisoned by bitter regrets. Every individual had to lament some victim to whom he was bound by the ties of nature, of gratitude, or of affection ; and many were doomed to mourn over a friend, a father,

or a husband, whom a month, a week, a day would have snatched from death. With peculiar pangs those victims were regretted, who were led to execution, to the number of nearly sixty, on the 27th of July, without guards, the military having been called to the aid of the convention on the arrest of Robespierre. It was recollected when too late, it was re-echoed through Paris with a general feeling of remorse, that one word might have rescued those last martyrs of tyranny from death, and that yet they were suffered to perish.

If any private individual had from the gallery, or at the bar of the convention, demanded a respite, there is no doubt it would immediately have been granted. The heart dilates at the idea of that sublime happiness which he would have prepared for himself, who should thus have rescued the innocent. What evil could malignity or misfortune have inflicted

dicted upon a mind, which could have repelled them with the consciousness of such an action? But tyranny, like "guilt, makes cowards of us all;" every man trembled for himself; the event of the day yet hung in suspense, and the sufferers were left to die.

Soon after the execution of Robespierre, the committee of general safety appointed a deputation of its members to visit the prisons, and speak the words of comfort to the prisoners; to hear from their own lips the motives of their captivity, and to change the bloody rolls of proscription into registers of promised freedom. In the mean time orders for liberty arrived in glad succession; and the prisons of Paris, so lately the abodes of hopeless misery, now exhibited scenes which an angel of mercy might have contemplated with pleasure.

The first persons released from the Luxembourg were mons. and madame Bitauby,

Bitauby, two days after the fall of Robespierre. When they departed, the prisoners, to the amount of nine hundred persons, formed a lane to see them pass; they embraced them, they bathed them with tears, they overwhelmed them with benedictions, they hailed with transport the moment which gave themselves the earnest of returning freedom: but the soul has emotions for which the lips have no utterance, and the feelings of such moments may be imagined, but cannot be defined.

Crowds of people were constantly assembled at the gates of the prisons, to enjoy the luxury of seeing the prisoners snatched from their living tombs, and restored to freedom: that very people, who had beheld in stupid silence the daily work of death, now melted in tears over the sufferers, and filled the air with acclamations at their release.

Among a multitude of affecting scenes
which

which passed at those prison-doors, where the wife, after a separation like that of death, again embraced her husband—where children clung upon the necks of their long-lost parents—none were more interesting than the unbounded transports of a little boy of six years of age, the son of mons. de F——, when his father met him at the gate, and while he pressed him in his arms with an emotion which choked his voice. This child was particularly remarked, having engaged the affections of many persons in the neighbourhood by his behaviour during his father's long confinement. He had never failed to come every day bounding along the terrace of the Luxembourg, till he approached the walls of the prison; and when he reached the sentinel, he always pulled off his hat very respectfully, and, looking up in his face with a supplicating air, enquired, *Citoyen, vous me permettrez de saluer mon papa?*

*papa**? and unless when he spoke to those "who never had a son," his petition was generally granted. He then used to kiss his hands again and again to his father, and play over his sportive tricks before him, while the parent's tears followed each other in swift succession.

All the little artifices which affection had prompted to cheat the watchful severity of unrelenting jailors, and soften the agonies of separation by the charm of mutual intercourse, were now disclosed. And it was found that love and friendship had been more vigilant than suspicion itself; had eluded its wakeful eye; and, in spite of triple bolts, and guards, and spies, had poured forth those effusions of tenderness, those assurances of fidelity not to be shaken by the frown of tyrants, which cheered the gloom of the prison, and awakened in the heart

* Citizen, you will give me leave to kiss my hand to my papa?

of

of the captive those luxurious feelings
that arise when

————— “ sweet remembrance sooths
With virtue’s kindest looks the aching breast,
And turns our tears to rapture.”

Sometimes pieces of paper carelessly torn,
and sent at different periods wrapped
round fruit or vegetables, when the scat-
tered scraps were rejoined by the pri-
soner, communicated the tidings he was
most anxious to hear. Sometimes a
tender billet was found inclosed within a
roasted fowl; and when the period arrived
at which no nourishment was suffered to
be sent to the prisoners, the fainting
frame was occasionally revived by rich
and cordial wines, which were conveyed
on the pretence of sickness, labelled as
bottles of medicine. But one of the
pious frauds most successfully employed
was the agency of a dog. His master
was confined in the prison of the Lux-
embourg,



embourg, and the faithful animal contrived every day to get into the prison, and penetrate as far as his chamber, when he used to overwhelm him with caresses, and seem to participate in his distress. His wife, who was at liberty, but deprived of all intercourse with her husband, used to caress the dog upon his return from the prison with the same kind of emotion with which Werter gazed upon the little ragged boy whom he sent to see Charlotte when he was prevented from seeing her himself. At length the idea suggested itself to the lady of inclosing a billet within the dog's collar; she contrived to give her husband some intimation of her scheme, which she immediately put in practice. From that period the four-legged courier, furnished with his invisible packet, marched boldly forward every day at the appointed hour through hosts of foes, and, in defiance of revolutionary edicts, laid
his

his dispatches and his person at his master's feet.

Paris was now converted into a scene of enthusiastic pleasure. The theatres, the public walks, the streets, resounded with the songs of rejoicing; the people indulged themselves in all the frolic gaiety which belongs to their character; and all the world knows that joy is no where so joyous as at Paris, which seems the natural region of Pleasure, who, though scared away for a while by sullen tyrants, soon returns upon her light wing, like the wandering dove, and appears to find on no other spot her proper place of rest.

Upon the fall of Robespierre, the terrible spell which bound the land of France was broken; the shrieking whirlwinds, the black precipices, the bottomless gulphs, suddenly vanished; and reviving nature covered the wastes with flowers, and the rocks with verdure.

All

All the fountains of public prosperity and public happiness were indeed poisoned by that malignant genius, and therefore the streams have since occasionally run bitter; but the waters are regaining their purity, are returning to their natural channels, and are no longer disturbed and sullied in their course.

I shall, in a short time, send you an account of the events which have succeeded the fall of Robespierre, and which wind up the singular drama of revolutionary government conformably to the most rigid rules of poetical justice; or rather let me say, that we see heaven calming the doubts of human weakness on its mysterious ways, by the triumph of innocence and the expiation of guilt.

The eventful scenes of the last winter will lead us to the present moment at which revolutionary government ceases, and a new constitution is presented to the people of France. The vessel of
the

the state, built with toil and trouble, and cemented with blood, will soon be launched. We have yet seen nothing but disjointed planks, and heard only the discordant turbulence of the hammer and the anvil. The fabric is at length erected; and it now remains to be tried, if it be framed of materials sufficiently firm and durable to defy the shock of the conflicting elements, and float majestically down the stream of time.

A P P E N D I X.

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A P P E N D I X.

No. I.

At the Prison of the Force, December 5th, O. S.
5th Nivose.

I HAVE just read the evening paper. I find my name in the decree of accusation proposed by Robespierre; in a few moments, perhaps, I shall be thrown into the dungeons of the Conciergerie. I know not on what grounds an indictment can be found against me, after four months having elapsed since the trial of my father, during which time I have been in no respect inculpated; and I shall find no difficulty in proving my innocence

against any accusation whatever. Nevertheless, the minds of the jury are sometimes *so easily and so suddenly convinced*, that I feel it is my duty to throw a few lines on paper to fill up what I may omit at the tribunal. I am trying to conjecture what may be imputed to me. I owe it to my son, to my wife, to my friends, and may at least an unfulfilled reputation be an heritage which no tribunal can take away! And first, I find my name joined with those of Biron and Dietrich. [Here he observes that his connections with either were of too slight a nature to be imputed by the tyrants to him as a crime; though he considers them both as men of character and integrity. He then continues:] It is probably on the subject of my diplomatic career at the epocha prior to the war, when I was sent on a secret mission to the duke of Brunswick, that I am about to be questioned. The nature of this last negotiation would have

have imposed silence on me for ever, if powerful reasons and imperious necessity did not oblige me to break it at present.

The minister Narbonne, whom I know but slightly, and with whom I never had any other connection than that of which I am going to speak, sent to me at Strasbourg, where I was at the end of November 1791, and informed me that the king was desirous of sending me to the duke of Brunswick to propose to him to take the command in chief of the French armies. On the first view, this project excited only doubts and objections in my mind. Narbonne was pressing, and seemed anxious for the regeneration of the army, and the solid establishment of the constitution. He gave me, as well as his colleague the minister of foreign affairs, Lessart, proofs and indications by which I believed, and was bound to believe, that Lewis the sixteenth was equally solicitous on this account. I never saw Lessart but

two or three times; he appeared to adopt, though with less warmth, the project of Narbonne, and begged me to compose a memorial on this subject, detailing the different considerations which I had presented. When I spoke of the impossibility of succeeding in such a negotiation, Narbonne denied this, and agreed only in admitting that there might be some difficulties.

When I spoke of the impression it might possibly make on the public, and the influence it would have on the cause of liberty, he answered that the best patriots were in raptures at the project, and that its success alone, by giving us consideration abroad, and order in the army, would prevent a war, and secure us against any fear of foreign invasion, on account of the reputation and great talents of the duke of Brunswick. I at length wrote the memorial which the two ministers had requested. I presented
in

in a forcible manner the almost insurmountable difficulties which resulted from the political and military character of the duke of Brunswick, from his quality as prince of the empire, as chief of the eldest branch of the house of Hanover, the ally of that of Prussia. I also observed, that whoever should undertake such a mission ought to be authorized to speak of affairs foreign to this special proposition; and I concluded by saying, that if I undertook it, I was almost certain of returning without having made the least progress in this delicate business; and that I was determined not to hazard such a proposition, if there was any danger of its being received in a manner injurious to the dignity of the national character, and without that respect and attention which could alone justify its being made.

My memorial was read in the council, and Lewis the sixteenth and his ministers

K 4

decided

decided on my departure. The ministers of foreign affairs and of war, for I never saw but those two, gave me the information.

Had I had thirty or fifty years of experience, which I think I have since acquired, I should have held fast to my objections, and should have remained at home; but being only twenty-three years of age, I departed; determined nevertheless to preserve the circumspect conduct I had prescribed myself. It will be seen by my four dispatches from Brunswick annexed, that the kind reception which the duke gave me, his conversation, which was interesting, and sometimes sufficiently philosophic to induce me to think that he approved of many things in the French revolution, led me to make overtures. It will be observed also, that having foreseen the little probability of success in this enterprise, I
broke

broke silence only because I had the certainty of producing an impression, at which I myself was astonished.

Those who are well acquainted with the duke of Brunswick, will readily perceive that my recital is exact, and will find his character in those conversations; but a circumstance which I ought not to have related at that time determined me more strongly to open to him the subject of my mission. I was on the point of leaving Brunswick without having spoken of any thing but the general interests of France with respect to the empire, when I heard the calumnious reports which were spread relative to the minister Segur at Berlin; accusations of perfidious projects, of corrupted and scandalous measures unworthy of a free people, whose success ought to be founded only on its strength and its virtue. My silence would also have exposed me to those

vile suspicions, and I should have passed for a man who was labouring in the same spirit, and practising the same manœuvres at Brunswick in a subordinate commission, and of having only worn the mask on account of the bad success of Segur : I went therefore directly to the point, in order to clear up the whole.

It will be seen that the proposition was received *more than decently* (plus que décentment), and that the answers of the duke left me room to return, and to dwell on it with probability of success.

Soon after appeared that vitiated political system, and which I am far from the self-reproach of not having opposed, which armed all the princes of Europe against us, and drew us some months after into a general war.

A few decrees adopted by the legislative assembly with respect to foreign powers, destroyed the hopes which I still retained ;

tained; and I wrote, that no further ideas must be entertained of success. Such was the conclusion of this business.

Lefart and Narbonne * had written to me in the most flattering manner on the opening and progress of the negotiation; and I answered them, as may be seen by my dispatches, that having seen the duke of Brunswick again after fifteen days absence, I had found him totally changed in his dispositions.

Some persons then said, that the object of this mission was to operate a change of dynasty in France in favour of the duke of Brunswick. This report, I am told, had circulated in England, and arose in the beginning from the divisions between Lameth and Narbonne. In those kinds of quarrels every means of doing injury are employed with too much indifference. This secret and concealed project has

* See their letters, which I received at Berlin.

since been imputed to Narbonne. The idea never came into my mind ; and besides I believed, and had every reason to believe myself sufficiently secure against any apprehension of this sort, by the agreement and formal consent of Lewis the sixteenth, and perhaps still more by the equal adherence of the two ministers Narbonne and Lessart, who were enemies, and who would not have failed to take advantage of such a suspicion to have opposed and ruined each other, if there had been any foundation for so doing. As for myself, could I have been the instrument of so abominable a project as that of giving new masters to my country ! Could I traffic with its throne, or its liberty, to serve the purposes of my own ambition, or that of any one in the world ! I shudder at the thought ; and knowing no other foundation for the report than the idle assertions of men whom the patriots have long since proscribed, I do not

not imagine that such a suspicion can be formed against me in their minds.

The order to go to Berlin, and replace Segur, met me at Brunswick. Our affairs were there ruined. I was therefore placed in a most difficult and critical situation. I thought however, that being already as it were in the place, at an epocha already too long delayed, it was my duty to go. A circumspect yet open conduct was my safeguard amidst this stormy career. But the political system of that period, which did not fail to gain soon a considerable ascendancy, and which from the first days of the administration of Dumourier drew on the declaration of war against Austria, left it altogether impossible for me to begin any important negotiation with success. I refer for what remains, to my dispatches, where it will be seen that I had to succeed a man whose mission was for peace ; that the new administration had

had changed the system; that the acknowledged dispositions of the Prussian cabinet, which I had carefully observed and minuted, imposed on me as my severest task to combat with our own government, and to destroy and refute a thousand false suppositions, a thousand false hopes. But my dispatches contain every thing, absolutely every thing: I can only add some private letters, by which I endeavoured to shew the impossibility of gaining any attention to various arguments which were pointed out to me with great confidence, and various means by which they flattered themselves that the king of Prussia would adopt our new political system. I did not conceal a single moment what the intentions and steps of the cabinet of Berlin were; and I was not a little surpris'd on my return to hear Dumourier, who had overwhelmed me with compliments on my mode of seeing

seeing and judging, say with a tone of assurance, in the drawing-room, " Yes, the Prussians are on their march ; but you will be much astonished when you see that it is *to assist us in destroying the house of Austria* *."

[The remainder of this interesting memorial of Mr. Custine is filled with affairs that concern only himself. He says that the ill state of his health, on his return from Berlin, obliged him to retire to the country, and that he had never discovered the least ambition to obtain any considerable employment. He speaks also of the letters which he wrote to Le Brun, on the massacre of the French

* Dumourier sent to Berlin while I was there, and which he made a mystery to me, an agent empowered by him to make propositions which I had combated in many of my dispatches. The success of this mission, of which I was informed by chance, proved to him that I was not deceived.

troops

troops at Frankfort.] "Since that time," he continues, "a few letters to my father, in which I spoke of his situation, of the line of conduct which he had to observe; different considerations, in fine, on which he ought to fix his attention in order to secure success, have been the only measures in which I have indirectly interested myself in public affairs. Sometimes he has commissioned me to urge the expedition of certain demands which he had made, and I fulfilled his orders punctually; and, situated as I was, I neither had nor could have any more intimate knowledge of his plans and operations. I do not speak of them, nor can I enter into that subject at this time. History will judge them. I could wish to have written this paper in a manner less confused, and less incomplete; but the necessity I was under of keeping no papers by me, obliged me to leave thus imperfect this
necessary

necessary preface to the following dispatches." [Those letters and dispatches are under the national seals, and cannot yet be obtained.]

No. II.

I ALSO saw the experiments which Marat published on light and fire, and which had excited my curiosity. The independent character which that man, since become so noted, displayed, induced me to seek his acquaintance, and we became intimately connected. Marat related to me certain circumstances of his life, which increased my esteem for him. He held himself forth as the apostle of liberty, and had written when in England, in 1775, a work on this subject, which was entitled *The chains of slavery*. In this publication he unmasked the corruption of the court and of the administration. The work he told me had made a great noise in England, and that he had been rewarded by valuable presents, and by his admission into corporations, and the freedom of several cities. He spoke to me of his connection with
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the celebrated Kau man ; of his prodigious success in practice ; which was so great, that on his *debut* at Paris he was paid thirty-six livres every visit, and had not time sufficient for all the consultations to which he was called. Though he was very well lodged, I did not see that sort of luxury which might have been the result of the wealth that was showered on him. But I have already observed that I was habitually credulous ; and it is only in going over the different circumstances of my connection with this detestable man, in bringing into one point of view the part which he has acted in this revolution, that I have been convinced of the quackery which through his whole life directed and veiled his actions and his writings.

Marat told me, that having made great discoveries in natural philosophy, he quitted practice, which at Paris was the profession only of a quack, and unworthy
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of himself. But while he renounced his profession he sold from time to time remedies and bottles, the efficacy of which he warranted, and he was very careful to name the price. I recollect that, a wart on my hand having struck his eye, he sent me a bottle of very limpid water, for which I thanked him, and asked him the price, which was twelve livres. I made no use of the remedy. Marat had given me some mistrust, if not of his success, at least of his medical knowledge. He told me one day, that, in order to cure himself of the colic, he wanted to have his belly opened, but that, happily for him, the surgeon had not the complaisance to comply with his desire.

Marat was so entirely full of himself, of his discoveries, and of the glory which he fancied he deserved, that he did not appear to me to feel the slightest impression of beauty, and he was certainly little calculated to please. Nevertheless, he
had

had found the secret of exciting an attachment in madame la marquise de L——, a woman whose elegant mind rendered her conversation highly interesting. Being separated from her husband, who was overwhelmed with debts, and dishonoured by a course of infamous conduct, she put herself under the care of Marat; who did not confine his attentions to her as a physician, but was ambitious of succeeding the husband. This union for a long time astonished me. The lady was soft, amiable, and good; and there was nothing so disgusting, violent, and savage in domestic life as Marat.

I must do him the justice to observe, that the rigour which he exercised against others, he exercised also on himself. Insensible of the pleasures of the table, and the enjoyments of life, he consecrated all his time and his money to philosophical experiments. Employed night
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and day in repeating them, he would have been contented with bread and water, in order to have the pleasure of humbling at some future day the academy of sciences. This was the *ne plus ultra* of his ambition. Enraged at the academicians, who had treated his first essays with contempt, he thirsted with the desire of vengeance, and to overturn the first of their idols, Newton; for which purpose he employed himself wholly in experiments destined to destroy his principles of optics. To combat and overthrow the reputation of celebrated men, was his ruling passion: such was the motive which dictated the first of his works, his treatise on *the principles of man*, which appeared in 1775, in three volumes, and which Voltaire burlesqued in his questions on the Encyclopædia.

The system of Helvetius was then in the greatest vogue, and it was against Helvetius that Marat wished to enter the

lists. Certainly Voltaire was in the right to ridicule some of the propositions and extravagancies of Marat, but he did not do him justice in other points of view.

The academicians, for instance, were violently animated against his experiments on light, on fire, and on electricity; and I have never seen any of them distinguish or acknowledge what was new or valuable in his experiments; nor did they wish his name even to be pronounced, so fearful were they of contributing even by their criticisms to his celebrity. I own that this injustice on the part of the class of experimental philosophers has always disgusted me; and this was what dictated a chapter in my treatise on truth, on academical prejudice, page 353, which I composed at the end of a long and warm dispute I had with the geometrician La P——, which chapter is a faithful recital of this dispute. La P—— might possibly be in the right,
and

and I might answer with too much harshness ; but I could not bear the insolence and despotism with which they treated a philosopher, because he did not like themselves wear a gown.

I followed Marat's experiments for three years ; and I thought that some esteem was due to a man who had buried himself in solitude to enlarge the bounds of science ; not indeed that this was his first view ; for he regarded only himself, he speculated on the sciences only for his own glory, and was anxious to raise his reputation on the wreck of that of others.

He had not failed to observe, that journalists were privileged distributors of fame ; but his vanity, insolence, and arrogance, had made him totally neglected by those whose good offices he sought after. He knew that I was connected with many amongst them ; and I believe it is to this circumstance that I was indebted for that kind of attachment which

which he professed for me for so many years. He was continually sending to me extracts from his works, and criticisms written on them with his own hand. I never could have conceived that any one could have had the impudence to bestow so many praises on himself; but considering him only as a person suffering under literary oppression, I exerted myself in making his works known, and I often succeeded. He never thanked me; and the reason was, that in spite of my esteem for his knowledge and his discoveries, I did not fully share in the admiration which he complaisantly felt for himself; and being sometimes in doubt as to the truth of his propositions, I undertook to soften his exaggerations, especially in the praising parts. This modesty which I felt on his account he never forgave.

As I earnestly wished for his success, I continued to bring him new acquaint-

ance to see his experiments. I know not by what fatality, every one left his house very well pleased with his philosophical feats, and very ill satisfied with the philosopher. He expressed himself with difficulty, his ideas were confused; and as his vanity was easily awakened by the slightest opposition, or the least sign of contempt or indifference, he became suddenly enraged, and his fury rose to such a height, that his ideas were disordered, and he lost his recollection. I saw one day a striking instance of this inflammability: Volta, so celebrated for his experiments on electricity, was very curious to see those which Marat announced as overturning the theory of Franklin; but scarcely had he repeated a few of them, and heard one or two objections, than, suspecting Volta's incredulity, he insulted him grossly, instead of answering his objections.

He was however conscious of his
difficulty

difficulty in speaking; and of his want of temper in conversation, which were the reason why he sought the acquaintance of a literary man who had abilities for speaking, and who could display his theory for him; after which he would have appeared in his temple like a god, to receive the incense of simple mortals.

He made me this proposition several times. I objected on account of my timidity, and my ignorance in experimental philosophy. He promised to initiate me in a short time into the most abstruse mysteries of his discoveries. I constantly persisted in my refusal, because I did not wish to be any man's second; because I never had any very strong passion for that branch of knowledge; because I did not think myself sufficiently skilled in making experiments; and in fine, because my feelings led me rather to shun Marat, than become more intimately connected with him. Curiosity, and the

wish to procure information, had made me seek his acquaintance; the desire of being useful to him, because he seemed oppressed, had induced me to keep up that acquaintance; but he had never inspired me with any of those sentiments that constitute the delight of friendship.

It was from a sentiment of humanity that I procured him the sale of his books, and little chests of instruments; from the earnestness which he discovered in collecting the little profit of his works, I judged that he was in distress, although he had too much pride to acknowledge it. Alas! this service, which I did him gratuitously, has since furnished him matter for treating me with the most atrocious insults in one of his numbers. So far was I from withholding the money for his works, that I would have shared my purse with him, had I then been provided for myself.

I have at all times done justice to
Marat,

Marat, and I will continue to do so, though I owe to him a part of the persecutions which I am now suffering. He was indefatigable in labour, and had great address in making experiments; a tribute which I heard Franklin once render him, who was enchanted with his experiments on light. I cannot say so much on those for fire and electricity. Marat thought he had made discoveries which overthrew the system of Franklin; but Franklin was not the dupe of his quackery. Le Roy, the academician, who was named commissary to examine his discoveries on light, agreed that those which he had made on the prism were ingenious, and that Marat had a singular talent in making them. His report was in many respects favourable, but some of the academicians forced him to suppress it.

Marat was most earnestly solicitous to obtain an eulogium from the academy

of sciences, and this earnestness suggested the idea of a stratagem which cost him immense labour. He undertook making a new translation of Newton's Principia on optics. This was a new mode of destroying the system ; for I have no doubt but that he made alterations in translating it. He wished the academy to give their approbation of this translation ; but his name would have excited their suspicions, and led them to examine the work with more severity. In order to avoid suspicion, he proposed to many of his friends, to lend him their name ; and he succeeded with Bauffée, the grammarian, a weak and easy man, who was not aware of Marat's manœuvres. With Bauffée's name, the commissaries of the academy did not hesitate to give, without reading, their approbation and praises to the work of their enemy. I cannot tell what advantage he reaped from it ; for this translation is unknown,

known, though it is magnificently printed. Marat made me a present of a copy of it on vellum paper in the beginning of the revolution.

At this period Marat was poor, and lived wretchedly; and though since my return from America I have not conversed with him, I do not think that he has changed his principles. He is accused of venality and corruption; but I have never forborne repeating, that he was above corruption. Marat had but one single passion—that of being foremost in the career which he was running. Anxiety for fame was his disease, for he had not that of avarice. He was of a bilious habit, and passionate in his disposition, obstinate in his sentiments, and persevering in his conduct. We may judge of his perseverance from one trait—that although he was under the greatest embarrassment in speaking, he has nevertheless exhibited himself in every tribune.

bunc. He forgot every thing in pursuit of his favourite object.

His earnestness to obtain his ends made him employ all sorts of means, lies and calumny of every kind : he was an actor in every thing. He defended the people as he defended truth in natural philosophy ; not for the sake of being useful to the people, for Marat despised them, but in order to accomplish his designs. He found flattery the best mode of obtaining the suffrages of the mob, he therefore flattered them : had tyranny promised him better success, he would have preferred it : but a man must be a tribune before he becomes a tyrant.

All his motions were those of a mountebank. He looked like a puppet, whose head and arms were moved at the will of the puppet-show-man. Every thing was abrupt and unconnected in his discourses, as well as in his gestures, because

Because nothing proceeded from his heart, but all from his head, and every thing was artificial.

Marat loved no man, and had no belief in virtue. He was selfish, never bestowed praise on any writer, and seemed as if all talents and all genius were concentrated in himself. He very seriously imagined that he alone was capable of governing France, and intrusted it in confidence to some friends, who were obliged to support the party which protected him, for the chiefs of which he had the most profound contempt.

I have said that he was daring; notwithstanding which, he was not brave. He had neither the courage of a gladiator, nor that of a philosopher; though he wanted one day to fight with Charles, because he had not spoken with respect of his experiments; and he was continually talking of blood, and challenging the whole world. This rhodomontade
never

never imposed on me, for I had seen him too nearly. He was violent, but not courageous; under despotism he was afraid of the Bastille, and since the reign of liberty he has been always in fear of prisons. I shall mention two traits on this head to shew his character.

Marat in 1780 was a candidate for the prize given by the œconomical society of Berne on the question of the reform of the criminal law. This society delayed every year pronouncing its judgment. In 1782, I advertised my collection of criminal laws in ten volumes. Marat begged me to insert the memoir which he had addressed to the society. There was a boldness in this essay which might prove disagreeable to government. I asked Marat if he wished his name to appear. "By no means," answered he, "for the Bastille is there, and I do not much like to be shut up:" and he left me to run the chance, as my name was at the head of the collection.

I met him one day in the Thuilleries, in 1786 or 87 : it was a long time since I had seen him. We talked of his works, I asked him why he was so bent on pursuing natural philosophy, when he had against him all the academies and all the philosophers. I advised him to consecrate his labours to politics. "It is time." I observed to him, "to think of overturning despotism : join your labours to mine, and to those enlightened men who have sworn its overthrow, and this undertaking will cover you with glory." Marat answered, that he would rather continue his experiments in peace, because philosophy did not lead to the Bastille, and he made me understand very plainly, that the French people were not sufficiently ripe, nor sufficiently courageous, to support a revolution.

When the Bastille was overthrown, Marat was no longer afraid of it, and quitted his cave. He even pretended at
 this

this period, that all the honours of this glorious revolution belonged to himself; and making up some sort of story about a colonel of dragoons whom he had arrested on the Pont-Neuf, he entreated me to print it in the *Patriote François*. He bestowed so many extravagant praises on himself in the account, that I could not carry my complaisance so far. I therefore struck out the praises, and published the fact; which Marat never forgave. As he despaired of finding journalists who would flatter him, he undertook a journal himself, which I advertised with an eulogium, in order to get him subscribers: and in doing him this service, which I never refused to any of my brother journalists, I thought I did service to the public. Good God! how great was my error! and what was my surprise, when I read some of his numbers! How was it possible that a writer who had any respect for himself could become so degraded as

to make use of a style so vile, scandalous, and atrocious !

I own that I thought Marat a mean writer, an inconsistent logician, incredulous as to morals, ambitious, an enemy to all men of talents ; but I did not think that he would violate every principle, every law, so far as to calumniate the most virtuous men, and preach massacre and pillage I stop here And I finish with this reflection : Whatever injury Marat may have done me, I forgive ; but I can never forgive him for having corrupted the morals of the people, and having inspired them with a taste for blood ; for without morals and without humanity there is no republic.

I have thought it right to enlarge with respect to this man, because he is better known from that part of his life preceding the revolution than that which followed. Since 1789, he has been constantly

(230.)

stantly on stilts ; before that period, you saw him at home, and more like himself.

In spite of the provocations of Marat, I have never thought it right to reveal to the world the circumstances which I have just related. Personal discussions have always been disagreeable to me, and seemed to me only fitted to serve the purposes of the enemies of the revolution.

No. III.

No. III.

WE find innumerable testimonies in favour of this incomparable man. A person of ordinary humanity would have refused so disagreeable a post, but Benoit was a *hero in humanity*. His noble soul calculated only the quantity of good which he might be able to do in this situation in preference to any other, and the evil which he could prevent; both of which were attended with imminent danger to himself. He was not indeed expressly chosen for this function; but being in possession of the place of concierge at the palace of the Luxembourg before the revolution, he was continued in his employment. Benoit is a native of Switzerland; he was born in a beautiful little village named Chamberlen, in the county of Neufchatel, at the distance of a league and a half from the town. I have had the satisfaction to relate to his

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sister,

sister, an honest farmer's wife of Chamberlen, all the good that was said and written about her brother, and I translated those passages from miss Williams's letters. She wept for joy, and exclaimed with enthusiasm and exultation, that she would relate to every one in her village all the good things that were said of her brother. As a mark of her gratitude, she brought me from her home her apron-full of excellent *moyel*, a sort of fruit the name of which I am unacquainted with.

I take occasion to add, that this excellent person was carried at length before the revolutionary tribunal, for the exercise of some act of humanity towards one of the miserable victims under his care. He escaped; and, by one of those singular providential occurrences which seemed to have no direction but that of chance, I was the happy instrument of his being saved. The commissary who arrested him, and upon whose report
and

and evidence his fate was suspended, happened to be my visitor at the moment ; and I did not forget at this critical period the obligations my family owed to Benoit. The commissary respected my representations and my entreaties ; the report and the evidence were softened, and Benoit's life was preserved ; which would otherwise have been forfeited, for he had in truth been guilty of the act of humanity with which he was charged.

Benoit is a protestant. He told us, when we were first his prisoners, that he had been accustomed to see us every Sunday at church ; and we probably owed part of the superior kind treatment we experienced to this consideration. We had the best apartments in the Luxembourg, which we ceded to the former duchess of Orleans, who remained in quiet possession till the fall of Robespierre.



R. B. H.
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