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of qualities for him. In that forty-years 'struggle against despotism,' he has gained the glorious faculty of *self-help*, and yet not lost the glorious natural gift of *fellowship*, of being helped. Rare union: this man can live self-sufficing—yet lives also in the life of other men; can make men love him, work with him; a born king of men!

But consider further how, as the old Marquis still snarls, he has "made away with (*humé*, swallowed, snuffed-up) all *Formulas*;"—a fact which, if we meditate it, will in these days mean much. This is no man of system, then; he is only a man of instincts and insights. A man nevertheless who will glare fiercely on any object; and see through it, and conquer it: for he has intellect, he has will, force beyond other men. A man not with *logic-spectacles*; but with an *eye*! Unhappily without Decalogue, moral Code or Theorem of any fixed sort; yet not without a strong living Soul in him, and Sincerity there: a Reality, not an artificiality, not a Sham! And so he, having struggled 'forty years against despotism,' and 'made away with all formulas,' shall now become the spokesman of a Nation bent to do the same. For is it not precisely the struggle of France also to cast off despotism; to make away with *her* old formulas,—having found them naught, worn out, far from the reality? She will make away with *such* formulas;—and even go *bare*, if need be, till she have found new ones.

Towards such work, in such manner, marches he, this singular Riquetti Mirabeau. In fiery rough figure, with black Samson-locks under the slouch-hat, he steps along there. A fiery fuliginous mass, which could not be choked and smothered, but would fill all France with smoke. And now it has got *air*; it will burn its whole substance, its whole smoke-atmosphere too, and fill all France with flame. Strange lot! Forty years of that smouldering, with foul fire-damp and vapour enough; then victory over that;—and like a burning mountain he blazes heaven-high; and, for twenty-three resplendent months, pours out, in flame and molten fire-torrents, all that is in him, the Pharos and Wonder-sign of an amazed Europe;—and then lies hollow, cold forever! Pass on, thou questionable Gabriel Honoré, the greatest of them all: in the whole National Deputies, in the whole Nation, there is none like and none second to thee.

But now if Mirabeau is the greatest, who of these Six Hundred may be the meanest? Shall we say, that anxious, slight, ineffectual-looking man, under thirty, in spectacles; his eyes (were the glasses off) troubled, careful; with upturned face, snuffing dimly the uncertain future time; complexion of a multiplex atrabiliar colour, the final shade of which may be the pale sea-green.<sup>3</sup> That greenish-coloured (*verdâtre*) individual is an Advocate of Arras; his name is *Maximilien Robespierre*. The son of an Advocate; his father founded mason-lodges under Charles Edward, the English Prince or Pretender. Maximilien the first-born was thriftily educated; he had brisk Camille Desmoulins for schoolmate in the College of Louis le Grand, at Paris. But he begged our famed Necklace-Cardinal, Rohan, the patron, to let him depart thence, and resign in favour of a younger brother. The strict-minded Max departed; home to paternal Arras; and even had a Law-case there and pleaded, not unsuccessfully, 'in favour of the first Franklin thunder-rod.' With a strict painful mind, an understanding small but clear and ready, he grew in favour with official persons, who could foresee in him an excellent man of business, happily quite free from genius. The Bishop, therefore, taking counsel, appoints him Judge of his diocese; and he faithfully does justice to the people: till behold, one day, a culprit comes whose crime merits hanging; and the strict-minded Max must abdicate, for his conscience will not permit the dooming of any son of Adam to die. A strict-minded, strait-laced man! A man unfit for Revolutions? Whose small soul, transparent wholesome-looking as small-ale, could by no chance ferment into virulent *alegar*,—the mother of ever new *alegar*; till all France were grown acetous virulent? We shall see.

Between which two extremes of grandest and meanest, so many grand and mean roll on, towards their several destinies, in that Procession! There is *Cazalès*, the learned young soldier; who shall become the eloquent orator of Royalism, and earn the shadow of a name. Experienced *Mounier*, experienced *Malouet*; whose Presidential Parliamentary experience the stream of things shall soon leave stranded. A *Pétion* has left his gown and briefs at Chartres for a stormier sort of pleading; has not forgotten his violin, being fond of music. His

<sup>3</sup> See De Staël, *Considérations* (ii. 142); Barbaroux, *Mémoires*, &c.

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hair is grizzled, though he is still young : convictions, beliefs placid-unalterable are in that man ; not hindmost of them, belief in himself. A Protestant-clerical *Rabaut-St.-Etienne*, a slender young eloquent and vehement *Barnave*, will help to regenerate France. There are so many of them young. Till thirty the Spartans did not suffer a man to marry : but how many men here under thirty ; coming to produce not one sufficient citizen, but a nation and a world of such ! The old to heal up rents ; the young to remove rubbish :—which latter, is it not, indeed, the task here ?

Dim, formless from this distance, yet authentically there, thou noticest the Deputies from Nantes ? To us mere clothes-screens, with slouch-hat and cloak, but bearing in their pocket a *Cahier of doléances* with this singular clause, and more such, in it : ‘ That the master wigmakers of Nantes be not troubled ‘ with new guild-brethren, the actually existing number of ‘ ninety-two being more than sufficient !’<sup>4</sup> The Rennes people have elected Farmer *Gérard*, ‘ a man of natural sense and rec- ‘ titude, without any learning.’ He walks there, with solid step ; unique, ‘ in his rustic farmer-clothes ;’ which he will wear always ; careless of short-cloaks and costumes. The name *Gérard*, or ‘ *Père Gérard*, Father *Gérard*,’ as they please to call him, will fly far ; borne about in endless banter ; in Royalist satires, in Republican didactic Almanacks.<sup>5</sup> As for the man *Gérard*, being asked once, what he did, after trial of it, candidly think of this Parliamentary work,—“ I think,” answered he, “ that there are a good many scoundrels among us.” So walks Father *Gérard* ; solid in his thick shoes, whithersoever bound.

And worthy *Doctor Guillotin*, whom we hoped to behold one other time ? If not here, the Doctor should be here, and we see him with the eye of prophecy : for indeed the Parisian Deputies are all a little late. Singular *Guillotin*, respectable practitioner : doomed by a satiric destiny to the strangest immortal glory that ever kept obscure mortal from his resting-place, the bosom of oblivion ! *Guillotin* can improve the ventilation of the Hall ; in all cases of medical police and *hygiène* be a present aid : but, greater far, he can produce his ‘ Report

<sup>4</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire*, i. 335.

<sup>5</sup> *Actes des Apôtres* (by Peltier and others) ; *Almanach du Père Gérard* (by Collot d’Herbois), &c. &c.

on the Penal Code; and reveal therein a cunningly devised Beheading Machine, which shall become famous and world-famous. This is the product of Guillotin's endeavours, gained not without meditation and reading; which product popular gratitude or levity christens by a feminine derivative name, as if it were his daughter: *La Guillotine!* "With my machine, " Messieurs, I whisk off your head (*vous fais sauter la tête*) in " a twinkling, and you have no pain;"—whereat they all laugh.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunate Doctor! For two-and-twenty years he, unguillotined, shall hear nothing but guillotine, see nothing but guillotine; then dying, shall through long centuries wander, as it were, a disconsolate ghost, on the wrong side of Styx and Lethe; his name like to outlive Cæsar's.

See *Bailly*, likewise of Paris, time-honoured Historian of Astronomy Ancient and Modern. Poor Bailly, how thy serenely beautiful Philosophising, with its soft moonshiny clearness and thinness, ends in foul thick confusion—of Presidency, Mayorship, diplomatic Officiality, rabid Triviality, and the throat of everlasting Darkness! Far was it to descend from the heavenly Galaxy to the *Drapeau Rouge*: beside that fatal dung-heap, on that last hell-day, thou must 'tremble,' though only with cold, '*de froid.*' Speculation is not practice: to be weak is not so miserable; but to be weaker than our task. Wo the day when they mounted thee, a peaceable pedestrian, on that wild Hippogriff of a Democracy; which, spurning the firm earth, nay lashing at the very stars, no yet known Astolpho could have ridden!

In the Commons Deputies there are Merchants, Artists, Men of Letters; three hundred and seventy-four Lawyers;<sup>7</sup> and at least one Clergyman: the *Abbé Sieyès*. Him also Paris sends, among its twenty. Behold him, the light thin man; cold, but elastic, wiry; instinct with the pride of Logic; passionless, or with but one passion, that of self-conceit. If indeed that can be called a passion, which, in its independent concentrated greatness, seems to have soared into transcendentalism; and to sit there with a kind of godlike indifference, and look down on passion! He is the man, and wisdom shall die

<sup>6</sup> *Moniteur* Newspaper, of December 1st, 1789 (in *Histoire Parlementaire*).

<sup>7</sup> Bouillé, *Mémoires sur la Révolution Française* (London, 1797), i. 68.

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with him. This is the Sieyes who shall be System-builder, Constitution-builder General; and build Constitutions (as many as wanted) skyhigh,—which shall all unfortunately fall before he get the scaffolding away. "*La Politique*," said he to Dumont, "Polity is a science I think I have completed (*achevée*)."<sup>8</sup> What things, O Sieyes, with thy clear assiduous eyes, art thou to see! But were it not curious to know how Sieyes, now in these days (for he is said to be still alive)<sup>9</sup> looks out on all that Constitution masonry, through the rheumy soberness of extreme age? Might we hope, still with the old irrefragable transcendentalism? The victorious cause pleased the gods, the vanquished one pleased Sieyes (*victa Catoni*).

Thus, however, amid skyrending *vivats*, and blessings from every heart, has the Procession of the Commons Deputies rolled by.

Next follow the Noblesse, and next the Clergy; concerning both of whom it might be asked, What they specially have come for? Specially, little as they dream of it, to answer this question, put in a voice of thunder: What are you doing in God's fair Earth and Task-garden; where whosoever is not working is begging or stealing? Wo, wo to themselves and to all, if they can only answer: Collecting tithes, Preserving game!—Remark, meanwhile, how *D'Orléans* affects to step before his own Order, and mingle with the Commons. For him are *vivats*: few for the rest, though all wave in plumed 'hats of a feudal cut,' and have sword on thigh; though among them is *D'Antraigues*, the young Languedocian gentleman,—and indeed many a Peer more or less noteworthy.

There are *Liancourt*, and *La Rochefoucault*; the liberal Anglomaniac Dukes. There is a filially pious *Lally*; a couple of liberal *Lameths*. Above all, there is a *Lafayette*; whose name shall be Cromwell-Grandison, and fill the world. Many a 'formula' has this Lafayette too made away with; yet not *all* formulas. He sticks by the Washington-formula; and by that he will stick;—and hang by it, as by sure bower-anchor hangs and swings the tight war-ship, which, after all changes of wildest weather and water, is found still hanging. Happy for him; be it glorious or not! Alone of all Frenchmen he has a theory of

<sup>8</sup> Dumont, *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau*, p. 64.

<sup>9</sup> A. D. 1834.

the world, and right mind to conform thereto ; he can become a hero and perfect character, were it but the hero of one idea. Note further our old Parliamentary friend, *Crispin-Catiline d'Espréménil*. He is returned from the Mediterranean Islands, a red-hot royalist, repentant to the finger-ends ;—unsettled-looking ; whose light, dusky-glowing at best, now flickers foul in the socket ; whom the National Assembly will by and by, to save time, 'regard as in a state of distraction.' Note lastly that globular *Younger* Mirabeau ; indignant that his elder Brother is among the Commons : it is *Viscomte* Mirabeau ; named oftener *Mirabeau Tonneau* (Barrel Mirabeau), on account of his rotundity, and the quantities of strong liquor he contains.

There then walks our French Noblesse. All in the old pomp of chivalry : and yet, alas, how changed from the old position ; drifted far down from their native latitude, like Arctic icebergs got into the Equatorial sea, and fast thawing there ! Once these Chivalry *Duces* (Dukes, as they are still named) did actually *lead* the world,—were it only towards battle-spoil, where lay the world's best wages then : moreover, being the ablest Leaders going, they had their lion's share, those *Duces* ; which none could grudge them. But now, when so many Looms, improved Ploughshares, Steam-Engines and Bills of Exchange have been invented ; and, for battle-brawling itself, men hire Drill-Sergeants at eighteenpence a-day,—what mean these goldmantled Chivalry Figures, walking there 'in black-velvet cloaks,' in high-plumed 'hats of a feudal cut' ? Reeds shaken in the wind !

The Clergy have got up ; with *Cahiers* for abolishing pluralities, enforcing residence of bishops, better payment of tithes.<sup>10</sup> The Dignitaries, we can observe, walk stately, apart from the numerous Undignified,—who indeed are properly little other than Commons disguised in Curate-frocks. Here, however, though by strange ways, shall the Precept be fulfilled, and they that are greatest (much to their astonishment) become least. For one example, out of many, mark that plausible *Grégoire* : one day Curé Grégoire shall be a Bishop, when the now stately are wandering distracted, as Bishops *in partibus*. With other thought, mark also the *Abbé Maury* : his broad bold face ; mouth accurately primmed ; full eyes, that ray out intelligence, false-

<sup>10</sup> *Hist. Parl.* i. 322-27.

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hood,—the sort of sophistry which is astonished you should find it sophistical. Skilfulest vamped-up of old rotten leather, to make it look like new; always a rising man; he used to tell Mercier, “You will see; I shall be in the Academy before you.”<sup>11</sup> Likely indeed, thou skilfulest Maury; nay thou shalt have a Cardinal's Hat, and plush and glory; but alas, also, in the longrun—mere oblivion, like the rest of us; and six feet of earth! What boots it, vamping rotten leather on these terms? Glorious in comparison is the livelihood thy good old Father earns, by making shoes,—one may hope, in a sufficient manner. Maury does not want for audacity. He shall wear pistols, by and by; and, at death-cries of “*La Lanterne, The Lamp-iron!*” —answer coolly, “Friends, will you see better there?”

But yonder, halting lamely along, thou noticest next *Bishop Talleyrand-Perigord*, his Reverence of Autun. A sardonic grimness lies in that irreverend Reverence of Autun. He will do and suffer strange things; and will *become* surely one of the strangest things ever seen, or like to be seen. A man living in falsehood, and on falsehood; yet not what you can call a false man: there is the specialty! It will be an enigma for future ages, one may hope: hitherto such a product of Nature and Art was possible only for this age of ours,—Age of Paper, and of the Burning of Paper. Consider Bishop Talleyrand and Marquis Lafayette as the topmost of their two kinds; and say once more, looking at what they did and what they were, *O Tempus ferax rerum!*

On the whole, however, has not this unfortunate Clergy also drifted in the Time-stream, far from its native latitude? An anomalous mass of men; of whom the whole world has already a dim understanding that it can understand nothing. They were once a Priesthood, interpreters of Wisdom, revealers of the Holy that is in Man; a true *Clerus* (or Inheritance of God on Earth): but now?—They pass silently, with such *Cahiers* as they have been able to redact; and none cries, God bless them.

King Louis with his Court brings up the rear: he cheerful, in this day of hope, is saluted with plaudits; still more Necker his Minister. Not so the Queen; on whom hope shines not steadily any more. Ill-fated Queen! Her hair is already gray

<sup>11</sup> Mercier, *Nouveau Paris*.

with many cares and crosses; her first-born son is dying in these weeks; black falsehood has ineffaceably soiled her name; ineffaceably while this generation lasts. Instead of *Vive la Reine*, voices insult her with *Vive d'Orléans*. Of her queenly beauty little remains except its stateliness; not now gracious, but haughty, rigid, silently enduring. With a most mixed feeling, wherein joy has no part, she resigns herself to a day she hoped never to have seen. Poor Marie Antoinette; with thy quick noble instincts; vehement glancings, vision all-too fitful narrow for the work thou hast to do! O there are tears in store for thee; bitterest wailings, soft womanly meltings, though thou hast the heart of an imperial Theresa's Daughter. Thou doomed one, shut thy eyes on the future!—

And so, in stately Procession, have passed the Elected of France. Some towards honour and quick fire-consummation; most towards dishonour; not a few towards massacre, confusion, emigration, desperation: all towards Eternity!—So many heterogeneities cast together into the fermenting-vat; there, with incalculable action, counteraction, elective affinities, explosive developments, to work out healing for a sick moribund System of Society! Probably the strangest Body of Men, if we consider well, that ever met together on our Planet on such an errand. So thousandfold complex a Society, ready to burst-up from its infinite depths; and these men, its rulers and healers, without life-rule for themselves,—other life-rule than a Gospel according to Jean Jacques! To the wisest of them, what we must call the wisest, man is properly an Accident under the sky. Man is without Duty round him; except it be 'to make the Constitution.' He is without Heaven above him, or Hell beneath him; he has no God in the world.

What further or better belief can be said to exist in these Twelve Hundred? Belief in high-plumed hats of a feudal cut; in heraldic scutcheons; in the divine right of Kings, in the divine right of Game-destroyers. Belief, or what is still worse, canting half-belief; or worst of all, mere Macchiavellic pretence-of-belief,—in consecrated dough-wafers, and the godhood of a poor old Italian Man! Nevertheless in that immeasurable Confusion and Corruption, which struggles there so blindly to become less confused and corrupt, there is, as we said, this one



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salient point of a New Life discernible : the deep fixed Determination to have done with Shams. A determination, which, consciously or unconsciously, is *fixed*; which waxes ever more fixed, into very madness and fixed-idea; which in such embodiment as lies provided there, shall now unfold itself rapidly : monstrous, stupendous, unspeakable ; new for long thousands of years !—How has the Heaven's *light*, oftentimes in this Earth, to clothe itself in thunder and electric murkiness ; and descend as molten *lightning*, blasting, if purifying ! Nay is it not rather the very murkiness, and atmospheric suffocation, that *brings* the lightning and the light ? The new Evangel, as the old had been, was it to be born in the Destruction of a World ?

But how the Deputies assisted at High Mass, and heard sermon, and applauded the preacher, church as it was, when he preached politics ; how, next day, with sustained pomp, they are, for the first time, installed in their *Salle des Menus* (Hall no longer of *Amusements*), and become a States-General,—readers can fancy for themselves. The King from his *estrade*, gorgeous as Solomon in all his glory, runs his eye over that majestic Hall ; many-plumed, many-glancing ; bright-tinted as rainbow, in the galleries and near side-spaces, where Beauty sits raining bright influence. Satisfaction, as of one that after long voyaging had got to port, plays over his broad simple face : the innocent King ! He rises and speaks, with sonorous tone, a conceivable speech. With which, still more with the succeeding one-hour and two-hours speeches of Garde-des-Sceaux and M. Necker, full of nothing but patriotism, hope, faith, and deficiency of the revenue,—no reader of these pages shall be tried.

We remark only that, as his Majesty, on finishing the speech, put on his plumed hat, and the Noblesse according to custom imitated him, our Tiers-Etat Deputies did mostly, not without a shade of fierceness, in like manner clap-on, and even crush-on their slouched hats ; and stand there awaiting the issue.<sup>12</sup> Thick buzz among them, between majority and minority of *Couvrez-vous, Découvrez-vous* (Hats off, Hats on) ! To which his Majesty puts end, by taking *off* his own royal hat again.

The session terminates without further accident or omen than this ; with which, significantly enough, France has opened her States-General.

<sup>12</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire* (i. 356). Mercier, *Nouveau Paris*, &c.

## BOOK FIFTH.

### THE THIRD ESTATE.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### INERTIA.

THAT exasperated France, in this same National Assembly of hers, has got something, nay something great, momentous, indispensable, cannot be doubted ; yet still the question were : Specially *what?* A question hard to solve, even for calm onlookers at this distance ; wholly insoluble to actors in the middle of it. The States-General, created and conflated by the passionate effort of the whole Nation, is there as a thing high and lifted up. Hope, jubilating, cries aloud that it will prove a miraculous Brazen Serpent in the Wilderness ; whereon whosoever looks, with faith and obedience, shall be healed of all woes and serpent-bites.

We may answer, it will at least prove a symbolic Banner ; round which the exasperated complaining Twenty-five Millions, otherwise isolated and without power, may rally, and work—what it is in them to work. If battle must be the work, as one cannot help expecting, then shall it be a battle-banner (say, an Italian Gonfalon, in its old Republican *Carroccio*) ; and shall tower up, car-borne, shining in the wind : and with iron tongue peal forth many a signal. A thing of prime necessity ; which whether in the van or in the centre, whether leading or led and driven, must do the fighting multitude incalculable services. For a season, while it floats in the very front, nay as it were stands solitary there, waiting whether force will gather round it, this same National *Carroccio*, and the signal-peals it rings, are a main object with us.

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The omen of the 'slouch-hats clapt on' shows the Commons Deputies to have made up their minds on one thing: that neither Noblesse nor Clergy shall have precedence of them; hardly even Majesty itself. To such length has the *Contrat Social*, and force of public opinion, carried us. For what is Majesty but the Delegate of the Nation; delegated, and bargained with (even rather tightly),—in some very singular posture of affairs, which Jean Jacques has not fixed the date of?

Coming therefore into their Hall, on the morrow, an inorganic mass of Six Hundred individuals, these Commons Deputies perceive, without terror, that they have it all to themselves. Their Hall is also the Grand or general Hall for all the Three Orders. But the Noblesse and Clergy, it would seem, have retired to their two separate Apartments, or Halls; and are there 'verifying their powers,' not in a conjoint but in a separate capacity. They are to constitute two separate, perhaps separately-voting Orders, then? It is as if both Noblesse and Clergy had silently taken for granted that they already were such! Two Orders against one; and so the Third Order to be left in a perpetual minority?

Much may remain unfixed; but the negative of that is a thing fixed: in the Slouch-hatted heads, in the French Nation's head. Double representation, and all else hitherto gained, were otherwise futile, null. Doubtless, the 'powers must be verified;'—doubtless, the Commission, the electoral Documents of your Deputy must be inspected by his brother Deputies, and found valid: it is the preliminary of all. Neither is this question, of doing it separately or doing it conjointly, a vital one: but if it lead to such? It must be resisted; wise was that maxim, Resist the beginnings! Nay were resistance unadvisable, even dangerous, yet surely pause is very natural: pause, with Twenty-five Millions behind you, may become resistance enough.—The inorganic mass of Commons Deputies will restrict itself to a 'system of inertia,' and for the present remain inorganic.

Such method, recommendable alike to sagacity and to timidity, do the Commons Deputies adopt; and, not without adroitness, and with ever more tenacity, they persist in it, day after day, week after week. For six weeks their history is of the kind named barren; which indeed, as Philosophy knows, is often the

fruitfulest of all. These were their still creation-days ; wherein they sat incubating ! In fact, what they did was to do nothing, in a judicious manner. Daily the inorganic body reassembles ; regrets that they cannot get organisation, 'verification of powers in common,' and begin regenerating France. Headlong motions may be made, but let such be repressed ; inertia alone is at once unpunishable and unconquerable.

Cunning must be met by cunning ; proud pretension by inertia, by a low tone of patriotic sorrow ; low, but incurable, unalterable. Wise as serpents ; harmless as doves : what a spectacle for France ! Six Hundred inorganic individuals, essential for its regeneration and salvation, sit there, on their elliptic benches, longing passionately towards life ; in painful durance ; like souls waiting to be born. Speeches are spoken ; eloquent ; audible within doors and without. Mind agitates itself against mind ; the Nation looks on with ever deeper interest. Thus do the Commons Deputies sit incubating.

There are private conclaves, supper-parties, consultations ; Breton Club, Club of Viroflay ; germs of many Clubs. Wholly an element of confused noise, dimness, angry heat ;—wherein, however, the Eros-egg, kept at the fit temperature, may hover safe, unbroken till it be hatched. In your Mouniers, Malouets, Lechapeliers is science sufficient for that ; fervour in your Barnaves, Rabauts. At times shall come an inspiration from royal Mirabeau : he is nowise yet recognised as royal ; nay he was 'groaned at,' when his name was first mentioned : but he is struggling towards recognition.

In the course of the week, the Commons having called their Eldest to the chair, and furnished him with young stronger-lunged assistants, —can speak articulately ; and, in audible lamentable words, declare, as we said, that they are an inorganic body, longing to become organic. Letters arrive ; but an inorganic body cannot open letters ; they lie on the table unopened. The Eldest may at most procure for himself some kind of List or Muster-roll, to take the votes by ; and wait what will betide. Noblesse and Clergy are all elsewhere : however, an eager public crowds all galleries and vacancies ; which is some comfort. With effort, it is determined, not that a Deputation shall be sent, —for how can an inorganic body send deputations?—but that certain individual Commons Members shall,

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in an accidental way, stroll into the Clergy Chamber, and then into the Noblesse one; and mention there, as a thing they have happened to observe, that the Commons seem to be sitting waiting for them, in order to verify their powers. That is the wiser method!

The Clergy, among whom are such a multitude of Undignified, of mere Commons in Curates' frocks, depute instant respectful answer that they are, and will now more than ever be, in deepest study as to that very matter. Contrariwise the Noblesse, in cavalier attitude, reply, after four days, that they, for their part, are all verified and constituted; which, they had trusted, the Commons also were; such *separate* verification being clearly the proper constitutional wisdom-of-ancestors method;—as they the Noblesse will have much pleasure in demonstrating by a Commission of their number, if the Commons will meet them, Commission against Commission! Directly in the rear of which comes a deputation of Clergy, reiterating, in their insidious conciliatory way, the same proposal. Here, then, is a complexity: what will wise Commons say to this?

Warily, inertly, the wise Commons, considering that they are, if not a French Third Estate, at least an Aggregate of individuals pretending to some title of that kind, determine, after talking on it five days, to name such a Commission,—though, as it were, with proviso not to be convinced: a sixth day is taken up in naming it; a seventh and an eighth day in getting the forms of meeting, place, hour and the like, settled: so that it is not till the evening of the 23d of May that Noblesse Commission first meets Commons Commission, Clergy acting as Conciliators; and begins the impossible task of convincing it. One other meeting, on the 25th, will suffice: the Commons are unconvincible, the Noblesse and Clergy irrefragably convincing; the Commissions retire; each Order persisting in its first pretensions.<sup>1</sup>

Thus have three weeks passed. For three weeks, the Third-Estate Carroccio, with far-seen Gonfalon, has stood stockstill, flouting the wind; waiting what force would gather round it.

Fancy can conceive the feeling of the Court; and how counsel met counsel, and loud-sounding inanity whirled in that distracted vortex, where wisdom could not dwell. Your cunningly

<sup>1</sup> Reported Debates, 6th May to 1st June 1789 (in *Histoire Parlementaire*, i. 379-422).

devised Taxing-Machine has been got together; set up with incredible labour; and stands there, its three pieces in contact; its two fly-wheels of Noblesse and Clergy, its huge working-wheel of Tiers-Etat. The two fly-wheels whirl in the softest manner; but, prodigious to look upon, the huge working-wheel hangs motionless, refuses to stir! The cunningest engineers are at fault. How *will* it work, when it does begin? Fearfully, my Friends; and to many purposes; but to gather taxes, or grind court-meal, one may apprehend, never. Could we but have continued gathering taxes *by hand*! Messieurs d'Artois, Conti, Condé (named Court Triumvirate), they of the anti-democratic *Mémoire au Roi*, has not their foreboding proved true? They may wave reproachfully their high heads; they may beat their poor brains; but the cunningest engineers can do nothing. Necker himself, were he even listened to, begins to look blue. The only thing one sees advisable is to bring up soldiers. New regiments, two, and a battalion of a third, have already reached Paris; others shall get in march. Good were it, in all circumstances, to have troops within reach; good that the command were in sure hands. Let Broglie be appointed; old Marshal Duke de Broglie; veteran disciplinarian, of a firm drill-sergeant morality, such as may be depended on.

For, alas, neither are the Clergy, or the very Noblesse what they should be; and might be, when so menaced from without: entire, undivided within. The Noblesse, indeed, have their Catiline or Crispin D'Espréménil, dusky-glowing, all in renegade heat; their boisterous Barrel-Mirabeau; but also they have their Lafayettes, Liancourts, Lameths; above all, their D'Orléans, now cut forever from his Court-moorings, and musing drowsily of high and highest sea-prizes (for is not he too a son of Henri Quatre, and partial potential Heir-Apparent?)—on his voyage towards Chaos. From the Clergy again, so numerous are the Curés, actual deserters have run over: two small parties; in the second party Curé Grégoire. Nay there is talk of a whole Hundred and Forty-nine of them about to desert in mass, and only restrained by an Archbishop of Paris. It seems a losing game.

But judge if France, if Paris sat idle, all this while! Addresses from far and near flow in: for our Commons have now grown organic enough to open letters. Or indeed to cavil at them! Thus poor Marquis de Brézé, Supreme Usher, Master

May 16th-26th.

of Ceremonies, or whatever his title was, writing about this time on some ceremonial matter, sees no harm in winding up with a 'Monsieur, yours with sincere attachment.'—"To whom does it address itself, this sincere attachment?" inquires Mirabeau. "To the Dean of the Tiers-Etat."—"There is no man in France entitled to write that," rejoins he; whereat the Galleries and the World will not be kept from applauding.<sup>2</sup> Poor De Brézé! These Commons have a still older grudge at him; nor has he yet done with them.

In another way, Mirabeau has had to protest against the quick suppression of his Newspaper, *Journal of the States-General*;—and to continue it under a new name. In which act of valour, the Paris Electors, still busy redacting their *Cahier*, could not but support him, by Address to his Majesty: they claim utmost 'provisory freedom of the press;' they have spoken even about demolishing the Bastille, and erecting a Bronze Patriot King on the site!—These are the rich Burghers: but now consider how it went, for example, with such loose miscellany, now all grown eleutheromaniac, of Loungers, Prowlers, social Nondescripts (and the distilled Rascality of our Planet), as whirls forever in the Palais Royal;—or what low infinite groan, fast changing into a growl, comes from Saint-Antoine, and the Twenty-five Millions in danger of starvation!

There is the indisputablest scarcity of corn;—be it Aristocrat-plot, D'Orléans-plot, of this year; or drought and hail of last year: in city and province, the poor man looks desolately towards a nameless lot. And this States-General, that could make us an age of gold, is forced to stand motionless; cannot get its powers verified! All industry necessarily languishes, if it be not that of making motions.

In the Palais Royal there has been erected, apparently by subscription, a kind of Wooden Tent (*en planches de bois*);<sup>3</sup>—most convenient; where select Patriotism can now redact resolutions, deliver harangues, with comfort, let the weather be as it will. Lively is that Satan-at-Home! On his table, on his chair, in every *café*, stands a patriotic orator; a crowd round him within; a crowd listening from without, open-mouthed, through open door and window; with 'thunders of applause

<sup>2</sup> *Moniteur* (in *Histoire Parlementaire*, i. 405).

<sup>3</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire*, i. 429.

for every sentiment of more than common hardiness.' In Monsieur Dessein's Pamphlet-shop, close by, you cannot without strong elbowing get to the counter: every hour produces its pamphlet, or litter of pamphlets; 'there were thirteen today, sixteen yesterday, ninety-two last week.'<sup>4</sup> Think of Tyranny and Scarcity; Fervid-eloquence, Rumour, Pamphleteering; *Société Publicole*, Breton Club, Enraged Club;—and whether every tap-room, coffee-room, social reunion, accidental street-group, over wide France, was not an Enraged Club!

To all which the Commons Deputies can only listen with a sublime inertia of sorrow; reduced to busy themselves 'with their internal police.' Surer position no Deputies ever occupied; if they keep it with skill. Let not the temperature rise too high; break not the Eros-egg till it be hatched, till it break itself! An eager public crowds all Galleries and vacancies; 'cannot be restrained from applauding.' The two Privileged Orders, the Noblesse all verified and constituted, may look on with what face they will; not without a secret tremor of heart. The Clergy, always acting the part of conciliators, make a clutch at the Galleries, and the popularity there; and miss it. Deputation of them arrives, with dolorous message about the 'dearth of grains,' and the necessity there is of casting aside vain formalities, and deliberating on this. An insidious proposal; which, however, the Commons (moved thereto by sea-green Robespierre) dexterously accept as a sort of hint, or even pledge, that the Clergy will forthwith come over to them, constitute the States-General, and *so* cheapen grains!<sup>5</sup>—Finally, on the 27th day of May, Mirabeau, judging the time now nearly come, proposes that 'the inertia cease;' that, leaving the Noblesse to their own stiff ways, the Clergy be summoned, 'in the name of the God of Peace,' to join the Commons, and begin.<sup>6</sup> To which summons if they turn a deaf ear,—we shall see! Are not one Hundred and Forty-nine of them ready to desert?

O Triumvirate of Princes, new Garde-des-Sceaux Barentin, thou Home-Secretary Breteuil, Duchess Polignac, and Queen eager to listen,—what is now to be done? This Third Estate will get in motion, with the force of all France in it; Clergy-machinery with Noblesse-machinery, which were to serve as

<sup>4</sup> Arthur Young, *Travels*, i. 104.

<sup>5</sup> Bailly, *Mémoires*, i. 114.

<sup>6</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire*, i. 413.



May 27th-June 17th.

beautiful counterbalances and drags, will be shamefully dragged after it,—and take fire along with it. What is to be done? The *Œil-de-Bœuf* waxes more confused than ever. Whisper and counter-whisper; a very tempest of whispers! Leading men from all the Three Orders are nightly spirited thither; conjurors many of them; but can they conjure this? Necker himself were now welcome, could he interfere to purpose.

Let Necker interfere, then; and in the King's name! Happily that incendiary 'God-of-Peace' message is not yet *answered*. The Three Orders shall again have conferences; under this Patriot Minister of theirs, somewhat may be healed, clouded up;—we meanwhile getting forward Swiss Regiments, and a 'hundred pieces of field-artillery.' This is what the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, for its part, resolves on.

But as for Necker—Alas, poor Necker, thy obstinate Third Estate has one first-last word, *verification in common*, as the pledge of voting and deliberating in common! Half-way proposals, from such a tried friend, they answer with a stare. The tardy conferences speedily break up: the Third Estate, now ready and resolute, the whole world backing it, returns to its Hall of the Three Orders; and Necker to the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, with the character of a disconjured conjuror there,—fit only for dismissal.<sup>7</sup>

And so the Commons Deputies are at last on their own strength getting under way? Instead of Chairman, or Dean, they have now got a President: Astronomer Bailly. Under way, with a vengeance! With endless vociferous and temperate eloquence, borne on Newspaper wings to all lands, they have now, on this 17th day of June, determined that their name is not *Third Estate*, but—*National Assembly!* They, then, are the Nation? Triumvirate of Princes, Queen, refractory Noblesse and Clergy, what, then, are *you?* A most deep question;—scarcely answerable in living political dialects.

All regardless of which, our new National Assembly proceeds to appoint a 'committee of subsistences;' dear to France, though it can find little or no grain. Next, as if our National Assembly stood quite firm on its legs,—to appoint 'four other standing committees;' then to settle the security of the National Debt; then that of the Annual Taxation: all within eight-and-

<sup>7</sup> Debates, 1st to 17th June 1789 (in *Histoire Parlementaire*, i. 422-478).

forty hours. At such rate of velocity it is going : the conjurors of the Œil-de-Bœuf may well ask themselves, Whither ?

## CHAPTER II.

### MERCURY DE BRÉZÉ.

Now surely were the time for a 'god from the machine ;' there is a *nodus* worthy of one. The only question is, Which god ? Shall it be Mars de Broglie, with his hundred pieces of cannon ?—Not yet, answers prudence ; so soft, irresolute is King Louis. Let it be Messenger *Mercury*, our Supreme Usher de Brézé !

On the morrow, which is the 20th of June, these Hundred and Forty-nine false Curates, no longer restrainable by his Grace of Paris, will desert in a body : let De Brézé intervene, and produce—closed doors ! Not only shall there be Royal Session, in that Salle des Menus ; but no meeting, nor working (except by carpenters), till then. Your Third Estate, self-styled 'National Assembly,' shall suddenly see itself extruded from its Hall, by carpenters, in this dexterous way ; and reduced to do nothing, not even to meet, or articulately lament,—till Majesty, with *Séance Royale* and new miracles, be ready ! In this manner shall De Brézé, as Mercury *ex machinâ*, intervene ; and, if the Œil-de-Bœuf mistake not, work deliverance from the *nodus*.

Of poor De Brézé we can remark that he has yet prospered in none of his dealings with these Commons. Five weeks ago, when they kissed the hand of Majesty, the mode he took got nothing but censure ; and then his 'sincere attachment,' how was it scornfully whiffed aside ! Before supper, this night, he writes to President Bailly, a new Letter, to be delivered shortly after dawn tomorrow, in the King's name. Which Letter, however, Bailly, in the pride of office, will merely crush together into his pocket, like a bill he does not mean to pay.

Accordingly on Saturday morning the 20th of June, shrill-sounding heralds proclaim, through the streets of Versailles, that there is to be *Séance Royale* next Monday ; and no meeting of the States-General till then. And yet, we observe, President Bailly, in sound of this, and with De Brézé's Letter in his pocket,

June 20th.

is proceeding, with National Assembly at his heels, to the accustomed Salle des Menus; as if De Brézé and heralds were mere wind. It is shut, this Salle; occupied by Gardes Françaises. "Where is your Captain?" The Captain shows his royal order: workmen, he is grieved to say, are all busy setting up the platform for his Majesty's *Séance*; most unfortunately, no admission; admission, at furthest, for President and Secretaries to bring away papers, which the joiners might destroy!—President Bailly enters with Secretaries; and returns bearing papers: alas, within doors, instead of patriotic eloquence, there is now no noise but hammering, sawing, and operative screeching and rumbling! A profanation without parallel.

The Deputies stand grouped on the Paris Road, on this umbrageous *Avenue de Versailles*; complaining aloud of the indignity done them. Courtiers, it is supposed, look from their windows, and giggle. The morning is none of the comfortablest: raw; it is even drizzling a little.<sup>1</sup> But all travellers pause; patriot gallery-men, miscellaneous spectators increase the groups. Wild counsels alternate. Some desperate Deputies propose to go and hold session on the great outer Staircase at Marly, under the King's windows; for his Majesty, it seems, has driven over thither. Others talk of making the Château Forecourt, what they call *Place d'Armes*, a Runnymede and new *Champ de Mai* of free Frenchmen: nay of awakening, to sounds of indignant Patriotism, the echoes of the *Ceil-de-Bœuf* itself.—Notice is given that President Bailly, aided by judicious Guillotin and others, has found place in the Tennis-Court of the Rue St. François. Thither, in long-drawn files, hoarse-jingling, like cranes on wing, the Commons Deputies angrily wend.

Strange sight was this in the Rue St. François, Vieux Versailles! A naked Tennis-Court, as the pictures of that time still give it: four walls; naked, except aloft some poor wooden penthouse, or roofed spectators'-gallery, hanging round them:—on the floor not now an idle teeheeing, a snapping of balls and rackets; but the bellowing din of an indignant National Representation, scandalously exiled hither! However, a cloud of witnesses looks down on them, from wooden penthouse, from wall-top, from adjoining roof and chimney; rolls towards them from all quarters, with passionate spoken blessings. Some table

<sup>1</sup> Bailly, *Mémoires*, i. 185-206.

can be procured to write on ; some chair, if not to sit on, then to stand on. The Secretaries undo their tapes ; Bailly has constituted the Assembly.

Experienced Mounier, not wholly new to such things, in Parliamentary revolts, which he has seen or heard of, thinks that it were well, in these lamentable threatening circumstances, to unite themselves by an Oath.—Universal acclamation, as from smouldering bosoms getting vent ! The Oath is redacted ; pronounced aloud by President Bailly, —and indeed in such a sonorous tone, that the cloud of witnesses, even outdoors, hear it, and bellow response to it. Six hundred right-hands rise with President Bailly's, to take God above to witness that they will not separate for man below, but will meet in all places, under all circumstances, wheresoever two or three can get together, till they have made the Constitution. Made the Constitution, Friends ! That is a long task. Six hundred hands, meanwhile, will sign as they have sworn : six hundred save *one* ; one Loyalist Abdiel, still visible by this sole light-point, and namable, poor ' M. Martin d'Auch, from Castelnaudary, in Languedoc.' Him they permit to sign or signify refusal ; they even save him from the cloud of witnesses, by declaring ' his head deranged.' At four o'clock, the signatures are all appended ; new meeting is fixed for Monday morning, earlier than the hour of the Royal Session ; that our Hundred and Forty-nine Clerical deserters be not balked : we will meet ' at the Recollets Church or elsewhere,' in hope that our Hundred and Forty-nine will join us ;—and now it is time to go to dinner.

This, then, is the Session of the Tennis-Court, famed *Séance du Jeu de Paume* ; the fame of which has gone forth to all lands. This is Mercurius de Brézé's appearance as *Deus ex machinâ* ; this is the fruit it brings ! The giggle of Courtiers in the Versailles Avenue has already died into gaunt silence. Did the distracted Court, with Garde-des-Sceaux Barentin, Triumvirate and Company, imagine that they could scatter six hundred National Deputies, big with a National Constitution, like as much barndoor poultry, big with next to nothing,—by the white or black rod of a Supreme Usher ? Barndoor poultry fly cackling : but National Deputies turn round, lion-faced ; and, with uplifted right-hand, swear an Oath that makes the four corners of France tremble.

June 22d-23d.

President Bailly has covered himself with honour; which shall become rewards. The National Assembly is now doubly and trebly the Nation's Assembly; not militant, martyred only, but triumphant; insulted, and which could not *be* insulted. Paris disembogues itself once more, to witness, 'with grim looks,' the *Séance Royale*.<sup>2</sup> which, by a new felicity, is postponed till Tuesday. The Hundred and Forty-nine, and even with Bishops among them, all in processional mass, have had free leisure to march off, and solemnly join the Commons sitting waiting in their Church. The Commons welcomed them with shouts, with embracings, nay with tears;<sup>3</sup> for it is growing a life-and-death matter now.

As for the *Séance* itself, the Carpenters seem to have accomplished their platform; but all else remains unaccomplished. Futile, we may say fatal, was the whole matter. King Louis enters, through seas of people, all grim-silent, angry with many things,—for it is a bitter rain too. Enters, to a Third Estate, likewise grim-silent; which has been wetted waiting under mean porches, at back-doors, while Court and Privileged were entering by the front. King and Garde-des-Sceaux (there is no Necker visible) make known, not without longwindedness, the determinations of the royal breast. The Three Orders *shall* vote separately. On the other hand, France may look for considerable constitutional blessings; as specified in these Five-and-thirty Articles,<sup>4</sup> which Garde-des-Sceaux is waxing hoarse with reading. Which Five-and-thirty Articles, adds his Majesty again rising, if the Three Orders most unfortunately cannot agree together to effect them, I myself will effect: "*seul je ferai le bien de mes peuples*,"—which being interpreted may signify, You, contentious Deputies of the States-General, have probably not long to be here! But, in fine, all shall now withdraw for this day; and meet again, each Order in its separate place, tomorrow morning, for despatch of business. *This* is the determination of the royal breast: pithy and clear. And herewith King, retinue, Noblesse, majority of Clergy file out, as if the whole matter were satisfactorily completed.

These file out; through grim-silent seas of people. Only

<sup>2</sup> See Arthur Young (*Travels*, i. 115-118); A. Lameth, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Dumont, *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau*, c. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire*, i. 13.

the Commons Deputies file not out ; but stand there in gloomy silence, uncertain what they shall do. One man of them is certain ; one man of them discerns and dares ! It is now that King Mirabeau starts to the Tribune, and lifts up his lion-voice. Verily a word in season ; for, in such scenes, the moment is the mother of ages ! Had not Gabriel Honoré been there,—one can well fancy, how the Commons Deputies, affrighted at the perils which now yawned dim all round them, and waxing ever paler in each other's paleness, might very naturally, one after one, have *glided off* ; and the whole course of European History have been different !

But he is there. List to the *brool* of that royal forest-voice ; sorrowful, low ; fast swelling to a roar ! Eyes kindle at the glance of his eye :—National Deputies were missioned by a Nation ; they have sworn an Oath ; they—But lo ! while the lion's voice roars loudest, what Apparition is this ? Apparition of Mercurius de Brézé, muttering somewhat!—"Speak out," cry several.—"Messieurs," shrills De Brézé, repeating himself, "You have heard the King's orders !" —Mirabeau glares on him with fire-flashing face ; shakes the black lion's mane : "Yes, Monsieur, we have heard what the King was advised to say : and you, who cannot be the interpreter of his orders to the States-General ; you, who have neither place nor right of speech here ; *you* are not the man to remind us of it. Go, Monsieur, tell those who sent you that we are here by the will of the People, and that nothing but the force of bayonets shall send us hence !"<sup>5</sup> And poor De Brézé shivers forth from the National Assembly ;—and also (if it be not in one faintest glimmer, months later) finally from the page of History!—

Hapless De Brézé ; doomed to survive long ages, in men's memory, in this faint way, with tremulent white rod ! He was true to Etiquette, which was his Faith here below ; a martyr to respect of persons. Short woollen cloaks could not kiss Majesty's hand as long velvet ones did. Nay lately, when the poor little Dauphin lay dead, and some ceremonial Visitation came, was he not punctual to announce it even to the Dauphin's *dead body* : "Monseigneur, a Deputation of the States-General!"<sup>6</sup>  
*Sunt lachrymæ rerum.*

But what does the Œil-de-Bœuf, now when De Brézé shivers

<sup>5</sup> *Moniteur* (*Hist. Parl.* ii. 22).

<sup>6</sup> Montgaillard, ii. 38.

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back thither? *Despatch* that same force of bayonets? Not so: the seas of people still hang multitudinous, intent on what is passing; nay rush and roll, loud-billowing, into the Courts of the Château itself; for a report has risen that Necker is to be dismissed. Worst of all, the Gardes Françaises seem indisposed to act: 'two Companies of them *do not fire* when ordered!'<sup>7</sup> Necker, for not being at the *Séance*, shall be shouted for, carried home in triumph; and must not be dismissed. His Grace of Paris, on the other hand, has to fly with broken coach-panels, and owe his life to furious driving. The *Gardes-du-Corps* (Body-Guards), which you were drawing out, had better be drawn in again.<sup>8</sup> There is no sending of bayonets to be thought of.

Instead of soldiers, the *Œil-de-Bœuf* sends—carpenters, to take down the platform. Ineffectual shift! In few instants, the very carpenters cease wrenching and knocking at their platform; standing on it, hammer in hand, and listen open-mouthed.<sup>9</sup> The Third Estate is decreeing that it is, was, and will be, nothing but a National Assembly; and now, moreover, an inviolable one, all members of it inviolable: 'infamous, traitorous, ' towards the Nation, and guilty of capital crime, is any person, ' body-corporate, tribunal, court or commission that now or ' henceforth, during the present session or after it, shall dare to ' pursue, interrogate, arrest, or cause to be arrested, detain or ' cause to be detained, any' &c. &c. ' on *whose part soever* the ' same be commanded.'<sup>10</sup> Which done, one can wind up with this comfortable reflection from Abbé Sieyès: "Messieurs, you are today what you were yesterday."

Courtiers may shriek; but it is, and remains, even so. Their well-charged explosion has exploded *through the touch-hole*; covering themselves with scorches, confusion, and unseemly soot! Poor Triumvirate, poor Queen; and above all, poor Queen's Husband, who means well, had he any fixed meaning! Folly is that wisdom which is wise only behindhand. Few months ago these Thirty-five Concessions had filled France with a rejoicing, which might have lasted for several years. Now it is unavailing, the very mention of it slighted; Majesty's express orders set at nought.

<sup>7</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire*, ii. 26.

<sup>8</sup> Baily, i. 217.

<sup>9</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire*, ii. 23.

<sup>10</sup> Montgaillard, ii. 47.

All France is in a roar; a sea of persons, estimated at 'ten thousand,' whirls 'all this day in the Palais Royal.'<sup>11</sup> The remaining Clergy, and likewise some Forty-eight Noblesse, D'Orléans among them, have now forthwith gone over to the victorious Commons;—by whom, as is natural, they are received 'with acclamation.'

The Third Estate triumphs; Versailles Town shouting round it; ten thousand whirling all day in the Palais Royal; and all France standing a-tiptoe, not unlike whirling! Let the Œil-de-Bœuf look to it. As for King Louis, he will swallow his injuries; will temporise, keep silence; will at all costs have present peace. It was Tuesday the 23d of June, when he spoke that peremptory royal mandate; and the week is not done till he has written to the remaining obstinate Noblesse, that they also must oblige him, and give in. D'Espréménil rages his last; Barrel Mirabeau 'breaks his sword,' making a vow,—which he might as well have kept. The 'Triple Family' is now therefore complete; the third erring brother, the Noblesse, having joined it;—erring but pardonable; soothed, so far as possible, by sweet eloquence from President Bailly.

So triumphs the Third Estate; and States-General are become National Assembly; and all France may sing *Te Deum*. By wise inertia, and wise cessation of inertia, great victory has been gained. It is the last night of June: all night you meet nothing on the streets of Versailles but 'men running with torches,' with shouts and jubilation. From the 2d of May when they kissed the hand of Majesty, to this 30th of June when men run with torches, we count eight weeks and three days. For eight weeks the National Carroccio has stood far-seen, ringing many a signal; and, so much having now gathered round it, may hope to stand.

### CHAPTER III.

#### BROGLIE THE WAR-GOD.

THE Court feels indignant that it is conquered; but what then? Another time it will do better. Mercury descended in vain; now has the time come for Mars.—The gods of the Œil-de-Bœuf have withdrawn into the darkness of their cloudy Ida;

<sup>11</sup> Arthur Young, i. 119.



July 1st-11th.

and sit there, shaping and forging what may be needful, be it 'billets of a new National Bank,' munitions of war, or things forever inscrutable to men.

Accordingly, what means this 'apparatus of troops'? The National Assembly can get no furtherance for its Committee of Subsistences; can hear only that, at Paris, the Bakers' shops are besieged; that, in the Provinces, people are 'living on meal-husks and boiled grass.' But on all highways there hover dust-clouds, with the march of regiments, with the trailing of cannon: foreign Pandours, of fierce aspect; Salis-Samade, Esterhazy, Royal-Allemand; so many of them foreign; to the number of thirty thousand,—which fear can magnify to fifty: all wending towards Paris and Versailles! Already, on the heights of Montmartre, is a digging and delving; too like a scarping and trenching. The effluence of Paris is arrested Versailles-ward by a barrier of cannon at Sèvres Bridge. From the Queen's Mews, cannon stand pointed on the National-Assembly Hall itself. The National Assembly has its very slumbers broken by the tramp of soldiery, swarming and defiling, endless, or seemingly endless, all round those spaces, at dead of night, 'without drum-music, without audible word of command.'<sup>1</sup> What means it?

Shall eight, or even shall twelve Deputies, our Mirabeaus, Barnaves at the head of them, be whirled suddenly to the Castle of Ham; the rest ignominiously dispersed to the winds? No National Assembly can make the Constitution with cannon levelled on it from the Queen's Mews! What means this reticence of the *Ceil-de-Bœuf*, broken only by nods and shrugs? In the mystery of that cloudy *Ida*, what is it that they forge and shape?—Such questions must distracted Patriotism keep asking, and receive no answer but an echo.

Questions and echo bad enough in themselves:—and now, above all, while the hungry food-year, which runs from August to August, is getting older; becoming more and more a famine-year! With 'meal-husks and boiled grass,' Brigands may actually collect; and, in crowds, at farm and mansion, howl angrily, *Food! Food!* It is in vain to send soldiers against them: at sight of soldiers they disperse, they vanish as under ground; then directly reassemble elsewhere for new tumult and plunder.

<sup>1</sup> A. Lameth, *Assemblée Constituante*, i. 41.

Frightful enough to look upon ; but what to *hear* of, reverberated through Twenty-five Millions of suspicious minds ! Brigands and Broglie, open Conflagration, preternatural Rumour are driving mad most hearts in France. What will the issue of these things be ?

At Marseilles, many weeks ago, the Townsmen have taken arms ; for 'suppressing of Brigands,' and other purposes : the military Commandant may make of it what he will. Elsewhere, everywhere, could not the like be done ? Dubious, on the distracted Patriot Imagination, wavers, as a last deliverance, some foreshadow of a *National Guard*. But conceive, above all, the Wooden Tent in the Palais Royal ! A universal hubbub there, as of dissolving worlds : there loudest bellows the mad, mad-making voice of Rumour ; there sharpest gazes Suspicion into the pale dim World-Whirlpool ; discerning shapes and phantasms : imminent bloodthirsty Regiments camped on the Champ-de-Mars ; dispersed National Assembly ; red-hot cannon-balls (to burn Paris) : —the mad War-god and Bellona's sounding thongs. To the calmest man it is becoming too plain that battle is inevitable.

Inevitable, silently nod Messeigneurs and Broglie : Inevitable and brief ! Your National Assembly, stopped short in its Constitutional labours, may fatigue the royal ear with addresses and remonstrances : those cannon of ours stand duly levelled ; those troops are here. The King's Declaration, with its Thirty-five too generous Articles, was spoken, was not listened to ; but remains yet unrevoked : he himself shall effect it, *seul il fera !*

As for Broglie, he has his headquarters at Versailles, all as in a seat of war : clerks writing ; significant staff-officers, inclined to taciturnity ; plumed aides-de-camp, scouts, orderlies flying or hovering. He himself looks forth, important, impenetrable ; listens to Besenval Commandant of Paris, and his warning and earnest counsels (for he has come out repeatedly on purpose), with a silent smile.<sup>2</sup> The Parisians resist ? scornfully cry Messeigneurs. As a meal-mob may ! They have sat quiet, these five generations, submitting to all. Their Mercier declared, in these very years, that a Parisian revolt was henceforth 'impossible.'<sup>3</sup> Stand by the royal Declaration, of the

<sup>2</sup> Besenval, iii. 398.

<sup>3</sup> Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, vi. 22.

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Twenty-third of June. The Nobles of France, valorous, chivalrous as of old, will rally round us with one heart;—and as for this which you call Third Estate, and which we call *canaille* of unwashed Sansculottes, of Patelins, Scribblers, factious Spouters,—brave Broglie, 'with a whiff of grapeshot (*salve de canons*),' if need be, will give quick account of it. Thus reason they: on their cloudy Ida; hidden from men,—men also hidden from them.

Good is grapeshot, Messeigneurs, on one condition: that the shooter also were made of metal! But unfortunately he is made of flesh; under his buffs and bandoleers your hired shooter has instincts, feelings, even a kind of thought. It is his kindred, bone of his bone, this same *canaille* that shall be whiffed; he has brothers in it, a father and mother,—living on meal-husks and boiled grass. His very doxy, not yet 'dead i' the spital,' drives him into military heterodoxy; declares that if he shed Patriot blood, he shall be accursed among men. The soldier, who has seen his pay stolen by rapacious Foulons, his blood wasted by Soubises, Pompadours, and the gates of promotion shut inexorably on him if he were not born noble,—is himself not without griefs against you. Your cause is not the soldier's cause; but, as would seem, your own only, and no other god's nor man's.

For example, the world may have heard how, at Béthune lately, when there rose some 'riot about grains,' of which sort there are so many, and the soldiers stood drawn out, and the word 'Fire!' was given,—not a trigger stirred; only the butts of all muskets rattled angrily against the ground; and the soldiers stood glooming, with a mixed expression of countenance;—till clutched 'each under the arm of a patriot householder,' they were all hurried off, in this manner, to be treated and caressed, and have their pay increased by subscription!<sup>4</sup>

Neither have the Gardes Françaises, the best regiment of the line, shown any promptitude for street-firing lately. They returned grumbling from Réveillon's; and have not burnt a single cartridge since; nay, as we saw, not even when bid. A dangerous humour dwells in these Gardes. Notable men too, in their way! Valadi the Pythagorean was, at one time, an officer of theirs. Nay, in the ranks, under the three-cornered

<sup>4</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire.*

felt and cockade, what hard heads may there not be, and reflections going on,—unknown to the public! One head of the hardest we do now discern there: on the shoulders of a certain Sergeant Hoche. Lazare Hoche, that is the name of him; he used to be about the Versailles Royal Stables, nephew of a poor herbwoman; a handy lad; exceedingly addicted to reading. He is now Sergeant Hoche, and can rise no farther: he lays out his pay in rushlights, and cheap editions of books.<sup>5</sup>

On the whole, the best seems to be: Consign these Gardes Françaises to their Barracks. So Besenval thinks, and orders. Consigned to their barracks, the Gardes Françaises do but form a 'Secret Association,' an Engagement not to act against the National Assembly. Debauched by Valadi the Pythagorean; debauched by money and women! cry Besenval and innumerable others. Debauched by what you will, or in need of no debauching, behold them, long files of them, their consignment broken, arrive, headed by their Sergeants, on the 26th day of June, at the Palais Royal! Welcomed with vivats, with presents, and a pledge of patriot liquor; embracing and embraced; declaring in words that the cause of France is their cause! Next day and the following days the like. What is singular too, except this patriot humour, and breaking of their consignment, they behave otherwise with 'the most rigorous accuracy.'<sup>6</sup>

They are growing questionable, these Gardes! Eleven ringleaders of them are put in the Abbaye Prison. It boots not in the least. The imprisoned Eleven have only, 'by the hand of an individual,' to drop, towards nightfall, a line in the Café de Foy; where Patriotism harangues loudest on its table. 'Two hundred young persons, soon waxing to four thousand,' with fit crowbars, roll towards the Abbaye; smite asunder the needful doors; and bear out their Eleven, with other military victims:—to supper in the Palais Royal Garden; to board, and lodging 'in camp-beds, in the *Théâtre des Variétés*;' other national *Prytaneum* as yet not being in readiness. Most deliberate! Nay so punctual were these young persons, that finding one military victim to have been imprisoned for real civil crime, they returned him to his cell, with protest.

<sup>5</sup> *Dictionnaire des Hommes Marquans*, Londres (Paris), 1800, ii. 198.

<sup>6</sup> Besenval, iii. 394-6.

July 1st-11th.

Why new military force was not called out? New military force was called out. New military force did arrive, full gallop, with drawn sabre: but the people gently 'laid hold of their bridles;' the dragoons sheathed their swords; lifted their caps by way of salute, and sat like mere statues of dragoons,—except indeed that a drop of liquor being brought them, they 'drank to the King and Nation with the greatest cordiality.'<sup>7</sup>

And now, ask in return, why Messieurs and Broglie the great god of war, on seeing these things, did not pause, and take some other course, any other course? Unhappily, as we said, they could see nothing. Pride, which goes before a fall; wrath, if not reasonable, yet pardonable, most natural, had hardened their hearts and heated their heads: so, with imbecility and violence (ill-matched pair), they rush to seek their hour. All Regiments are not Gardes Françaises, or debauched by Valadi the Pythagorean: let fresh undebauched Regiments come up; let Royal-Allemand, Salis-Samade, Swiss Château-Vieux come up,—which can fight, but can hardly speak except in German gutturals; let soldiers march, and highways thunder with artillery-wagons: Majesty has a *new* Royal Session to hold,—and miracles to work there! The whiff of grapeshot can, if needful, become a blast and tempest.

In which circumstances, before the red-hot balls begin raining, may not the Hundred-and-twenty Paris Electors, though their *Cahier* is long since finished, see good to meet again daily, as an 'Electoral Club'? They meet first 'in a Tavern;'—where 'a large wedding-party' cheerfully gives place to them.<sup>8</sup> But latterly they meet in the *Hôtel-de-Ville*, in the Townhall itself. Flesselles, Provost of Merchants, with his Four Echevins (*Scabins*, Assessors), could not prevent it; such was the force of public opinion. He, with his Echevins, and the Six-and-Twenty Town-Councillors, all appointed from Above, may well sit silent there, in their long gowns; and consider, with awed eye, what prelude this is of convulsion coming from Below, and how they themselves shall fare in that!

<sup>7</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire*, ii. 32.

<sup>8</sup> Dusaulx, *Prise de la Bastille* (*Collection des Mémoires*, par Berville et Barrière, Paris, 1821), p. 269.

## CHAPTER IV.

## TO ARMS!

So hangs it, dubious, fateful, in the sultry days of July. It is the passionate printed *advice* of M. Marat, to abstain, of all things, from violence.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless the hungry poor are already burning Town Barriers, where Tribute on eatables is levied; getting clamorous for food.

The twelfth July morning is Sunday: the streets are all placarded with an enormous-sized *De par le Roi*, 'inviting peaceable citizens to remain within doors,' to feel no alarm, to gather in no crowd. Why so? What mean these 'placards of enormous size'? Above all, what means this clatter of military; dragoons, hussars, rattling in from all points of the compass towards the Place Louis Quinze; with a staid gravity of face, though saluted with mere nicknames, hootings and even missiles?<sup>2</sup> Besenval is with them. Swiss Guards of his are already in the Champs Elysées, with four pieces of artillery.

Have the destroyers descended on us, then? From the Bridge of Sèvres to utmost Vincennes, from Saint-Denis to the Champ-de-Mars, we are begirt! Alarm, of the vague unknown, is in every heart. The Palais Royal has become a place of awestruck interjections, silent shakings of the head: one can fancy with what dolorous stound the noon-tide cannon (which the Sun fires at crossing of his meridian) went off there; bodeful, like an inarticulate voice of doom.<sup>3</sup> Are these troops verily come out 'against Brigands'? Where are the Brigands? What mystery is in the wind?—Hark! a human voice reporting articulately the Job's-news: *Necker, People's Minister, Saviour of France, is dismissed*. Impossible; incredible! Treasonous to the public peace! Such a voice ought to be choked in the water-works;<sup>4</sup>—had not the news-bringer quickly fled. Nevertheless, friends, make of it what you will, the news is true. Necker is gone. Necker hies northward incessantly, in obedient secrecy, since yesternight. We have a new Ministry: Bro-

<sup>1</sup> *Avis au Peuple, ou les Ministres dévoilés*, 1st July 1789 (in *Histoire Parlementaire*, ii. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Besenval, iii. 411.

<sup>3</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire*, ii. 81.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

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glie the War-god; Aristocrat Breteuil; Foulon who said the people might eat grass!

Rumour, therefore, shall arise; in the Palais Royal, and in broad France. Paleness sits on every face; confused tremor and fremescence; waxing into thunder-peals, of Fury stirred on by Fear.

But see Camille Desmoulins, from the Café de Foy, rushing out, sibylline in face; his hair streaming, in each hand a pistol! He springs to a table: the Police satellites are eyeing him; alive they shall not take him, not they alive him alive. This time he speaks without stammering:—Friends! shall we die like hunted hares? Like sheep hounded into their pinfold; bleating for mercy, where is no mercy, but only a whetted knife? The hour is come; the supreme hour of Frenchman and Man; when Oppressors are to try conclusions with Oppressed; and the word is, swift Death, or Deliverance forever. Let such hour be *well-come*! Us, meseems, one cry only befits: To Arms! Let universal Paris, universal France, as with the throat of the whirlwind, sound only: To arms!—“To arms!” yell responsive the innumerable voices; like one great voice, as of a Demon yelling from the air: for all faces wax fire-eyed, all hearts burn up into madness. In such, or fitter words,<sup>5</sup> does Camille evoke the Elemental Powers, in this great moment.—Friends, continues Camille, some rallying-sign! Cockades; green ones;—the colour of Hope!—As with the flight of locusts, these green tree-leaves; green ribands from the neighbouring shops; all green things are snatched, and made cockades of. Camille descends from his table, ‘stifled with embraces, wetted with tears;’ has a bit of green riband handed him; sticks it in his hat. And now to Curtius’ Image-shop there; to the Boulevards; to the four winds; and rest not till France be on fire!

France, so long shaken and wind-parched, is probably at the right inflammable point.—As for poor Curtius, who, one grieves to think, might be but imperfectly paid,—he cannot make two words about his Images. The Wax-bust of Necker, the Wax-bust of D’Orléans, helpers of France: these, covered

<sup>5</sup> *Vieux Cordelier*, par Camille Desmoulins, No. 5 (reprinted in *Collection des Mémoires*, par Baudouin Frères, Paris, 1825), p. 81.

with crape, as in funeral procession, or after the manner of suppliants appealing to Heaven, to Earth, and Tartarus itself, a mixed multitude bears off. For a sign! As indeed man, with his singular imaginative faculties, can do little or nothing without signs: thus Turks look to their Prophet's Banner; also Osier *Mannikins* have been burnt, and Necker's Portrait has erewhile figured, aloft on its perch.

In this manner march they, a mixed, continually increasing multitude; armed with axes, staves and miscellanea; grim, many-sounding, through the streets. Be all Theatres shut; let all dancing, on planked floor, or on the natural greensward, cease! Instead of a Christian Sabbath, and feast of *guinguette* tabernacles, it shall be a Sorcerer's Sabbath; and Paris, gone rabid, dance,—with the Fiend for piper!

However, Besenval, with horse and foot, is in the Place Louis Quinze. Mortals promenading homewards, in the fall of the day, saunter by, from Chaillot or Passy, from flirtation and a little thin wine; with sadder step than usual. Will the Bust-Procession pass that way? Behold it; behold also Prince Lambesc dash forth on it, with his Royal-Allemands! Shots fall, and sabre-strokes; Busts are hewed asunder; and, alas, also heads of men. A sabred Procession has nothing for it but to *explode*, along what streets, alleys, Tuileries Avenues it finds; and disappear. One unarmed man lies hewed down; a Garde Française by his uniform: bear him (or bear even the report of him) dead and gory to his Barracks;—where he has comrades still alive!

But why not now, victorious Lambesc, charge through that Tuileries Garden itself, where the fugitives are vanishing? Not show the Sunday promenaders too, how steel glitters, besprent with blood; that it be told of, and men's ears tingle?—Tingle, alas, they did; but the wrong way. Victorious Lambesc, in this his second or Tuileries charge, succeeds but in overturning (call it not slashing, for he struck with the flat of his sword) one man, a poor old schoolmaster, most pacifically tottering there; and is driven out, by barricade of chairs, by flights of 'bottles and glasses,' by execrations in bass voice and treble. Most delicate is the mob-queller's vocation; wherein Too-much may be as bad as Not-enough. For each of these bass voices, and more each treble voice, borne to all parts of the City, rings



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now nothing but distracted indignation; will ring all night. The cry, *To arms!* roars tenfold; steeples with their metal storm-voice boom out, as the sun sinks; armorers' shops are broken open, plundered; the streets are a living foam-sea, chafed by all the winds.

Such issue came of Lambesc's charge on the Tuileries Garden: no striking of salutary terror into Chaillot promenaders; a striking into broad wakefulness of Frenzy and the three Furies,—which otherwise were not asleep! For they lie always, those subterranean Eumenides (fabulous and yet so true), in the dullest existence of man;—and can dance, brandishing their dusky torches, shaking their serpent-hair. Lambesc with Royal-Allemand may ride to his barracks, with curses for his marching-music; then ride back again, like one troubled in mind: vengeful Gardes Françaises, *sacreing*, with knit brows, start out on him, from their barracks in the Chaussé d'Antin; pour a volley into him (killing and wounding); which he must not answer, but ride on.<sup>6</sup>

Counsel dwells not under the plumed hat. If the Eumenides awaken, and Broglie has given no orders, what can a Besenval do? When the Gardes Françaises, with Palais-Royal volunteers, roll down, greedy of more vengeance, to the Place Louis Quinze itself, they find neither Besenval, Lambesc, Royal-Allemand, nor any soldier now there. Gone is military order. On the far Eastern Boulevard, of Saint-Antoine, the Chasseurs Normandie arrive, dusty, thirsty, after a hard day's ride; but can find no billet-master, see no course in this City of confusions; cannot get to Besenval, cannot so much as discover where he is: Normandie must even bivouac there, in its dust and thirst,—unless some patriot will treat it to a cup of liquor, with advices.

Raging multitudes surround the Hôtel-de-Ville, crying: Arms! Orders! The Six-and-twenty Town-Councillors, with their long gowns, have ducked under (into the raging chaos);—shall never emerge more. Besenval is painfully wriggling himself out, to the Champ-de-Mars; he must sit there 'in the cruelest uncertainty': courier after courier may dash off for Versailles; but will bring back no answer, can hardly bring himself back. For the roads are all blocked with batteries and

<sup>6</sup> Weber, ii. 75-91.

pickets, with floods of carriages arrested for examination : such was Broglie's one sole order ; the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, hearing in the distance such mad din, which sounded almost like invasion, will before all things keep its own head whole. A new Ministry, with, as it were, but one foot in the stirrup, cannot take leaps. Mad Paris is abandoned altogether to itself.

What a Paris, when the darkness fell ! A European metropolitan City hurled suddenly forth from its old combinations and arrangements ; to crash tumultuously together, seeking new. Use and wont will now no longer direct any man ; each man, with what of originality he has, must begin thinking ; or following those that think. Seven hundred thousand individuals, on the sudden, find all their old paths, old ways of acting and deciding, vanish from under their feet. And so there go they, with clangour and terror, they know not as yet whether running, swimming or flying,—headlong into the New Era. With clangour and terror : from above, Broglie the war-god impends, preternatural, with his red-hot cannon-balls ; and from below, a preternatural Brigand-world menaces with dirk and firebrand : madness rules the hour.

Happily, in place of the submerged Twenty-six, the Electoral Club is gathering ; has declared itself a 'Provisional Municipality.' On the morrow it will get Provost Flesselles, with an Echevin or two, to give help in many things. For the present it decrees one most essential thing : that forthwith a 'Parisian Militia' shall be enrolled. Depart, ye heads of Districts, to labour in this great work ; while we here, in Permanent Committee, sit alert. Let fencible men, each party in its own range of streets, keep watch and ward, all night. Let Paris court a little fever-sleep ; confused by such fever-dreams, of 'violent motions at the Palais Royal ;'—or from time to time start awake, and look out, palpitating, in its nightcap, at the clash of discordant mutually-unintelligible Patrols ; on the gleam of distant Barriers, going up all-too ruddy towards the vault of Night:<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Deux Amis*, i. 267-306.

CHAPTER V.

GIVE US ARMS.

ON Monday the huge City has awoke, not to its week-day industry : to what a different one ! The working man has become a fighting man ; has one want only : that of arms. The industry of all crafts has paused ;—except it be the smith's, fiercely hammering pikes ; and, in a faint degree, the kitchen-er's, cooking offhand victuals ; for *bouche va toujours*. Women too are sewing cockades ;—not now of *green*, which being D'Artois colour, the Hôtel-de-Ville has had to interfere in it ; but of *red* and *blue*, our old Paris colours : these, once based on a ground of constitutional *white*, are the famed TRICOLOR, —which (if Prophecy err not) 'will go round the world.'

All shops, unless it be the Bakers' and Vintners', are shut : Paris is in the streets ;—rushing, foaming like some Venice wine-glass into which you had dropped poison. The tocsin, by order, is pealing madly from all steeples. Arms, ye Elector Municipals ; thou Flesselles with thy Echevins, give us arms ! Flesselles gives what he can : fallacious, perhaps insidious promises of arms from Charleville ; order to seek arms here, order to seek them there. The new Municipals give what they can ; some three hundred and sixty indifferent firelocks, the equipment of the City-Watch : 'a man in wooden shoes, and without coat, directly clutches one of them, and mounts guard.' Also as hinted, an order to all Smiths to make pikes with their whole soul.

Heads of Districts are in fervent consultation ; subordinate Patriotism roams distracted, ravenous for arms. Hitherto at the Hôtel-de-Ville was only such modicum of indifferent firelocks as we have seen. At the so-called Arsenal, there lies nothing but rust, rubbish and saltpetre,—overlooked too by the guns of the Bastille. His Majesty's Repository, what they call *Garde-Meuble*, is forced and ransacked : tapestries enough, and gauderies ; but of serviceable fighting-gear small stock ! Two silver-mounted cannons there are ; an ancient gift from his Majesty of Siam to Louis Fourteenth : gilt sword of the Good Henri ; antique Chivalry arms and armour. These, and such as these, a necessitous Patriotism snatches greedily, for want

of better. The Siamese cannons go trundling, on an errand they were not meant for. Among the indifferent firelocks are seen tourney-lances; the princely helm and hauberk glittering amid ill-hatted heads,—as in a time when all times and their possessions are suddenly sent jumbling!

At the *Maison de Saint-Lazare*, Lazar-House once, now a Correction-House with Priests, there was no trace of arms; but, on the other hand, corn, plainly to a culpable extent. Out with it, to market; in this scarcity of grains!—Heavens, will ‘fifty-two carts,’ in long row, hardly carry it to the *Halle aux Bleds*? Well, truly, ye reverend Fathers, was your pantry filled; fat are your larders; over-generous your wine-bins, ye plotting exasperators of the Poor; traitorous forestallers of bread!

Vain is protesting, entreaty on bare knees: the House of Saint-Lazarus has that in it which comes not out by protesting. Behold, how, from every window, it vomits: mere torrents of furniture, of bellowing and hurlyburly;—the cellars also leaking wine. Till, as was natural, smoke rose,—kindled, some say, by the desperate Saint-Lazaristes themselves, desperate of other riddance; and the Establishment vanished from this world in flame. Remark nevertheless that ‘a thief’ (set on or not by Aristocrats), being detected there, is ‘instantly hanged.’

Look also at the Châtelet Prison. The Debtors’ Prison of La Force is broken from without; and they that sat in bondage to Aristocrats go free: hearing of which the Felons at the Châtelet do likewise ‘dig up their pavements,’ and stand on the offensive; with the best prospects,—had not Patriotism, passing that way, ‘fired a volley’ into the Felon world; and crushed it down again under hatches. Patriotism consorts not with thieving and felony: surely also Punishment, this day, hitches (if she still hitch) after Crime, with frightful shoes-of-swiftness! ‘Some score or two’ of wretched persons, found prostrate with drink in the cellars of that Saint-Lazare, are indignantly haled to prison; the Jailor has no room; whereupon, other place of security not suggesting itself, it is written, ‘*on les pendit*, they hanged them.’<sup>1</sup> Brief is the word; not without significance, be it true or untrue!

In such circumstances, the Aristocrat, the unpatriotic rich

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire*, ii, 96.

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man is packing-up for departure. But he shall not get departed. A wooden-shod force has seized all Barriers, burnt or not : all that enters, all that seeks to issue, is stopped there, and dragged to the Hôtel-de-Ville : coaches, tumbrils, plate, furniture, 'many meal-sacks,' in time even 'flocks and herds' encumber the Place de Grève.<sup>2</sup>

And so it roars, and rages, and brays ; drums beating, steeples pealing ; criers rushing with hand-bells : " Oyez, oyez, All men to their Districts to be enrolled ! " The Districts have met in gardens, open squares ; are getting marshalled into volunteer troops. No red-hot ball has yet fallen from Besenval's Camp ; on the contrary, Deserters with their arms are continually dropping in : nay now, joy of joys, at two in the afternoon, the Gardes Françaises, being ordered to Saint-Denis, and flatly declining, have come over in a body ! It is a fact worth many. Three thousand six hundred of the best fighting men, with complete accoutrement ; with cannoneers even, and cannon ! Their officers are left standing alone ; could not so much as succeed in 'spiking the guns.' The very Swiss, it may now be hoped, Château-Vieux and the others, will have doubts about fighting.

Our Parisian Militia,—which some think it were better to name National Guard,—is prospering as heart could wish. It promised to be forty-eight thousand ; but will in few hours double and quadruple that number : invincible, if we had only arms !

But see, the promised Charleville Boxes, marked *Artillerie!* Here, then, are arms enough?—Conceive the blank face of Patriotism, when it found them filled with rags, foul linen, candle-ends, and bits of wood ! Provost of the Merchants, how is this ? Neither at the Chartreux Convent, whither we were sent with signed order, is there or ever was there any weapon of war. Nay here, in this Seine Boat, safe under tarpaulings (had not the nose of Patriotism been of the finest), are 'five thousand-weight of gunpowder ;' not coming *in*, but surreptitiously going out ! What meanest thou, Flesselles ? 'Tis a ticklish game, that of 'amusing' us. Cat plays with captive mouse : but mouse with enraged cat, with enraged National Tiger ?

Meanwhile, the faster, O ye black-aproned Smiths, smite ; with strong arm and willing heart. This man and that, all stroke from head to heel, shall thunder alternating, and ply the great

<sup>2</sup> Dusaulx, *Prise de la Bastille*, p. 290.

forge-hammer, till stithy reel and ring again ; while ever and anon, overhead, booms the alarm-cannon,—for the City has now got gunpowder. Pikes are fabricated ; fifty thousand of them, in six-and-thirty hours : judge whether the Black-aproned have been idle. Dig trenches, unpave the streets, ye others, assiduous, man and maid ; cram the earth in barrel-barricades, at each of them a volunteer sentry ; pile the whinstones in window-sills and upper rooms. Have scalding pitch, at least boiling water ready, ye weak old women, to pour it and dash it on Royal-Allemand, with your old skinny arms : your shrill curses along with it will not be wanting !—Patrols of the newborn National Guard, bearing torches, scour the streets, all that night ; which otherwise are vacant, yet illuminated in every window by order. Strange-looking ; like some naphtha-lighted City of the Dead, with here and there a flight of perturbed Ghosts.

O poor mortals, how ye make this Earth bitter for each other ; this fearful and wonderful Life fearful and horrible ; and Satan has his place in all hearts ! Such agonies and ragings and wailings ye have, and have had, in all times :—to be buried all, in so deep silence ; and the salt sea is not swoln with your tears.

Great meanwhile is the moment, when tidings of Freedom reach us ; when the long-enthralled soul, from amid its chains and squalid stagnancy, arises, were it still only in blindness and bewilderment, and swears by Him that made it, that it will be *free* ! Free ? Understand that well, it is the deep commandment, dimmer or clearer, of our whole being, to be *free*. Freedom is the one purport, wisely aimed at, or unwisely, of all man's struggles, toilings and sufferings, in this Earth. Yes, supreme is such a moment (if thou have known it) : first vision as of a flame-girt Sinai, in this our waste Pilgrimage,—which thenceforth wants not its pillar of cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night ! Something it is even,—nay, something considerable, when the chains have grown *corrosive*, poisonous,—to be free 'from oppression by our fellow-man.' Forward, ye maddened sons of France ; be it towards this destiny or towards that ! Around you is but starvation, falsehood, corruption and the clam of death. Where ye are is no abiding.

Imagination may, imperfectly, figure how Commandant

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Besenval, in the Champ-de-Mars, has worn out these sorrowful hours. Insurrection raging all round ; his men melting away ! From Versailles, to the most pressing messages, comes no answer ; or once only some vague word of answer which is worse than none. A Council of Officers can decide merely that there is no decision : Colonels inform him, 'weeping,' that they do not think their men will fight. Cruel uncertainty is here : war-god Broglie sits yonder, inaccessible in his Olympus ; does not descend terror-clad, does not produce his whiff of grapeshot ; sends no orders.

Truly, in the Château of Versailles all seems mystery : in the Town of Versailles, were we there, all is rumour, alarm and indignation. An august National Assembly sits, to appearance, menaced with death ; endeavouring to defy death. It has resolved 'that Necker carries with him the regrets of the Nation.' It has sent solemn Deputation over to the Château, with entreaty to have these troops withdrawn. In vain : his Majesty, with a singular composure, invites us to be busy rather with our own duty, making the Constitution ! Foreign Pandours, and suchlike, go pricking and prancing, with a swashbuckler air ; with an eye too probably to the *Salle des Menus*,—were it not for the 'grim-looking countenances' that crowd all avenues there.<sup>3</sup> Be firm, ye National Senators ; the cynosure of a firm, grim-looking people !

The august National Senators determine that there shall, at least, be Permanent Session till this thing end. Wherein however, consider that worthy Lafranc de Pompignan, our new President, whom we have named Bailly's successor, is an old man, wearied with many things. He is the Brother of that Pompignan who meditated lamentably on the Book of *Lamentations* :

*Savez-vous pourquoi Jérémie  
Se lamentait toute sa vie ?  
C'est qu'il prévoyait  
Que Pompignan le traduirait !*

Poor Bishop Pompignan withdraws ; having got Lafayette for helper or substitute : this latter, as nocturnal Vice-President, with a thin house in disconsolate humour, sits sleepless, with lights unsnuffed ;—waiting what the hours will bring.

So at Versailles. But at Paris, agitated Besenval, before

<sup>3</sup> See Lameth ; Ferrieres, &c.

retiring for the night, has stept over to old M. de Sombreuil, of the *Hôtel des Invalides* hard by. M. de Sombreuil has, what is a great secret, some eight-and-twenty thousand stand of muskets deposited in his cellars there; but no trust in the temper of his Invalides. This day, for example, he sent twenty of the fellows down to unscrew those muskets; lest Sedition might snatch at them: but scarcely, in six hours, had the twenty unscrewed twenty gun-locks, or dogsheads (*chiens*) of locks,—each Invalide his dogshead! If ordered to fire, they would, he imagines, turn their cannon against himself.

Unfortunate old military gentleman, it is your hour, not of glory! Old Marquis de Launay too, of the Bastille, has pulled up his drawbridges long since, 'and retired into his interior;' with sentries walking on his battlements, under the midnight sky, aloft over the glare of illuminated Paris;—whom a National Patrol, passing that way, takes the liberty of firing at: 'seven shots towards twelve at night,' which do not take effect.<sup>4</sup> This was the 13th day of July 1789; a worse day, many said, than the last 13th was, when only hail fell out of Heaven, not madness rose out of Tophet, ruining worse than crops!

In these same days, as Chronology will teach us, hot old Marquis Mirabeau lies stricken down, at Argenteuil,—*not* within sound of these alarm-guns; for *he* properly is not there, and only the body of him now lies, deaf and cold forever. It was on Saturday night that he, drawing his last life-breaths, gave up the ghost there;—leaving a world, which would never go to his mind, now broken out, seemingly, into deliration and the *culbute générale*. What is it to him, departing elsewhere, on his long journey? The old Château Mirabeau stands silent, far off, on its scarped rock, in that 'gorge of two windy valleys;' the pale-fading spectre now of a Château: this huge World-riot, and France, and the World itself, fades also, like a shadow on the great still mirror-sea; and all shall be as God wills.

Young Mirabeau, sad of heart, for he loved this crabbed brave old Father; sad of heart, and occupied with sad cares,—is withdrawn from Public History. The great crisis transacts itself without him.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *Deux Amis de la Liberté*, i. 312.

<sup>5</sup> *Fils Adoptif, Mirabeau*, vi. l. 1.



CHAPTER VI.

STORM AND VICTORY.

BUT, to the living and the struggling, a new, Fourteenth morning dawns. Under all roofs of this distracted City is the nodus of a drama, not untragic, crowding towards solution. The bustlings and preparings, the tremors and menaces; the tears that fell from old eyes! This day, my sons, ye shall quit you like men. By the memory of your fathers' wrongs, by the hope of your children's rights! Tyranny impends in red wrath: help for you is none, if not in your own right hands. This day ye must do or die.

From earliest light, a sleepless Permanent Committee has heard the old cry, now waxing almost frantic, mutinous: Arms! Arms! Provost Flesselles, or what traitors there are among you, may think of those Charleville Boxes. A hundred-and-fifty-thousand of us; and but the third man furnished with so much as a pike! Arms are the one thing needful: with arms we are an unconquerable man-defying National Guard; without arms, a rabble to be whiffed with grapeshot.

Happily the word has arisen, for no secret can be kept,—that there lie muskets at the *Hôtel des Invalides*. Thither will we: King's Procureur M. Ethys de Corny, and whatsoever of authority a Permanent Committee can lend, shall go with us. Besenval's Camp is there; perhaps he will not fire on us; if he kill us, we shall but die.

Alas, poor Besenval, with his troops melting away in that manner, has not the smallest humour to fire! At five o'clock this morning, as he lay dreaming, oblivious in the *Ecole Militaire*, a 'figure' stood suddenly at his bedside; 'with face 'rather handsome; eyes inflamed, speech rapid and curt, air 'audacious:' such a figure drew Priam's curtains! The message and monition of the figure was, that resistance would be hopeless; that if blood flowed, wo to him who shed it. Thus spoke the figure: and vanished. 'Withal there was a kind of eloquence that struck one.' Besenval admits that he should have arrested him, but did not.<sup>1</sup> Who this figure with inflamed eyes, with speech rapid and curt, might be? Besenval knows,

<sup>1</sup> Besenval, iii. 414.

but mentions not. Camille Desmoulins? Pythagorean Marquis Valadi, inflamed with 'violent motions all night at the Palais Royal'? Fame names him 'Young M. Meillar';<sup>2</sup> then shuts her lips about him forever.

In any case, behold, about nine in the morning, our National Volunteers rolling in long wide flood south-westward to the *Hôtel des Invalides*; in search of the one thing needful. King's Procureur M. Ethys de Corny and officials are there; the Curé of Saint-Etienne du Mont marches unpacific at the head of his militant Parish; the Clerks of the Basoche in red coats we see marching, now Volunteers of the Basoche; the Volunteers of the Palais Royal:—National Volunteers, numerable by tens of thousands; of one heart and mind. The King's muskets are the Nation's; think, old M. de Sombreuil, how, in this extremity, thou wilt refuse them! Old M. de Sombreuil would fain hold parley, send couriers; but it skills not: the walls are scaled, no Invalide firing a shot; the gates must be flung open. Patriotism rushes in, tumultuous, from grunsel up to ridge-tile, through all rooms and passages; rummaging distractedly for arms. What cellar, or what cranny can escape it? The arms are found; all safe there; lying packed in straw,—apparently with a view to being burnt! More ravenous than famishing lions over dead prey, the multitude, with clangour and vociferation, pounces on them; struggling, dashing, clutching:—to the jamming-up, to the pressure, fracture and probable extinction of the weaker Patriot.<sup>3</sup> And so, with such protracted crash of deafening, most discordant Orchestra-music, the Scene is changed; and eight-and-twenty thousand sufficient firelocks are on the shoulders of as many National Guards, lifted thereby out of darkness into fiery light.

Let Besenval look at the glitter of these muskets, as they flash by! Gardes Françaises, it is said, have cannon levelled on him; ready to open, if need were, from the other side of the River.<sup>4</sup> Motionless sits he; 'astonished,' one may flatter oneself, 'at the proud bearing (*fière contenance*) of the Pari-

<sup>2</sup> *Tableaux de la Révolution, Prise de la Bastille* (a folio Collection of Pictures and Portraits, with letter-press, not always uninteresting,—part of it said to be by Chamfort).

<sup>3</sup> *Deux Amis*, i. 302.

<sup>4</sup> Besenval, iii. 416.

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sians.'—And now, to the Bastille, ye intrepid Parisians! There grapeshot still threatens: thither all men's thoughts and steps are now tending.

Old De Launay, as we hinted, withdrew 'into his interior' soon after midnight of Sunday. He remains there ever since, hampered, as all military gentlemen now are, in the saddest conflict of uncertainties. The Hôtel-de-Ville 'invites' him to admit National Soldiers, which is a soft name for surrendering. On the other hand, His Majesty's orders were precise. His garrison is but eighty-two old Invalides, reinforced by thirty-two young Swiss; his walls indeed are nine feet thick, he has cannon and powder; but, alas, only one day's provision of victuals. The city too is French, the poor garrison mostly French. Rigorous old De Launay, think what thou wilt do!

All morning, since nine, there has been a cry everywhere: To the Bastille! Repeated 'deputations of citizens' have been here, passionate for arms; whom De Launay has got dismissed by soft speeches through portholes. Towards noon, Elector Thuriot de la Rosière gains admittance; finds De Launay indisposed for surrender; nay disposed for blowing up the place rather. Thuriot mounts with him to the battlements: heaps of paving-stones, old iron and missiles lie piled; cannon all duly levelled; in every embrasure a cannon,—only drawn back a little! But outwards, behold, O Thuriot, how the multitude flows on, welling through every street: tocsin furiously pealing, all drums beating the *générale*: the Suburb Saint-Antoine rolling hitherward wholly, as one man! Such vision (spectral yet real) thou, O Thuriot, as from thy Mount of Vision, beholdest in this moment: prophetic of what other Phantasmagories, and loud-gibbering Spectral Realities, which thou yet beholdest not, but shalt! "*Que voulez-vous?*" said De Launay, turning pale at the sight, with an air of reproach, almost of menace. "Monsieur," said Thuriot, rising into the moral-sublime, "what mean *you?* Consider if I could not precipitate *both* of us from this height,"—say only a hundred feet, exclusive of the walled ditch! Whereupon De Launay fell silent. Thuriot shows himself from some pinnacle, to comfort the multitude becoming suspicious, fremescent: then descends; departs with protest; with warning addressed also to the Invalides,—on whom, however, it produces but a mixed indistinct impression. The old

heads are none of the clearest ; besides, it is said, De Launay has been profuse of beverages (*prodigua des buissons*). They think, they will not fire,—if not fired on, if they can help it ; but must, on the whole, be ruled considerably by circumstances.

Wo to thee, De Launay, in such an hour, if thou canst not, taking some one firm decision, *rule* circumstances ! Soft speeches will not serve ; hard grapeshot is questionable ; but hovering between the two is *unquestionable*. Ever wilder swells the tide of men ; their infinite hum waxing ever louder, into imprecations, perhaps into crackle of stray musketry,—which latter, on walls nine feet thick, cannot do execution. The Outer Drawbridge has been lowered for Thuriot ; new *deputation of citizens* (it is the third, and noisiest of all) penetrates that way into the Outer Court : soft speeches producing no clearance of these, De Launay gives fire ; pulls up his Drawbridge. A slight sputter ;—which has *kindled* the too combustible chaos ; made it a roaring fire-chaos ! Bursts forth Insurrection, at sight of its own blood (for there were deaths by that sputter of fire), into endless rolling explosion of musketry, distraction, execration ;—and over head, from the Fortress, let one great gun, with its grapeshot, go booming, to show what we *could* do. The Bastille is besieged !

On, then, all Frenchmen, that have hearts in your bodies ! Roar with all your throats, of cartilage and metal, ye Sons of Liberty ; stir spasmodically whatsoever of utmost faculty is in you, soul, body, or spirit ; for it is the hour ! Smite, thou Louis Tournay, cartwright of the Marais, old-soldier of the Regiment Dauphiné ; smite at that Outer Drawbridge chain, though the fiery hail whistles round thee ! Never, over nave or felloe, did thy axe strike such a stroke. Down with it, man ; down with it to Orcus : let the whole accursed Edifice sink thither, and Tyranny be swallowed up forever ! Mounted, some say, on the roof of the guard-room, some 'on bayonets stuck into joints of the wall,' Louis Tournay smites, brave Aubin Bonnemère (also an old soldier) seconding him : the chain yields, breaks ; the huge Drawbridge slams down, thundering (*avec fracas*). Glorious : and yet, alas, it is still but the outworks. The Eight grim Towers, with their Invalide musketry, their paving-stones and cannon-mouths, still soar aloft intact ;—Ditch yawning impass-

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able, stone-faced; the inner Drawbridge with its *back* towards us: the Bastille is still to take!

To describe this Siege of the Bastille (thought to be one of the most important in History) perhaps transcends the talent of mortals. Could one but, after infinite reading, get to understand so much as the plan of the building! But there is open Esplanade, at the end of the Rue Saint-Antoine; there are such Forecourts, *Cour Avancé*, *Cour de l'Orme*, arched Gateway (where Louis Tournay now fights); then new drawbridges, dormant-bridges, rampart-bastions, and the grim Eight Towers: a labyrinthic Mass, high-frowning there, of all ages from twenty years to four hundred and twenty;—beleaguered, in this its last hour, as we said, by mere Chaos come again! Ordnance of all calibres; throats of all capacities; men of all plans, every man his own engineer: seldom since the war of Pygmies and Cranes was there seen so anomalous a thing. Half-pay Elie is home for a suit of regimentals; no one would heed him in coloured clothes: half-pay Hulin is haranguing Gardes Françaises in the Place de Grève. Frantic Patriots pick up the grapeshots; bear them, still hot (or seemingly so), to the Hôtel-de-Ville:—Paris, you perceive, is to be burnt! Flesselles is 'pale to the very lips;' for the roar of the multitude grows deep. Paris wholly has got to the acme of its frenzy; whirled, all ways, by panic madness. At every street-barricade, there whirls simmering a minor whirlpool,—strengthening the barricade, since God knows what is coming; and all minor whirlpools play distractedly into that grand Fire-Mahlstrom which is lashing round the Bastille.

And so it lashes and it roars. Cholat the wine-merchant has become an impromptu cannoneer. See Georget, of the Marine Service, fresh from Brest, ply the King of Siam's cannon. Singular (if we were not used to the like): Georget lay, last night, taking his ease at his inn; the King of Siam's cannon also lay, knowing nothing of *him*, for a hundred years. Yet now, at the right instant, they have got together, and discourse eloquent music. For, hearing what was toward, Georget sprang from the Brest Diligence, and ran. Gardes Françaises also will be here, with real artillery: were not the walls so thick!—Upwards from the Esplanade, horizontally from all neighbouring

roofs and windows, flashes one irregular deluge of musketry, without effect. The Invalides lie flat, firing comparatively at their ease from behind stone; hardly through portholes show the tip of a nose. We fall, shot; and make no impression!

Let conflagration rage; of whatsoever is combustible! Guard-rooms are burnt, Invalides mess-rooms. A distracted 'Peruke-maker with two fiery torches' is for burning 'the saltpetres of the Arsenal;'—had not a woman run screaming; had not a Patriot, with some tincture of Natural Philosophy, instantly struck the wind out of him (butt of musket on pit of stomach), overturned barrels, and stayed the devouring element. A young beautiful lady, seized escaping in these Outer Courts, and thought falsely to be De Launay's daughter, shall be burnt in De Launay's sight; she lies swooned on a paillasse: but again a Patriot, it is brave Aubin Bonnemère the old soldier, dashes in, and rescues her. Straw is burnt; three cartloads of it, hauled thither, go up in white smoke: almost to the choking of Patriotism itself; so that Elie had, with singed brows, to drag back one cart; and Réole the 'gigantic haberdasher' another. Smoke as of Tophet; confusion as of Babel; noise as of the Crack of Doom!

Blood flows; the aliment of new madness. The wounded are carried into houses of the Rue Cerisaie; the dying leave their last mandate not to yield till the accursed Stronghold fall. And yet, alas, how fall? The walls are so thick! Deputations, three in number, arrive from the Hôtel-de-Ville; Abbé Fauchet (who was of one) can say, with what almost superhuman courage of benevolence.<sup>5</sup> These wave their Town-flag in the arched Gateway; and stand, rolling their drum; but to no purpose. In such Crack of Doom, De Launay cannot hear them, dare not believe them: they return, with justified rage, the whew of lead still singing in their ears. What to do? The Firemen are here, squirting with their fire-pumps on the Invalides cannon, to wet the touchholes; they unfortunately cannot squirt so high; but produce only clouds of spray. Individuals of classical knowledge propose *catapults*. Santerre, the sonorous Brewer of the Suburb Saint-Antoine, advises rather that the place be fired, by a 'mixture of phosphorus and oil-of-turpentine spouted up through 'forcing-pumps:' O Spinola-Santerre, hast thou the mixture

<sup>5</sup> Fauchet's *Narrative* (*Deux Amis*, i. 324).

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*ready?* Every man his own engineer! And still the fire-deluge abates not: even women are firing, and Turks; at least one woman (with her sweetheart), and one Turk.<sup>6</sup> Gardes Françaises have come: real cannon, real cannoneers. Usher Maillard is busy; half-pay Elie, half-pay Hulin rage in the midst of thousands.

How the great Bastille Clock ticks (inaudible) in its Inner Court there, at its ease, hour after hour; as if nothing special, for it or the world, were passing! It tolled One when the firing began; and is now pointing towards Five, and still the firing slakes not.—Far down, in their vaults, the seven Prisoners hear muffled din as of earthquakes; their Turnkeys answer vaguely.

Wo to thee, De Launay, with thy poor hundred Invalides! Broglie is distant, and his ears heavy: Besenval hears, but can send no help. One poor troop of Hussars has crept, reconnoitering, cautiously along the Quais, as far as the Pont Neuf. "We are come to join you," said the Captain; for the crowd seems shoreless. A large-headed dwarfish individual, of smoke-bleared aspect, shambles forward, opening his blue lips, for there is sense in him; and croaks: "Alight then, and give up your arms!" The Hussar-Captain is too happy to be escorted to the Barriers, and dismissed on parole. Who the squat individual was? Men answer, It is M. Marat, author of the excellent pacific *Avis au Peuple!* Great truly, O thou remarkable Dogleech, is this thy day of emergence and new-birth: and yet this same day come four years—!—But let the curtains of the Future hang.

What shall De Launay do? One thing only De Launay could have done: what he said he would do. Fancy him sitting, from the first, with lighted taper, within arm's-length of the Powder-Magazine; motionless, like old Roman Senator, or Bronze Lamp-holder; coldly apprising Thuriot, and all men, by a slight motion of his eye, what his resolution was:—Harmless he sat there, while unharmed; but the King's Fortress, meanwhile, could, might, would, or should in nowise be surrendered, save to the King's Messenger: one old man's life is worthless, so it be lost with honour; but think, ye brawling *canaille*, how will it be when a whole Bastille springs skyward!—In such statuesque, taper-holding attitude, one fancies De Launay might have left Thuriot, the red Clerks of the Basoche,

<sup>6</sup> *Deux Amis*, i. 319; Dusaulx, &c.

Curé of Saint-Stephen and all the tagrag-and-bobtail of the world, to work their will.

And yet, withal, he could not do it. Hast thou considered how each man's heart is so tremulously responsive to the hearts of all men; hast thou noted how omnipotent is the very sound of many men? How their shriek of indignation palsies the strong soul; their howl of contumely withers with unfelt pangs? The Ritter Gluck confessed that the ground-tone of the noblest passage, in one of his noblest Operas, was the voice of the Populace he had heard at Vienna, crying to their Kaiser: Bread! Bread! Great is the combined voice of men; the utterance of their *instincts*, which are truer than their *thoughts*: it is the greatest a man encounters, among the sounds and shadows which make up this World of Time. He who can resist that, has his footing somewhere *beyond* Time. De Launay could not do it. Distracted, he hovers between two; hopes in the middle of despair; surrenders not his Fortress; declares that he will blow it up, seizes torches to blow it up, and does not blow it. Unhappy old De Launay, it is the death-agony of thy Bastille and thee! Jail, Jailoring and Jailor, all three, such as they may have been, must finish.

For four hours now has the World-Bedlam roared: call it the World-Chimæra, blowing fire! The poor Invalides have sunk under their battlements, or rise only with reversed muskets: they have made a white flag of napkins; go beating the *chamade*, or seeming to beat, for one can hear nothing. The very Swiss at the Portcullis look weary of firing; disheartened in the fire-deluge: a porthole at the drawbridge is opened, as by one that would speak. See Huissier Maillard, the shifty man! On his plank, swinging over the abyss of that stone Ditch; plank resting on parapet, balanced by weight of Patriots,—he hovers perilous: such a Dove towards such an Ark! Deftly, thou shifty Usher: one man already fell; and lies smashed, far down there, against the masonry! Usher Maillard falls not: deftly, unerring he walks, with outspread palm. The Swiss holds a paper through his porthole; the shifty Usher snatches it, and returns. Terms of surrender: Pardon, immunity to all! Are they accepted?—“*Foi d'officier*, On the word of an officer,” answers half-pay Hulin,—or half-pay Elie, for men do not agree on it,—“they are!” Sinks the drawbridge,—Usher Maillard bolting it when



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down ; rushes-in the living deluge : the Bastille is fallen ! *Victoire ! La Bastille est prise !*<sup>7</sup>

## CHAPTER VII.

## NOT A REVOLT.

WHY dwell on what follows ? Hulin's *foi d'officier* should have been kept, but could not. The Swiss stand drawn up, disguised in white canvas smocks ; the Invalides without disguise ; their arms all piled against the wall. The first rush of victors, in ecstasy that the death-peril is passed, 'leaps joyfully on their necks ;' but new victors rush, and ever new, also in ecstasy not wholly of joy. As we said, it was a living deluge, plunging head-long : had not the Gardes Françaises, in their cool military way, 'wheeled round with arms levelled,' it would have plunged suicidally, by the hundred or the thousand, into the Bastille-ditch.

And so it goes plunging through court and corridor ; billowing uncontrollable, firing from windows—on itself ; in hot frenzy of triumph, of grief and vengeance for its slain. The poor Invalides will fare ill ; one Swiss, running off in his white smock, is driven back, with a death-thrust. Let all Prisoners be marched to the Townhall, to be judged !—Alas, already one poor Invalide has his right hand slashed off him ; his maimed body dragged to the Place de Grève, and hanged there. This same right hand, it is said, turned back De Launay from the Powder-Magazine, and saved Paris.

De Launay, 'discovered in gray frock with poppy-coloured riband,' is for killing himself with the sword of his cane. He shall to the Hôtel-de-Ville ; Hulin, Maillard and others escorting him ; Elie marching foremost 'with the capitulation-paper on his sword's point.' Through roarings and cursings ; through hustlings, clutchings, and at last through strokes ! Your escort is hustled aside, felled down ; Hulin sinks exhausted on a heap of stones. Miserable De Launay ! He shall never enter the Hôtel-de-Ville : only his 'bloody hair-queue, held up in a bloody hand ;' that shall enter, for a sign. The bleeding trunk lies on

<sup>7</sup> *Histoire de la Révolution*, par Deux Amis de la Liberté, i. 267-306 ; Besenval, iii. 410-434 ; Dusaulx, *Prise de la Bastille*, 291-301 ; Bailly, *Mémoires* (Collection de Berville et Barrière), i. 322 et seqq.

the steps there; the head is off through the streets; ghastly, aloft on a pike.

Rigorous De Launay has died; crying out, "O friends, kill me fast!" Merciful De Losme must die; though Gratitude embraces him, in this fearful hour, and will die for him; it avails not. Brothers, your wrath is cruel! Your Place de Grève is become a Throat of the Tiger; full of mere fierce bellowings, and thirst of blood. One other officer is massacred; one other Invalide is hanged on the Lamp-iron; with difficulty, with generous perseverance, the Gardes Françaises will save the rest. Provost Flesselles, stricken long since with the paleness of death, must descend from his seat, 'to be judged at the Palais Royal:'—alas, to be shot dead, by an unknown hand, at the turning of the first street!—

O evening sun of July, how, at this hour, thy beams fall slant on reapers amid peaceful woody fields; on old women spinning in cottages; on ships far out in the silent main; on Balls at the Orangerie of Versailles, where high-rouged Dames of the Palace are even now dancing with double-jacketed Hussar-Officers;—and also on this roaring Hell-porch of a Hôtel-de-Ville! Babel Tower, with the confusion of tongues, were not Bedlam added with the conflagration of thoughts, was no type of it. One forest of distracted steel bristles, endless, in front of an Electoral Committee; points itself, in horrid radii, against this and the other accused breast. It was the Titans warring with Olympus; and they, scarcely crediting it, have *conquered*: prodigy of prodigies; delirious,—as it could not but be. Denunciation, vengeance; blaze of triumph on a dark ground of terror; all outward, all inward things fallen into one general wreck of madness!

Electoral Committee? Had it a thousand throats of brass, it would not suffice. Abbé Lefevre, in the Vaults down below, is black as Vulcan, distributing that 'five thousand-weight of Powder;' with what perils, these eight-and-forty hours! Last night, a Patriot, in liquor, insisted on sitting to smoke on the edge of one of the Powder-barrels: there smoked he, independent of the world,—till the Abbé 'purchased his pipe for three francs,' and pitched it far.

Elie, in the grand Hall, Electoral Committee looking on, sits 'with drawn sword bent in three places;' with battered helm, for he was of the Queen's Regiment, Cavalry; with torn regi-

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mentals, face singed and soiled; comparable, some think, to 'an antique warrior;'—judging the people; forming a list of Bastille Heroes. O Friends, stain not with blood the greenest laurels ever gained in this world: such is the burden of Elie's song: could it but be listened to. Courage, Elie! Courage, ye Municipal Electors! A declining sun; the need of victuals, and of telling news, will bring assuagement, dispersion: all earthly things must end.

Along the streets of Paris circulate Seven Bastille Prisoners, borne shoulder-high; seven Heads on pikes; the Keys of the Bastille; and much else. See also the Gardes Françaises, in their steadfast military way, marching home to their barracks, with the Invalides and Swiss kindly enclosed in hollow square. It is one year and two months since these same men stood unparticipating, with Brennus d'Agoust at the Palais de Justice, when Fate overtook D'Espréménil; and now they have participated; and will participate. Not Gardes Françaises henceforth, but *Centre Grenadiers of the National Guard*: men of iron discipline and humour,—not without a kind of thought in them!

Likewise ashlar stones of the Bastille continue thundering through the dusk; its paper archives shall fly white. Old secrets come to view; and long-buried Despair finds voice. Read this portion of an old Letter:<sup>1</sup> 'If for my consolation Monseigneur would grant me, for the sake of God and the Most Blessed Trinity, that I could have news of my dear wife; were it only her name on a card, to show that she is alive! It were the greatest consolation I could receive; and I should forever bless the greatness of Monseigneur.' Poor Prisoner, who namest thyself *Quéret-Démery*, and hast no other history,—she is *dead*, that dear wife of thine, and thou art dead! 'Tis fifty years since thy breaking heart put this question; to be heard now first, and long heard, in the hearts of men.

But so does the July twilight thicken; so must Paris, as sick children, and all distracted creatures do, brawl itself finally into a kind of sleep. Municipal Electors, astonished to find their heads still uppermost, are home: only Moreau de Saint-Méry, of tropical birth and heart, of coolest judgment; he, with two

<sup>1</sup> Dated à la Bastille, 7 Octobre 1752; signed Quéret-Démery. *Bastille Dévoilée*; in Linguet, *Mémoires sur la Bastille* (Paris, 1821), p. 199.

others, shall sit permanent at the Townhall. Paris sleeps; gleams upward the illuminated City: patrols go clashing, without common watchword; there go rumours; alarms of war, to the extent of 'fifteen thousand men marching through the Suburb Saint-Antoine,'—who never got it marched through. Of the day's distraction judge by this of the night: Moreau de Saint-Méry, 'before rising from his seat, gave upwards of three thousand orders.'<sup>2</sup> What a head; comparable to Friar Bacon's Brass Head! Within it lies all Paris. Prompt must the answer be, right or wrong; in Paris is no other Authority extant. Seriously, a most cool clear head;—for which also thou, O brave Saint-Méry, in many capacities, from august Senator to Merchant's-Clerk, Book-dealer, Vice-King; in many places, from Virginia to Sardinia, shalt, ever as a brave man, find employment.<sup>3</sup>

Besenal has decamped, under cloud of dusk, 'amid a great affluence of people,' who did not harm him; he marches, with faint-growing tread, down the left bank of the Seine, all night,—towards infinite space. Re-summoned shall Besenal himself be; for trial, for difficult acquittal. His King's-troops, his Royal-Allemand, are gone hence forever.

The Versailles Ball and lemonade is done; the Orangerie is silent except for nightbirds. Over in the Salle des Menus Vice-President Lafayette, with unsnuffed lights, 'with some Hundred or so of Members, stretched on tables round him,' sits erect; outwatching the Bear. This day, a second solemn Deputation went to his Majesty; a second, and then a third: with no effect. What will the end of these things be?

In the Court, all is mystery, not without whisperings of terror; though ye dream of lemonade and epaulettes, ye foolish women! His Majesty, kept in happy ignorance, perhaps dreams of double-barrels and the Woods of Meudon. Late at night, the Duke de Liancourt, having official right of entrance, gains access to the Royal Apartments; unfolds, with earnest clearness, in his constitutional way, the Job's-news. "*Mais,*" said poor Louis, "*c'est une révolte,* Why, that is a revolt!"—"Sire," answered Liancourt, "it is not a revolt,—it is a revolution."

<sup>2</sup> Dusaulx.

<sup>3</sup> *Biographie Universelle*, § Moreau Saint-Méry (by Fournier-Pescay).

CHAPTER VIII.

CONQUERING YOUR KING.

ON the morrow a fourth Deputation to the Château is on foot: of a more solemn, not to say awful character; for, besides 'orgies in the Orangery,' it seems 'the grain-convoys are all stopped;' nor has Mirabeau's thunder been silent. Such Deputation is on the point of setting out,—when lo, his Majesty himself, attended only by his two Brothers, steps in; quite in the paternal manner; announces that the troops, and all causes of offence, are gone, and henceforth there shall be nothing but trust, reconciliation, goodwill; whereof he 'permits, and even requests,' a National Assembly to assure Paris in his name! Acclamation, as of men suddenly delivered from death, gives answer. The whole Assembly spontaneously rises to escort his Majesty back; 'interlacing their arms to keep-off the excessive pressure from him;' for all Versailles is crowding and shouting. The Château Musicians, with a felicitous promptitude, strike up the *Sein de sa Famille* (Bosom of one's Family): the Queen appears at the Balcony with her little boy and girl, 'kissing them several times;' infinite *Vivats* spread far and wide;—and suddenly there has come, as it were, a new Heaven-on-Earth.

Eighty-eight august Senators, Bailly, Lafayette and our repentant Archbishop among them, take coach for Paris, with the great intelligence; benedictions without end on their heads. From the Place Louis Quinze, where they alight, all the way to the Hôtel-de-Ville, it is one sea of Tricolor cockades, of clear National muskets; one tempest of huzzaings, hand-clappings, aided by 'occasional rollings' of drum-music. Harangues of due fervour are delivered; especially by Lally Tollendal, pious son of the ill-fated murdered Lally; on whose head, in consequence, a civic crown (of oak or parsley) is forced,—which he forcibly transfers to Bailly's.

But surely, for one thing, the National Guard should have a General! Moreau de Saint-Méry, he of the 'three thousand orders,' casts one of his significant glances on the Bust of Lafayette, which has stood there ever since the American War of Liberty. Whereupon, by acclamation, Lafayette is nominated. Again, in room of the slain traitor or quasi-traitor Flesselles,

President Bailly shall be—Provost of the Merchants? No: Mayor of Paris! So be it. *Maire de Paris!* Mayor Bailly, General Lafayette; *vive Bailly, vive Lafayette!* the universal out-of-doors multitude rends the welkin in confirmation.—And now, finally, let us to Notre-Dame for a *Te Deum*.

Towards Notre-Dame Cathedral, in glad procession, these Regenerators of the Country walk, through a jubilant people; in fraternal manner; Abbé Lefevre, still black with his gun-powder services, walking arm in arm with the white-stoled Archbishop. Poor Bailly comes upon the Foundling Children, sent to kneel to him; and 'weeps.' *Te Deum*, our Archbishop officiating, is not only sung, but *shot*—with blank cartridges. Our joy is boundless, as our wo threatened to be. Paris, by her own pike and musket, and the valour of her own heart, has conquered the very war-gods,—to the satisfaction now of Majesty itself. A courier is, this night, getting under way for Necker: the People's Minister, invited back by King, by National Assembly, and Nation, shall traverse France amid shoutings, and the sound of trumpet and timbrel.

Seeing which course of things, Messeigneurs of the Court Triumvirate, Messieurs of the dead-born Broglie Ministry, and others such, consider that their part also is clear: to mount and ride. Off, ye too-royal Broglies, Polignacs and Princes of the Blood; off while it is yet time! Did not the Palais Royal, in its late nocturnal 'violent motions,' set a specific price (place of payment not mentioned) on each of your heads?—With precautions, with the aid of pieces of cannon and regiments that can be depended on, Messeigneurs, between the 16th night and 17th morning, get to their several roads. Not without risk! Prince Condé has (or seems to have) 'men galloping at full speed:' with a view, it is thought, to fling him into the river Oise, at Pont-Sainte-Mayence.<sup>1</sup> The Polignacs travel disguised; friends, not servants, on their coach-box. Broglie has his own difficulties at Versailles, runs his own risks at Metz and Verdun; does nevertheless get safe to Luxemburg, and there rests.

This is what they call the First Emigration; determined on, as appears, in full Court-conclave; his Majesty assisting; prompt he, for his share of it, to follow any counsel whatso-

<sup>1</sup> Weber, ii. 126.

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ever. 'Three Sons of France, and four Princes of the blood of 'Saint Louis,' says Weber, 'could not more effectually humble 'the Burghers of Paris than by appearing to withdraw in fear 'of their life.' Alas, the Burghers of Paris bear it with unexpected stoicism! The Man D'Artois indeed is gone; but has he carried, for example, the Land D'Artois with him? Not even Bagatelle the Country-house (which shall be useful as a Tavern); hardly the four-valet Breeches, leaving the Breeches-maker!—As for old Foulon, one learns that he is dead; at least 'a sumptuous funeral' is going on; the undertakers honouring him, if no other will. Intendant Berthier, his son-in-law, is still living; lurking: he joined Besenval, on that Eumenides Sunday; appearing to treat it with levity; and is now fled no man knows whither.

The Emigration is not gone many miles, Prince Condé hardly across the Oise, when his Majesty, according to arrangement, for the Emigration also thought it might do good,—undertakes a rather daring enterprise: that of visiting Paris in person. With a Hundred Members of Assembly; with small or no military escort, which indeed he dismissed at the Bridge of Sèvres, poor Louis sets out; leaving a desolate Palace; a Queen weeping, the Present, the Past and the Future all so unfriendly for her.

At the Barrier of Passy, Mayor Bailly, in grand gala, presents him with the keys; harangues him, in Academic style; mentions that it is a great day; that in Henri Quatre's case, the King had to make conquest of his People; but in this happier case, the People makes conquest of its King (*a conquís son Roi*). The King, so happily conquered, drives forward, slowly, through a steel people, all silent, or shouting only *Vive la Nation*; is harangued at the Townhall, by Moreau of the three thousand orders, by King's Procureur M. Ethys de Corny, by Lally Tollendal, and others; knows not what to think of it or say of it; learns that he is 'Restorer of French Liberty,'—as a Statue of him, to be raised on the site of the Bastille, shall testify to all men. Finally, he is shown at the Balcony, with a Tricolor cockade in his hat; is greeted now, with vehement acclamation, from Square and Street, from all windows and roofs:—and so drives home again amid glad mingled and, as

it were, intermarried shouts, of *Vive le Roi* and *Vive la Nation*; wearied but safe.

It was Sunday when the red-hot balls hung over us, in mid air: it is now but Friday, and 'the Revolution is sanctioned.' An august National Assembly shall make the Constitution; and neither foreign Pandour, domestic Triumvirate, with levelled Cannon, Guy-Faux powder-plots (for that too was spoken of); nor any tyrannic Power on the Earth or under the Earth, shall say to it, What dost thou?—So jubilates the People; sure now of a Constitution. Cracked Marquis Saint-Huruge is heard under the windows of the Château; murmuring sheer speculative-treason.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE LANTERNE.

THE Fall of the Bastille may be said to have shaken all France to the deepest foundations of its existence. The rumour of these wonders flies everywhere: with the natural speed of Rumour; with an effect thought to be preternatural, produced by plots. Did D'Orléans or Laclos, nay did Mirabeau (not overburdened with money at this time) send riding Couriers out from Paris; to gallop 'on all radii,' or highways, towards all points of France? It is a miracle, which no penetrating man will call in question.<sup>1</sup>

Already in most Towns, Electoral Committees were met; to regret Necker, in harangue and resolution. In many a Town, as Rennes, Caen, Lyons, an ebullient people was already regretting him in brickbats and musketry. But now, at every Town's-end in France, there do arrive, in these days of terror, —'men,' as men will arrive; nay 'men on horseback,' since Rumour oftenest travels riding. These men declare, with alarmed countenance, *The BRIGANDS* to be coming, to be just at hand; and do then—ride on, about their further business, be what it might! Whereupon the whole population of such Town defensively flies to arms. Petition is soon thereafter forwarded to National Assembly; in such peril and terror of peril,

<sup>2</sup> Campan, ii. 46-64.

<sup>1</sup> Toulangeon, i. 95; Weber, &c. &c.



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leave to organise yourself cannot be withheld : the armed population becomes everywhere an enrolled National Guard. Thus rides Rumour, careering along all radii, from Paris outwards, to such purpose : in few days, some say in not many hours, all France to the utmost borders bristles with bayonets. Singular, but undeniable,—miraculous or not !—But thus may any chemical liquid, though cooled to the freezing-point, or far lower, still continue liquid ; and then, on the slightest stroke or shake, it at once rushes wholly into ice. Thus has France, for long months and even years, been chemically dealt with ; brought below zero ; and now, shaken by the Fall of a Bastille, it instantaneously congeals : into one crystallised mass, of sharp-cutting steel ! *Guai a chi la tocca*, 'Ware who touches it !

In Paris, an Electoral Committee, with a new Mayor and General, is urgent with belligerent workmen to resume their handicrafts. Strong Dames of the Market (*Dames de la Halle*) deliver congratulatory harangues ; present 'bouquets to the Shrine of Sainte Geneviève.' Unenrolled men deposit their arms,—not so readily as could be wished : and receive 'nine francs.' With *Te Deums*, Royal Visits, and sanctioned Revolution, there is halcyon weather ; weather even of preternatural brightness ; the hurricane being overblown.

Nevertheless, as is natural, the waves still run high, hollow rocks retaining their murmur. We are but at the 22d of the month, hardly above a week since the Bastille fell, when it suddenly appears that old Foulon is alive ; nay, that he is here, in early morning, in the streets of Paris : the extortioner, the plotter, who would make the people eat grass, and was a liar from the beginning !—It is even so. The deceptive 'sumptuous funeral' (of some domestic that died) ; the hiding-place at Vitry towards Fontainebleau, have not availed that wretched old man. Some living domestic or dependent, for none loves Foulon, has betrayed him to the Village. Merciless boors of Vitry unearth him ; pounce on him, like hell-hounds : Westward, old Infamy ; to Paris, to be judged at the Hôtel-de-Ville ! His old head, which seventy-four years have bleached, is bare ; they have tied an emblematic bundle of grass on his back ; a garland of nettles and thistles is round his neck : in this manner ; led with ropes ; goaded on with curses and menaces, must he, with his

old limbs, sprawl forward; the pitiabest, most unpitied of all old men.

Sooty Saint-Antoine, and every street, musters its crowds as he passes;—the Hall of the Hôtel-de-Ville, the Place de Grève itself, will scarcely hold his escort and him. Foulon must not only be judged righteously, but judged there where he stands, without any delay. Appoint seven judges, ye Municipals, or seventy-and-seven; name them yourselves, or we will name them: but judge him!<sup>2</sup> Electoral rhetoric, eloquence of Mayor Bailly, is wasted, for hours, explaining the beauty of the Law's delay. Delay, and still delay! Behold, O Mayor of the People, the morning has worn itself into noon: and he is still unjudged!—Lafayette, pressingly sent for, arrives; gives voice: This Foulon, a known man, is guilty almost beyond doubt; but may he not have accomplices? Ought not the truth to be cunningly pumped out of him,—in the Abbaye Prison? It is a new light! Sansculottism claps hands;—at which handclapping, Foulon (in his fainness, as his Destiny would have it) also claps. “See! they understand one another!” cries dark Sansculottism, blazing into fury of suspicion. —“Friends,” said ‘a person in good clothes,’ stepping forward, “what is the use of judging this man? Has not he been “judged these thirty years?” With wild yells, Sansculottism clutches him, in its hundred hands: he is whirled across the Place de Grève, to the ‘*Lanterne*,’ Lamp-iron which there is at the corner of the *Rue de la Vannerie*; pleading bitterly for life, —to the deaf winds. Only with the third rope—for two ropes broke, and the quavering voice still pleaded—can he be so much as got hanged! His Body is dragged through the streets; his Head goes aloft on a pike, the mouth filled with grass: amid sounds as of Tophet, from a grass-eating people.<sup>3</sup>

Surely if Revenge is a ‘kind of Justice,’ it is a ‘wild’ kind! O mad Sansculottism, hast thou risen, in thy mad darkness, in thy soot and rags; unexpectedly, like an Enceladus, living-buried, from under his Trinacria? They that would make grass be eaten do now eat grass, in *this* manner? After long dumb-groaning generations, has the turn suddenly become thine?—To such abysmal overturns, and frightful instantaneous inver-

<sup>2</sup> *Histoire Parlementaire*, ii. 146-9.

<sup>3</sup> *Deux Amis de la Liberté*, ii. 60-6.

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sions of the centre-of-gravity, are human Solecisms all liable, if they but knew it; the more liable, the falser (and topheavier) they are!—

To add to the horror of Mayor Bailly and his Municipals, word comes that Berthier has also been arrested; that he is on his way hither from Compiègne. Berthier, Intendant (say *Tax-levier*) of Paris; sycophant and tyrant; forestaller of Corn; contriver of Camps against the people;—accused of many things: is he not Foulon's son-in-law; and, in that one point, guilty of all? In these hours, too, when Sansculottism has its blood up! The shuddering Municipals send one of their number to escort him, with mounted National Guards.

At the fall of day, the wretched Berthier, still wearing a face of courage, arrives at the Barrier; in an open carriage; with the Municipal beside him; five hundred horsemen with drawn sabres; unarmed footmen enough: not without noise! Placards go brandished round him; bearing legibly his indictment, as Sansculottism, with unlegal brevity, 'in huge letters,' draws it up.<sup>4</sup> Paris is come forth to meet him: with hand-clappings, with windows flung up; with dances, triumph-songs, as of the Furies. Lastly, the Head of Foulon; this also meets him on a pike. Well might his 'look become glazed,' and sense fail him, at such sight!—Nevertheless, be the man's conscience what it may, his nerves are of iron. At the Hôtel-de-Ville he will answer nothing. He says he obeyed superior orders; they have his papers; they may judge and determine: as for himself, not having closed an eye these two nights, he demands, before all things, to have sleep. Leaden sleep, thou miserable Berthier! Guards rise with him, in motion towards the Abbaye. At the very door of the Hôtel-de-Ville, they are clutched; flung asunder, as by a vortex of mad arms; Berthier whirls towards the Lanterne. He snatches a musket; fells and strikes, defending himself like a mad lion: he is borne down, trampled, hanged, mangled: his Head too, and even his Heart, flies over the City on a pike.

<sup>4</sup> '*Il a volé le Roi et la France* (He robbed the King and France).' 'He devoured the substance of the People.' 'He was the slave of the rich, and the tyrant of the poor.' 'He drank the blood of the widow and orphan.' 'He betrayed his country.' See *Deux Amis*, ii. 67-73.

Horrible, in Lands that had known equal justice! Not so unnatural in Lands that had never known it. "*Le sang qui coule, est-il donc si pur ?*" asks Barnave; intimating that the Gallows, though by irregular methods, has its own.—Thou thyself, O Reader, when thou turnest that corner of the Rue de la Vannerie, and discernest still that same grim Bracket of old Iron, wilt not want for reflections. 'Over a grocer's shop,' or otherwise; with 'a bust of Louis XIV. in the niche under it,' now no longer in the niche,—*it* still sticks there; still holding out an ineffectual light, of fish-oil; and has seen worlds wrecked, and says nothing.

But to the eye of enlightened Patriotism, what a thunder-cloud was this; suddenly shaping itself in the radiance of the halcyon weather! Cloud of Erebus blackness; betokening latent electricity without limit. Mayor Bailly, General Lafayette throw up their commissions, in an indignant manner;—need to be flattered back again. The cloud disappears, as thunder-clouds do. The halcyon weather returns, though of a grayer complexion; of a character more and more evidently *not* supernatural.

Thus, in any case, with what rubs soever, shall the Bastille be abolished from our Earth; and with it, Feudalism, Despotism; and, one hopes, Scoundrelism generally, and all hard usage of man by his brother man. Alas, the Scoundrelism and hard usage are not so easy of abolition! But as for the Bastille, it sinks day after day, and month after month; its ashlar and boulders tumbling down continually, by express order of our Municipals. Crowds of the curious roam through its caverns; gaze on the skeletons found walled-up, on the *oubliettes*, iron-cages, monstrous stone-blocks with padlock chains. One day we discern Mirabeau there, along with the Genevese Dumont.<sup>5</sup> Workers and onlookers make reverent way for him; fling verses, flowers on his path, Bastille-papers and curiosities into his carriage, with *vivats*.

Able Editors compile Books from the *Bastille Archives*; from what of them remain unburnt. The Key of that Robber-Den shall cross the Atlantic; shall lie on Washington's hall-table. The great Clock ticks now in a private patriotic Clockmaker's apartment; no longer measuring hours of mere

<sup>5</sup> Dumont, *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau*, p. 305.

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heaviness. Vanished is the Bastille, what we call vanished: the *body*, or sandstones, of it hanging, in benign metamorphosis, for centuries to come, over the Seine waters, as *Pont Louis Seize*;<sup>6</sup> the soul of it living, perhaps still longer, in the memories of men.

So far, ye august Senators, with your Tennis-Court Oaths, your inertia and impetus, your sagacity and pertinacity, have ye brought us. "And yet think, Messieurs," as the Petitioners justly urged, "you who were our saviours did yourselves need saviours,"—the brave Bastillers, namely; workmen of Paris; many of them in straitened pecuniary circumstances!<sup>7</sup> Subscriptions are opened; Lists are formed, more accurate than Elie's; harangues are delivered. A Body of *Bastille Heroes*, tolerably complete, did get together;—comparable to the Argonauts; hoping to endure like them. But in little more than a year the whirlpool of things threw them asunder again, and they sank. So many highest superlatives achieved by man are followed by new higher; and dwindle into comparatives and positives! The Siege of the Bastille, weighed with which, in the Historical balance, most other sieges, including that of Troy Town, are gossamer, cost, as we find, in killed and mortally wounded, on the part of the Besiegers, some Eighty-three persons: on the part of the Besieged, after all that straw-burning, fire-pumping, and deluge of musketry, One poor solitary Invalid, shot stone-dead (*roide-mort*) on the battlements!<sup>8</sup> The Bastille Fortress, like the City of Jericho, was overturned by miraculous *sound*.

<sup>6</sup> Dulaure, *Histoire de Paris*, viii. 434.

<sup>7</sup> *Moniteur*, *Séance du Samedi 18 Juillet 1789* (in *Histoire Parlementaire*, ii. 137).

<sup>8</sup> Dusaulx, *Prise de la Bastille*, p. 447, &c.