

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. [\[183\]](#) Motionless sits he; “astonished,” one may flatter oneself, “at the proud bearing (*fière contenance*) of the Parisians.”—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 Rosiere 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 shews 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 grape-shot 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 overhead, from the Fortress, let one great gun, with its grape-shot, go booming, to shew what we *could* do. The Bastille is besieged!

On, then, all Frenchmen that have hearts in their 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 Dauphine; smite at that Outer Drawbridge chain, though the fiery hail whistles round thee! Never, over nave or fellow, 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 for ever! Mounted, some say on the roof of the guard-room, some “on bayonets stuck into joints of the wall,” Louis Tournay smites, brave Aubin Bonnemere (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 Invalides’ musketry, their paving stones and cannon-mouths, still soar aloft intact;—Ditch yawning impassable, 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 grape-shots; 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, shew 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 “Puke-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 Bonnemere 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 Reole 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 Fouchet (who was of one) can say, with what almost superhuman courage of benevolence. [\[184\]](#) 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 phosphorous and oil-of-turpentine spouted up through forcing pumps:" O Spinola-Santerre, hast thou the mixture *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>[185]</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, reconnoitring, 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 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 Bazoche, 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 some where *beyond* Time. De Launay could not do it. Distracted, he hovers between the 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-Chimaera, 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 down; rushes-in the living deluge: the Bastille is fallen! *Victoire! La Bastille est prise!*[\[186\]](#)

Chapter 1.5.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 headlong; 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 Hotel de Ville: only his “bloody hair-queue, held up in a bloody hand;” that shall enter, for a sign. The bleeding trunk lies on 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-jacketted 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 regimentals, 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 Garde 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:[\[187\]](#) “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 card to shew that she is alive! It were the greatest consolation I could receive; and I should for ever 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 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.”[\[188\]](#) 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.[\[189\]](#)

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. Resummoned shall Besenal himself be; for trial, for difficult acquittal. His King’s-troops, his Royal Allemand, are gone hence for ever.

The Versailles Ball and lemonade is done; the Orangery is silent except for nightbirds. Over in the Salle des Menus, Vice-president Lafayette, with unsnuffed lights, “with some hundred 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.’

Chapter 1.5.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, step 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, good-will; 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 must 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 gunpowder 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 wargods,—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-loyal 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 the 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>[190]</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 whatsoever. "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 conquis 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 shewn 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.[\[191\]](#)

Chapter 1.5.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 every where: 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.[\[192\]](#)

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, 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 Genevieve." 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 22nd 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 dependant, 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 pitiablest, most unpitied of all old men.

Sooty Saint-Antoine, and every street, mustering its crowds as he passes,—the Place de Grève, the Hall of the Hôtel-de-Ville 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! [\[193\]](#) Electoral rhetoric, eloquence of Mayor Bailly, is wasted 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 hand-clapping, 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 he not 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.[\[194\]](#)

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 inversions 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 illegal brevity, “in huge letters,” draws it up.[\[195\]](#) 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 order; 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; is borne down, trampled, hanged, mangled: his Head too, and even his Heart, flies over the City on a pike.

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 pure?* 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,” or 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. [\[196\]](#) 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 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*;[197] 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 Petitioner justly urged, 'you who were our saviours, did yourselves need saviours,'—the brave Bastillers, namely; workmen of Paris; many of them in straightened pecuniary circumstances! [198] 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;[199] The Bastille Fortress, like the City of Jericho, was overturned by miraculous *sound*.

## BOOK VI.

### CONSOLIDATION

#### Chapter 1.6.I.

#### Make the Constitution.

Here perhaps is the place to fix, a little more precisely, what these two words, *French Revolution*, shall mean; for, strictly considered, they may have as many meanings as there are speakers of them. All things are in revolution; in change from moment to moment, which becomes sensible from epoch to epoch: in this Time-World of ours there is properly nothing else but revolution and mutation, and even nothing else conceivable. Revolution, you answer, means *speedier* change. Whereupon one has still to ask: How speedy? At what degree of speed; in what particular points of this variable course, which varies in velocity, but can never stop till Time itself stops, does revolution begin and end; cease to be ordinary mutation, and again become such? It is a thing that will depend on definition more or less arbitrary.

For ourselves we answer that French Revolution means here the open violent Rebellion, and Victory, of disimprisoned Anarchy against corrupt worn-out Authority: how Anarchy breaks prison; bursts up from the infinite Deep, and rages uncontrollable, immeasurable, enveloping a world; in phasis after phasis of fever-

frenzy;—till the frenzy burning itself out, and what elements of new Order it held (since all Force holds such) developing themselves, the Uncontrollable be got, if not reimprisoned, yet harnessed, and its mad forces made to work towards their object as sane regulated ones. For as Hierarchies and Dynasties of all kinds, Theocracies, Aristocracies, Autocracies, Strumpetocracies, have ruled over the world; so it was appointed, in the decrees of Providence, that this same Victorious Anarchy, Jacobinism, Sansculottism, French Revolution, Horrors of French Revolution, or what else mortals name it, should have its turn. The “destructive wrath” of Sansculottism: this is what we speak, having unhappily no voice for singing.

Surely a great Phenomenon: nay it is a *transcendental* one, overstepping all rules and experience; the crowning Phenomenon of our Modern Time. For here again, most unexpectedly, comes antique Fanaticism in new and newest vesture; miraculous, as all Fanaticism is. Call it the Fanaticism of “making away with formulas, *de humer les formules*.” The world of formulas, the *formed* regulated world, which all habitable world is,—must needs hate such Fanaticism like death; and be at deadly variance with it. The world of formulas must conquer it; or failing that, must die execrating it, anathematising it;—can nevertheless in nowise prevent its being and its having been. The Anathemas are there, and the miraculous Thing is there.

Whence it cometh? Whither it goeth? These are questions! When the age of Miracles lay faded into the distance as an incredible tradition, and even the age of Conventionalities was now old; and Man’s Existence had for long generations rested on mere formulas which were grown hollow by course of time; and it seemed as if no Reality any longer existed but only Phantasms of realities, and God’s Universe were the work of the Tailor and Upholsterer mainly, and men were buckram masks that went about becking and grimacing there,—on a sudden, the Earth yawns asunder, and amid Tartarean smoke, and glare of fierce brightness, rises SANSCULOTTISM, many-headed, fire-breathing, and asks: What think ye of *me*? Well may the buckram masks start together, terror-struck; “into expressive well-concerted groups!” It is indeed, Friends, a most singular, most fatal thing. Let whosoever is but buckram and a phantasm look to it: ill verily may it fare with him; here methinks he cannot much longer be. Wo also to many a one who is not wholly buckram, but partially real and human! The age of Miracles has come back! “Behold the World-Phoenix, in fire-consummation and fire-creation; wide are her fanning wings; loud is her death-melody, of battle-thunders and falling towns; skyward lashes the funeral flame, enveloping all things: it is the Death-Birth of a World!”

Whereby, however, as we often say, shall one unspeakable blessing seem attainable. This, namely: that Man and his Life rest no more on hollowness and a Lie, but on

solidity and some kind of Truth. Welcome, the beggarliest truth, so it *be* one, in exchange for the royallest sham! Truth of any kind breeds ever new and better truth; thus hard granite rock will crumble down into soil, under the blessed skyey influences; and cover itself with verdure, with fruitage and umbrage. But as for Falsehood, which in like contrary manner, grows ever falser,—what can it, or what should it do but decease, being ripe; decompose itself, gently or even violently, and return to the Father of it,—too probably in flames of fire?

Sansculottism will burn much; but what is incombustible it will not burn. Fear not Sansculottism; recognise it for what it is, the portentous, inevitable end of much, the miraculous beginning of much. One other thing thou mayest understand of it: that it too came from God; for has it not *been*? From of old, as it is written, are His goings forth; in the great Deep of things; fearful and wonderful now as in the beginning: in the whirlwind also He speaks! and the wrath of men is made to praise Him.—But to gauge and measure this immeasurable Thing, and what is called *account for it*, and reduce it to a dead logic-formula, attempt not! Much less shalt thou shriek thyself hoarse, cursing it; for that, to all needful lengths, has been already done. As an actually existing Son of Time, *look*, with unspeakable manifold interest, oftenest in silence, at what the Time did bring: therewith edify, instruct, nourish thyself, or were it but to amuse and gratify thyself, as it is given thee.

Another question which at every new turn will rise on us, requiring ever new reply is this: Where the French Revolution specially *is*? In the King's Palace, in his Majesty's or her Majesty's managements, and maltreatments, cabals, imbecilities and woes, answer some few:—whom we do not answer. In the National Assembly, answer a large mixed multitude: who accordingly seat themselves in the Reporter's Chair; and therefrom noting what Proclamations, Acts, Reports, passages of logic-fence, bursts of parliamentary eloquence seem notable within doors, and what tumults and rumours of tumult become audible from without,—produce volume on volume; and, naming it History of the French Revolution, contentedly publish the same. To do the like, to almost any extent, with so many Filed Newspapers, *Choix des Rapports*, *Histoires Parlementaires* as there are, amounting to many horseloads, were easy for us. Easy but unprofitable. The National Assembly, named now Constituent Assembly, goes its course; making the Constitution; but the French Revolution also goes *its* course.

In general, may we not say that the French Revolution lies in the heart and head of every violent-speaking, of every violent-thinking French Man? How the Twenty-five Millions of such, in their perplexed combination, acting and counter-acting may give birth to events; which event successively is the cardinal one; and from what point of

vision it may best be surveyed: this is a problem. Which problem the best insight, seeking light from all possible sources, shifting its point of vision whithersoever vision or glimpse of vision can be had, may employ itself in solving; and be well content to solve in some tolerably approximate way.

As to the National Assembly, in so far as it still towers eminent over France, after the manner of a car-borne *Carroccio*, though now no longer in the van; and rings signals for retreat or for advance,—it is and continues a reality among other realities. But in so far as it sits making the Constitution, on the other hand, it is a fatuity and chimera mainly. Alas, in the never so heroic building of Montesquieu-Mably card-castles, though shouted over by the world, what interest is there? Occupied in that way, an august National Assembly becomes for us little other than a Sanhedrim of pedants, not of the gerund-grinding, yet of no fruitfuller sort; and its loud debates and recriminations about Rights of Man, Right of Peace and War, *Veto suspensif*, *Veto absolu*, what are they but so many Pedant's-curses, "May God confound you for your *Theory of Irregular Verbs!*"

A Constitution can be built, Constitutions enough *à la Sieyes*: but the frightful difficulty is that of getting men to come and live in them! Could Sieyes have drawn thunder and lightning out of Heaven to sanction his Constitution, it had been well: but without any thunder? Nay, strictly considered, is it not still true that without some such celestial sanction, given visibly in thunder or invisibly otherwise, no Constitution can in the long run be worth much more than the waste-paper it is written on? The Constitution, the set of Laws, or prescribed Habits of Acting, that men will live under, is the one which images their Convictions,—their Faith as to this wondrous Universe, and what rights, duties, capabilities they have there; which stands sanctioned therefore, by Necessity itself, if not by a seen Deity, then by an unseen one. Other laws, whereof there are always enough *ready-made*, are usurpations; which men do not obey, but rebel against, and abolish, by their earliest convenience.

The question of questions accordingly were, Who is it that especially for rebellers and abolishers, can make a Constitution? He that can image forth the general Belief when there is one; that can impart one when, as here, there is none. A most rare man; ever as of old a god-missioned man! Here, however, in defect of such transcendent supreme man, Time with its infinite succession of merely superior men, each yielding his little contribution, does much. Force likewise (for, as Antiquarian Philosophers teach, the royal Sceptre was from the first something of a Hammer, to *crack* such heads as could not be convinced) will all along find somewhat to do. And thus in perpetual abolition and reparation, rending and mending, with struggle and strife, with present evil and the hope and effort towards future good, must the Constitution, as all

human things do, build itself forward; or unbuild itself, and sink, as it can and may. O Sieyes, and ye other Committeemen, and Twelve Hundred miscellaneous individuals from all parts of France! What is the Belief of France, and yours, if ye knew it? Properly that there shall be no Belief; that all formulas be swallowed. The Constitution which will suit that? Alas, too clearly, a No-Constitution, an Anarchy;—which also, in due season, shall be vouchsafed you.

But, after all, what can an unfortunate National Assembly do? Consider only this, that there are Twelve Hundred miscellaneous individuals; not a unit of whom but has his own thinking-apparatus, his own speaking-apparatus! In every unit of them is some belief and wish, different for each, both that France should be regenerated, and also that he individually should do it. Twelve Hundred separate Forces, yoked miscellaneously to any object, miscellaneously to all sides of it; and bid pull for life!

Or is it the nature of National Assemblies generally to do, with endless labour and clangour, Nothing? Are Representative Governments mostly at bottom Tyrannies too! Shall we say, the *Tyrants*, the ambitious contentious Persons, from all corners of the country do, in this manner, get gathered into one place; and there, with motion and counter-motion, with jargon and hubbub, *cancel* one another, like the fabulous Kilkenny Cats; and produce, for net-result, *zero*;—the country meanwhile *governing* or *guiding itself*, by such wisdom, recognised or for most part unrecognised, as may exist in individual heads here and there?—Nay, even that were a great improvement: for, of old, with their Guelf Factions and Ghibelline Factions, with their Red Roses and White Roses, they were wont to cancel the whole country as well. Besides they do it now in a much narrower cockpit; within the four walls of their Assembly House, and here and there an outpost of Hustings and Barrel-heads; do it with tongues too, not with swords:—all which improvements, in the art of producing zero, are they not great? Nay, best of all, some happy Continents (as the Western one, with its Savannahs, where whosoever has four willing limbs finds food under his feet, and an infinite sky over his head) can do without governing.—What Sphinx-questions; which the distracted world, in these very generations, must answer or die!

#### Chapter 1.6.II.

##### The Constituent Assembly.

One thing an elected Assembly of Twelve Hundred is fit for: Destroying. Which indeed is but a more decided exercise of its natural talent for Doing Nothing. Do nothing, only keep agitating, debating; and things will destroy themselves.

So and not otherwise proved it with an august National Assembly. It took the name, Constituent, as if its mission and function had been to construct or build; which also,

with its whole soul, it endeavoured to do: yet, in the fates, in the nature of things, there lay for it precisely of all functions the most opposite to that. Singular, what Gospels men will believe; even Gospels according to Jean Jacques! It was the fixed Faith of these National Deputies, as of all thinking Frenchmen, that the Constitution could be *made*; that they, there and then, were called to make it. How, with the toughness of Old Hebrews or Ishmaelite Moslem, did the otherwise light unbelieving People persist in this their *Credo quia impossibile*; and front the armed world with it; and grow fanatic, and even heroic, and do exploits by it! The Constituent Assembly's Constitution, and several others, will, being printed and not manuscript, survive to future generations, as an instructive well-nigh incredible document of the Time: the most significant Picture of the then existing France; or at lowest, Picture of these men's Picture of it.

But in truth and seriousness, what could the National Assembly have done? The thing to *be* done was, actually as they said, to regenerate France; to abolish the old France, and make a new one; quietly or forcibly, by concession or by violence, this, by the Law of Nature, has become inevitable. With what degree of violence, depends on the wisdom of those that preside over it. With perfect wisdom on the part of the National Assembly, it had all been otherwise; but whether, in any wise, it could have been pacific, nay other than bloody and convulsive, may still be a question.

Grant, meanwhile, that this Constituent Assembly does to the last continue to be something. With a sigh, it sees itself incessantly forced away from its infinite divine task, of perfecting "the Theory of Irregular Verbs,"—to finite terrestrial tasks, which latter have still a significance for us. It is the cynosure of revolutionary France, this National Assembly. All work of Government has fallen into its hands, or under its control; all men look to it for guidance. In the middle of that huge Revolt of Twenty-five millions, it hovers always aloft as *Carroccio* or Battle-Standard, impelling and impelled, in the most confused way; if it cannot give much guidance, it will still seem to give some. It emits pacificatory Proclamations, not a few; with more or with less result. It authorises the enrolment of National Guards,—lest Brigands come to devour us, and reap the unripe crops. It sends missions to quell "effervescences;" to deliver men from the Lanterne. It can listen to congratulatory Addresses, which arrive daily by the sackful; mostly in King Cambyzes' vein: also to Petitions and complaints from all mortals; so that every mortal's complaint, if it cannot get redressed, may at least hear itself complain. For the rest, an august National Assembly can produce Parliamentary Eloquence; and appoint Committees. Committees of the Constitution, of Reports, of Researches; and of much else: which again yield mountains of Printed Paper; the theme of new Parliamentary Eloquence, in bursts, or in plenteous smooth-flowing

floods. And so, from the waste vortex whereon all things go whirling and grinding, Organic Laws, or the similitude of such, slowly emerge.

With endless debating, we get the *Rights of Man* written down and promulgated: true paper basis of all paper Constitutions. Neglecting, cry the opponents, to declare the Duties of Man! Forgetting, answer we, to ascertain the *Mights* of Man;—one of the fatalest omissions!—Nay, sometimes, as on the Fourth of August, our National Assembly, fired suddenly by an almost preternatural enthusiasm, will get through whole masses of work in one night. A memorable night, this Fourth of August: Dignitaries temporal and spiritual; Peers, Archbishops, Parlement-Presidents, each outdoing the other in patriotic devotedness, come successively to throw their (untenable) possessions on the “altar of the fatherland.” With louder and louder vivats, for indeed it is “after dinner” too,—they abolish Tithes, Seignorial Dues, Gabelle, excessive Preservation of Game; nay Privilege, Immunity, Feudalism root and branch; then appoint a *Te Deum* for it; and so, finally, disperse about three in the morning, striking the stars with their sublime heads. Such night, unforeseen but for ever memorable, was this of the Fourth of August 1789. Miraculous, or semi-miraculous, some seem to think it. A new Night of Pentecost, shall we say, shaped according to the new Time, and new Church of Jean Jacques Rousseau? It had its causes; also its effects.

In such manner labour the National Deputies; perfecting their Theory of Irregular Verbs; governing France, and being governed by it; with toil and noise;—cutting asunder ancient intolerable bonds; and, for new ones, assiduously spinning ropes of sand. Were their labours a nothing or a something, yet the eyes of all France being reverently fixed on them, History can never very long leave them altogether out of sight.

For the present, if we glance into that Assembly Hall of theirs, it will be found, as is natural, “most irregular.” As many as “a hundred members are on their feet at once;” no rule in making motions, or only commencements of a rule; Spectators’ Gallery allowed to applaud, and even to hiss; [\[200\]](#) President, appointed once a fortnight, raising many times no serene head above the waves. Nevertheless, as in all human Assemblages, like does begin arranging itself to like; the perennial rule, *Ubi homines sunt modi sunt*, proves valid. Rudiments of Methods disclose themselves; rudiments of Parties. There is a Right Side (*Côté Droit*), a Left Side (*Côté Gauche*); sitting on M. le President’s right hand, or on his left: the *Côté Droit* conservative; the *Côté Gauche* destructive. Intermediate is Anglomaniac Constitutionalism, or Two-Chamber Royalism; with its Mouniers, its Lallys,—fast verging towards nonentity. Preeminent, on the Right Side, pleads and perorates Cazalès, the Dragoon-captain,

eloquent, mildly fervent; earning for himself the shadow of a name. There also blusters Barrel-Mirabeau, the Younger Mirabeau, not without wit: dusky d'Espréménil does nothing but sniff and ejaculate; *might*, it is fondly thought, lay prostrate the Elder Mirabeau himself, would he but try, [\[201\]](#)—which he does not. Last and greatest, see, for one moment, the Abbé Maury; with his jesuitic eyes, his impassive brass face, “image of all the cardinal sins.” Indomitable, unquenchable, he fights jesuitico-rhetorically; with toughest lungs and heart; for Throne, especially for Altar and Tithes. So that a shrill voice exclaims once, from the Gallery: ‘Messieurs of the Clergy, you *have* to be shaved; if you wriggle too much, you will get cut.’ [\[202\]](#)

The Left side is also called the d’Orléans side; and sometimes derisively, the Palais Royal. And yet, so confused, real-imaginary seems everything, “it is doubtful,” as Mirabeau said, “whether d’Orléans himself belong to that same d’Orléans Party.” What can be known and seen is, that his moon-visage does beam forth from that point of space. There likewise sits seagreen Robespierre; throwing in his light weight, with decision, not yet with effect. A thin lean Puritan and Precisian; he would make away with formulas; yet lives, moves, and has his being, wholly in formulas, of another sort. “*Peuple*,” such according to Robespierre ought to be the Royal method of promulgating laws, “*Peuple*, this is the Law I have framed for thee; dost thou accept it?”—answered from Right Side, from Centre and Left, by inextinguishable laughter. [\[203\]](#) Yet men of insight discern that the Seagreen may by chance go far: ‘this man,’ observes Mirabeau, ‘will do somewhat; he believes every word he says.’

Abbé Sieyes is busy with mere Constitutional work: wherein, unluckily, fellow-workmen are less pliable than, with one who has completed the Science of Polity, they ought to be. Courage, Sieyes nevertheless! Some twenty months of heroic travail, of contradiction from the stupid, and the Constitution shall be built; the top-stone of it brought out with shouting,—say rather, the top-paper, for it is all Paper; and *thou* hast done in it what the Earth or the Heaven could require, thy utmost. Note likewise this Trio; memorable for several things; memorable were it only that their history is written in an epigram: “whatsoever these Three have in hand,” it is said, “Duport thinks it, Barnave speaks it, Lameth does it.” [\[204\]](#)

But royal Mirabeau? Conspicuous among all parties, raised above and beyond them all, this man rises more and more. As we often say, he has an eye, he is a reality; while others are formulas and eye-glasses. In the Transient he will detect the Perennial, find some firm footing even among Paper-vortexes. His fame is gone forth to all lands; it gladdened the heart of the crabbed old Friend of Men himself before he died. The very Postilions of inns have heard of Mirabeau: when an impatient Traveller complains that the team is insufficient, his Postilion answers, ‘Yes, Monsieur, the wheelers are weak;

but my *mirabeau* (main horse), you see, is a right one, *mais mon mirabeau est excellent.*'[205]

And now, Reader, thou shalt quit this noisy Discrepancy of a National Assembly; not (if thou be of humane mind) without pity. Twelve Hundred brother men are there, in the centre of Twenty-five Millions; fighting so fiercely with Fate and with one another; struggling their lives out, as most sons of Adam do, for that which profiteth not. Nay, on the whole, it is admitted further to be very *dull*. 'Dull as this day's Assembly,' said some one. 'Why date, *Pourquoi dater?*' answered Mirabeau.

Consider that they are Twelve Hundred; that they not only speak, but *read* their speeches; and even borrow and steal speeches to read! With Twelve Hundred fluent speakers, and their Noah's Deluge of vociferous commonplace, unattainable silence may well seem the one blessing of Life. But figure Twelve Hundred pamphleteers; droning forth perpetual pamphlets: and no man to gag them! Neither, as in the American Congress, do the arrangements seem perfect. A Senator has not his own Desk and Newspaper here; of Tobacco (much less of Pipes) there is not the slightest provision. Conversation itself must be transacted in a low tone, with continual interruption: only "pencil Notes" circulate freely; "in incredible numbers to the foot of the very tribune." [206]—Such work is it, regenerating a Nation; perfecting one's Theory of Irregular Verbs!

### Chapter 1.6.III.

#### The General Overturn.

Of the King's Court, for the present, there is almost nothing whatever to be said. Silent, deserted are these halls; Royalty languishes forsaken of its war-god and all its hopes, till once the *Œil-de-Bœuf* rally again. The sceptre is departed from King Louis; is gone over to the *Salles des Menus*, to the Paris Townhall, or one knows not whither. In the July days, while all ears were yet deafened by the crash of the Bastille, and Ministers and Princes were scattered to the four winds, it seemed as if the very Valets had grown heavy of hearing. Besenval, also in flight towards Infinite Space, but hovering a little at Versailles, was addressing his Majesty personally for an Order about post-horses; when, lo, "the Valet in waiting places himself familiarly between his Majesty and me," stretching out his rascal neck to learn what it was! His Majesty, in sudden choler, whirled round; made a clutch at the tongs: "I gently prevented him; he grasped my hand in thankfulness; and I noticed tears in his eyes." [207]

Poor King; for French Kings also are men! Louis Fourteenth himself once clutched the tongs, and even smote with them; but then it was at Louvois, and Dame Maintenon ran up.—The Queen sits weeping in her inner apartments, surrounded by weak

women: she is “at the height of unpopularity;” universally regarded as the evil genius of France. Her friends and familiar counsellors have all fled; and fled, surely, on the foolishhest errand. The Château Polignac still frowns aloft, on its “bold and enormous” cubical rock, amid the blooming champaigns, amid the blue girdling mountains of Auvergne:[208] but no Duke and Duchess Polignac look forth from it; they have fled, they have “met Necker at Bale;” they shall not return. That France should see her Nobles resist the Irresistible, Inevitable, with the face of angry men, was unhappy, not unexpected: but with the face and sense of pettish children? This was her peculiarity. They understood nothing; would understand nothing. Does not, at this hour, a new Polignac, first-born of these Two, sit reflective in the Castle of Ham;[209] in an astonishment he will never recover from; the most confused of existing mortals?

King Louis has his new Ministry: mere Popularities; Old-President Pompignan; Necker, coming back in triumph; and other such.[210] But what will it avail him? As was said, the sceptre, all but the wooden gilt sceptre, has departed elsewhither. Volition, determination is not in this man: only innocence, indolence; dependence on all persons but himself, on all circumstances but the circumstances he were lord of. So troublous internally is our Versailles and its work. Beautiful, if seen from afar, resplendent like a Sun; seen near at hand, a mere Sun’s-Atmosphere, hiding darkness, confused ferment of ruin!

But over France, there goes on the indisputablest “destruction of formulas;” transaction of realities that follow therefrom. So many millions of persons, all gyved, and nigh strangled, with formulas; whose Life nevertheless, at least the digestion and hunger of it, was real enough! Heaven has at length sent an abundant harvest; but what profits it the poor man, when Earth with her formulas interposes? Industry, in these times of Insurrection, must needs lie dormant; capital, as usual, not circulating, but stagnating timorously in nooks. The poor man is short of work, is therefore short of money; nay even had he money, bread is not to be bought for it. Were it plotting of Aristocrats, plotting of d’Orléans; were it Brigands, preternatural terror, and the clang of Phoebus Apollo’s silver bow,—enough, the markets are scarce of grain, plentiful only in tumult. Farmers seem lazy to thresh;—being either “bribed;” or needing no bribe, with prices ever rising, with perhaps rent itself no longer so pressing. Neither, what is singular, do municipal enactments, “That along with so many measures of wheat you shall sell so many of rye,” and other the like, much mend the matter. Dragoons with drawn swords stand ranked among the corn-sacks, often more dragoons than sacks.[211] Meal-mobs abound; growing into mobs of a still darker quality.

Starvation has been known among the French Commonalty before this; known and familiar. Did we not see them, in the year 1775, presenting, in sallow faces, in wretchedness and raggedness, their Petition of Grievances; and, for answer, getting a brand-new Gallows forty feet high? Hunger and Darkness, through long years! For look back on that earlier Paris Riot, when a Great Personage, worn out by debauchery, was believed to be in want of Blood-baths; and Mothers, in worn raiment, yet with living hearts under it, “filled the public places” with their wild Rachel-cries,—stilled also by the Gallows. Twenty years ago, the Friend of Men (preaching to the deaf) described the Limousin Peasants as wearing a pain-stricken (*souffre-douleur*) look, a look *past* complaint, “as if the oppression of the great were like the hail and the thunder, a thing irremediable, the ordinance of Nature.”[\[212\]](#) And now, if in some great hour, the shock of a falling Bastille should awaken you; and it were found to be the ordinance of Art merely; and remediable, reversible!

Or has the Reader forgotten that “flood of savages,” which, in sight of the same Friend of Men, descended from the mountains at Mont d’Or? Lank-haired haggard faces; shapes rawboned, in high sabots; in woollen jupes, with leather girdles studded with copper-nails! They rocked from foot to foot, and beat time with their elbows too, as the quarrel and battle which was not long in beginning went on; shouting fiercely; the lank faces distorted into the similitude of a cruel laugh. For they were darkened and hardened: long had they been the prey of excise-men and tax-men; of “clerks with the cold spurt of their pen.” It was the fixed prophecy of our old Marquis, which no man would listen to, that “such Government by Blind-man’s-buff, stumbling along too far, would end by the General Overturn, the *Culbute Générale!*”

No man would listen, each went his thoughtless way;—and Time and Destiny also travelled on. The Government by Blind-man’s-buff, stumbling along, has reached the precipice inevitable for it. Dull Drudgery, driven on, by clerks with the cold dastard spurt of their pen, has been driven—into a Communion of Drudges! For now, moreover, there have come the strangest confused tidings; by Paris Journals with their paper wings; or still more portentous, where no Journals are,[\[213\]](#) by rumour and conjecture: Oppression *not* inevitable; a Bastille prostrate, and the Constitution fast getting ready! Which Constitution, if it be something and not nothing, what can it be but bread to eat?

The Traveller, “walking up hill bridle in hand,” overtakes “a poor woman;” the image, as such commonly are, of drudgery and scarcity; “looking sixty years of age, though she is not yet twenty-eight.” They have seven children, her poor drudge and she: a farm, with one cow, which helps to make the children soup; also one little horse, or garron. They have rents and quit-rents, Hens to pay to this Seigneur, Oat-sacks to that; King’s

taxes, Statute-labour, Church-taxes, taxes enough;—and think the times inexpressible. She has heard that *somewhere*, in some manner, *something* is to be done for the poor: ‘God send it soon; for the dues and taxes crush us down (*nous écrasent*)!’[\[214\]](#)

Fair prophecies are spoken, but they are not fulfilled. There have been Notables, Assemblages, turnings out and comings in. Intriguing and manœuvring; Parliamentary eloquence and arguing, Greek meeting Greek in high places, has long gone on; yet still bread comes not. The harvest is reaped and garnered; yet still we have no bread. Urged by despair and by hope, what can Drudgery do, but rise, as predicted, and produce the General Overturn?

Fancy, then, some Five full-grown Millions of such gaunt figures, with their haggard faces (*figures hâves*); in woollen jupes, with copper-studded leather girths, and high sabots,—starting up to ask, as in forest-roarings, their washed Upper-Classes, after long unreviewed centuries, virtually this question: How have ye treated us; how have ye taught us, fed us, and led us, while we toiled for you? The answer can be read in flames, over the nightly summer sky. *This* is the feeding and leading we have had of you: EMPTINESS,—of pocket, of stomach, of head, and of heart. Behold there is *nothing in us*; nothing but what Nature gives her wild children of the desert: Ferocity and Appetite; Strength grounded on Hunger. Did ye mark among your Rights of Man, that man was not to die of starvation, while there was bread reaped by him? It is among the *Mights of Man*.

Seventy-two Châteaux have flamed aloft in the Maconnais and Beaujolais alone: this seems the centre of the conflagration; but it has spread over Dauphiné, Alsace, the Lyonnais; the whole South-East is in a blaze. All over the North, from Rouen to Metz, disorder is abroad: smugglers of salt go openly in armed bands: the barriers of towns are burnt; toll-gatherers, tax-gatherers, official persons put to flight. “It was thought,” says Young, “the people, from hunger, would revolt;” and we see they have done it. Desperate Lackalls, long prowling aimless, now finding hope in desperation itself, everywhere form a nucleus. They ring the Church bell by way of tocsin: and the Parish turns out to the work.[\[215\]](#) Ferocity, atrocity; hunger and revenge: such work as we can imagine!

Ill stands it now with the Seigneur, who, for example, “has walled up the only Fountain of the Township;” who has ridden high on his *chartier* and parchments; who has preserved Game not wisely but too well. Churches also, and Canonries, are sacked, without mercy; which have shorn the flock too close, forgetting to feed it. Wo to the land over which Sansculottism, in its day of vengeance, tramps roughshod,—shod in

sabots! Highbred Seigneurs, with their delicate women and little ones, had to “fly half-naked,” under cloud of night; glad to escape the flames, and even worse. You meet them at the *tables-d’hôte* of inns; making wise reflections or foolish that “rank is destroyed;” uncertain whither they shall now wend. [216] The *métayer* will find it convenient to be slack in paying rent. As for the Tax-gatherer, he, long hunting as a biped of prey, may now get hunted as one; his Majesty’s Exchequer will not “fill up the Deficit,” this season: it is the notion of many that a Patriot Majesty, being the Restorer of French Liberty, has abolished most taxes, though, for their private ends, some men make a secret of it.

Where this will end? In the Abyss, one may prophecy; whither all Delusions are, at all moments, travelling; where this Delusion has now arrived. For if there be a Faith, from of old, it is this, as we often repeat, that no Lie can live for ever. The very Truth has to change its vesture, from time to time; and be born again. But all Lies have sentence of death written down against them, and Heaven’s Chancery itself; and, slowly or fast, advance incessantly towards their hour. “The sign of a Grand Seigneur being landlord,” says the vehement plain-spoken Arthur Young, “are wastes, *landes*, deserts, ling: go to his residence, you will find it in the middle of a forest, peopled with deer, wild boars and wolves. The fields are scenes of pitiable management, as the houses are of misery. To see so many millions of hands, that would be industrious, all idle and starving: Oh, if I were legislator of France, for one day, I would make these great lords skip again!” [217] O Arthur, thou now actually beholdest them *skip*;—wilt thou grow to grumble at that too?

For long years and generations it lasted, but the time came. Featherbrain, whom no reasoning and no pleading could touch, the glare of the firebrand had to illuminate: there remained but that method. Consider it, look at it! The widow is gathering nettles for her children’s dinner; a perfumed Seigneur, delicately lounging in the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, has an alchemy whereby he will extract from her the third nettle, and name it Rent and Law: such an arrangement must end. Ought it? But, O most fearful is *such* an ending! Let those, to whom God, in His great mercy, has granted time and space, prepare another and milder one.

To some it is a matter of wonder that the Seigneurs did not do something to help themselves; say, combine, and arm: for there were a “hundred and fifty thousand of them,” all violent enough. Unhappily, a hundred and fifty thousand, scattered over wide Provinces, divided by mutual ill-will, cannot combine. The highest Seigneurs, as we have seen, had already emigrated,—with a view of putting France to the blush. Neither are arms now the peculiar property of Seigneurs; but of every mortal who has ten shillings, wherewith to buy a secondhand firelock.

Besides, those starving Peasants, after all, have not four feet and claws, that you could keep them down permanently in that manner. They are not even of black colour; they are mere Unwashed Seigneurs; and a Seigneur too has human bowels!—The Seigneurs did what they could; enrolled in National Guards; fled, with shrieks, complaining to Heaven and Earth. One Seigneur, famed Memmay of Quincey, near Vesoul, invited all the rustics of his neighbourhood to a banquet; blew up his Château and them with gunpowder; and instantaneously vanished, no man yet knows whither. [\[218\]](#) Some half dozen years after, he came back; and demonstrated that it was by accident.

Nor are the authorities idle: though unluckily, all Authorities, Municipalities and such like, are in the uncertain transitionary state; getting regenerated from old Monarchic to new Democratic; no Official yet knows clearly what he is. Nevertheless, Mayors old or new do gather *Marechaussées*, National Guards, Troops of the line; justice, of the most summary sort, is not wanting. The Electoral Committee of Macon, though but a Committee, goes the length of hanging, for its own behoof, as many as twenty. The Prévôt of Dauphiné traverses the country “with a movable column,” with tipstaves, gallows-ropes; for gallows any tree will serve, and suspend its culprit, or “thirteen” culprits.

Unhappy country! How is the fair gold-and-green of the ripe bright Year defaced with horrid blackness: black ashes of Châteaux, black bodies of gibetted Men! Industry has ceased in it; not sounds of the hammer and saw, but of the tocsin and alarm-drum. The sceptre has departed, *whither* one knows not;—breaking itself in pieces: here impotent, there tyrannous. National Guards are unskilful, and of doubtful purpose; Soldiers are inclined to mutiny: there is danger that they two may quarrel, danger that they may *agree*. Strasburg has seen riots: a Townhall torn to shreds, its archives scattered white on the winds; drunk soldiers embracing drunk citizens for three days, and Mayor Dietrich and Marshal Rochambeau reduced nigh to desperation. [\[219\]](#)

Through the middle of all which phenomena, is seen, on his triumphant transit, “escorted,” through BÉfort for instance, “by fifty National Horsemen and all the military music of the place,”—M. Necker, returning from Bale! Glorious as the meridian; though poor Necker himself partly guesses whither it is leading. [\[220\]](#) One highest culminating day, at the Paris Townhall; with immortal vivats, with wife and daughter kneeling publicly to kiss his hand; with Besenval’s pardon granted,—but indeed revoked before sunset: one highest day, but then lower days, and ever lower, down even to lowest! Such magic is in a name; and in the want of a name. Like some enchanted Mambrino’s Helmet, essential to victory, comes this “Saviour of France;”

bespoken, bespoken by the world:—alas, so soon, to be *disenchanted*, to be pitched shamefully over the lists as a Barber's Bason! Gibbon "could wish to shew him" (in this ejected, Barber's-Bason state) to any man of solidity, who were minded to have the soul burnt out of him, and become a *caput mortuum*, by Ambition, unsuccessful or successful. [\[221\]](#)

Another small phasis we add, and no more: how, in the Autumn months, our sharp-tempered Arthur has been "pestered for some days past," by shot, lead-drops and slugs, "rattling five or six times into my chaise and about my ears;" all the mob of the country gone out to kill game! [\[222\]](#) It is even so. On the Cliffs of Dover, over all the Marches of France, there appear, this autumn, two Signs on the Earth: emigrant flights of French Seigneurs; emigrant winged flights of French Game! Finished, one may say, or as good as finished, is the Preservation of Game on this Earth; completed for endless Time. What part it had to play in the History of Civilisation is played *plaudite; exeat!*

In this manner does Sansculottism blaze up, illustrating many things;—producing, among the rest, as we saw, on the Fourth of August, that semi-miraculous Night of Pentecost in the National Assembly; semi miraculous, which had its causes, and its effects. Feudalism is struck dead; not on parchment only, and by ink; but in very fact, by fire; say, by self-combustion. This conflagration of the South-East will abate; will be got scattered, to the West, or elsewhither: extinguish it will not, till the *fuel* be all done.

#### Chapter 1.6.IV.

##### In Queue.

If we look now at Paris, one thing is too evident: that the Baker's shops have got their *Queues*, or Tails; their long strings of purchasers, arranged *in tail*, so that the first come be the first served,—were the shop once open! This waiting in tail, not seen since the early days of July, again makes its appearance in August. In time, we shall see it perfected by practice to the rank almost of an art; and the art, or quasi-art, of standing in tail become one of the characteristics of the Parisian People, distinguishing them from all other Peoples whatsoever.

But consider, while work itself is so scarce, how a man must not only realise money; but stand waiting (if his wife is too weak to wait and struggle) for half days in the Tail, till he get it changed for dear bad bread! Controversies, to the length, sometimes of blood and battery, must arise in these exasperated Queues. Or if no controversy, then it is but one accordant *Pange Lingua* of complaint against the Powers that be. France has begun her long Curriculum of Hungering, instructive and productive beyond

Academic Curriculums; which extends over some seven most strenuous years. As Jean Paul says, of his own Life, “to a great height shall the business of Hungering go.”

Or consider, in strange contrast, the jubilee Ceremonies; for, in general, the aspect of Paris presents these two features: jubilee ceremonials and scarcity of victual. Processions enough walk in jubilee; of Young Women, decked and dizen'd, their ribands all tricolor; moving with song and tabor, to the Shrine of Sainte Genevieve, to thank her that the Bastille is down. The Strong Men of the Market, and the Strong Women, fail not with their bouquets and speeches. Abbé Fauchet, famed in such work (for Abbé Lefevre could only distribute powder) blesses tricolor cloth for the National Guard; and makes it a National Tricolor Flag; victorious, or to be victorious, in the cause of civil and religious liberty all over the world. Fauchet, we say, is the man for *Te-Deums*, and public Consecrations;—to which, as in this instance of the Flag, our National Guard will “reply with volleys of musketry,” Church and Cathedral though it be;[223] filling Notre Dame with such noisiest fuliginous Amen, significant of several things.

On the whole, we will say our new Mayor Bailly; our new Commander Lafayette, named also “Scipio-Americanus,” have bought their preferment dear. Bailly rides in gilt state-coach, with beefeaters and sumptuosity; Camille Desmoulins, and others, sniffing at him for it: Scipio bestrides the “white charger,” and waves with civic plumes in sight of all France. Neither of them, however, does it for nothing; but, in truth, at an exorbitant rate. At this rate, namely: of feeding Paris, and keeping it from fighting. Out of the City-funds, some seventeen thousand of the utterly destitute are employed digging on Montmartre, at tenpence a day, which buys them, at market price, almost two pounds of bad bread;—they look very yellow, when Lafayette goes to harangue them. The Townhall is in travail, night and day; it must bring forth Bread, a Municipal Constitution, regulations of all kinds, curbs on the Sansculottic Press; above all, Bread, Bread.

Purveyors prowl the country far and wide, with the appetite of lions; detect hidden grain, purchase open grain; by gentle means or forcible, must and will find grain. A most thankless task; and so difficult, so dangerous,—even if a man did gain some trifle by it! On the 19th August, there is food for one day.[224] Complaints there are that the food is spoiled, and produces an effect on the intestines: not corn but plaster-of-Paris! Which effect on the intestines, as well as that “smarting in the throat and palate,” a Townhall Proclamation warns you to disregard, or even to consider as drastic-beneficial. The Mayor of Saint-Denis, so black was his bread, has, by a dyspeptic populace, been hanged on the Lanterne there. National Guards protect the

Paris Corn-Market: first ten suffice; then six hundred. [225] Busy are ye, Bailly, Brissot de Warville, Condorcet, and ye others!

For, as just hinted, there is a Municipal Constitution to be made too. The old Bastille Electors, after some ten days of psalmodying over their glorious victory, began to hear it asked, in a splenetic tone, Who put you there? They accordingly had to give place, not without moanings, and audible growlings on both sides, to a new larger Body, specially elected for that post. Which new Body, augmented, altered, then fixed finally at the number of Three Hundred, with the title of Town Representatives (*Représentans de la Commune*), now sits there; rightly portioned into Committees; assiduous making a Constitution; at all moments when not seeking flour.

And such a Constitution; little short of miraculous: one that shall “consolidate the Revolution”! The Revolution is finished, then? Mayor Bailly and all respectable friends of Freedom would fain think so. Your Revolution, like jelly sufficiently *boiled*, needs only to be poured into *shapes*, of Constitution, and “consolidated” therein? Could it, indeed, contrive to *cool*; which last, however, is precisely the doubtful thing, or even the not doubtful!

Unhappy friends of Freedom; consolidating a Revolution! They must sit at work there, their pavilion spread on very Chaos; between two hostile worlds, the Upper Court-world, the Nether Sansculottic one; and, beaten on by both, toil painfully, perilously, — doing, in sad literal earnest, “the impossible.”

Chapter 1.6.V.

The Fourth Estate.

Pamphleteering opens its abysmal throat wider and wider: never to close more. Our Philosophes, indeed, rather withdraw; after the manner of Marmontel, “retiring in disgust the first day.” Abbé Raynal, grown gray and quiet in his Marseilles domicile, is little content with this work; the last literary act of the man will again be an act of rebellion: an indignant *Letter to the Constituent Assembly*; answered by “the order of the day.” Thus also Philosophe Morellet puckers discontented brows; being indeed threatened in his benefices by that Fourth of August: it is clearly going too far. How astonishing that those “haggard figures in woollen jupes” would not rest as satisfied with Speculation, and victorious Analysis, as we!

Alas, yes: Speculation, Philosophism, once the ornament and wealth of the saloon, will now coin itself into mere Practical Propositions, and circulate on street and highway, universally; with results! A Fourth Estate, of Able Editors, springs up; increases and multiplies; irrepressible, incalculable. New Printers, new Journals, and

ever new (so prurient is the world), let our Three Hundred curb and consolidate as they can! Loustalot, under the wing of Prudhomme dull-blustering Printer, edits weekly his *Révolutions de Paris*; in an acrid, emphatic manner. Acrid, corrosive, as the spirit of sloes and copperas, is Marat, *Friend of the People*; struck already with the fact that the National Assembly, so full of Aristocrats, “can do nothing,” except dissolve itself, and make way for a better; that the Townhall Representatives are little other than babblers and imbeciles, if not even knaves. Poor is this man; squalid, and dwells in garrets; a man unlovely to the sense, outward and inward; a man forbid;—and is becoming fanatical, possessed with fixed-idea. Cruel *lusus* of Nature! Did Nature, O poor Marat, as in cruel sport, knead thee out of her *leavings*, and miscellaneous waste clay; and fling thee forth stepdamelike, a Distraction into this distracted Eighteenth Century? Work is appointed thee there; which thou shalt do. The Three Hundred have summoned and will again summon Marat: but always he croaks forth answer sufficient; always he will defy them, or elude them; and endure no gag.

Carra, “Ex-secretary of a decapitated Hospodar,” and then of a Necklace-Cardinal; likewise pamphleteer, Adventurer in many scenes and lands,—draws nigh to Mercier, of the *Tableau de Paris*; and, with foam on his lips, proposes an *Annales Patriotiques*. The *Moniteur* goes its prosperous way; Barrère “weeps,” on Paper as yet loyal; Rivarol, Royou are not idle. Deep calls to deep: your *Domine Salvum Fac Regem* shall awaken *Pange Lingua*; with an *Ami-du-Peuple* there is a King’s-Friend Newspaper, *Ami-du-Roi*. Camille Desmoulins has appointed himself *Procureur-Général de la Lanterne*, Attorney-General of the Lamp-iron; and pleads, *not* with atrocity, under an atrocious title; editing weekly his brilliant *Revolutions of Paris and Brabant*. Brilliant, we say: for if, in that thick murk of Journalism, with its dull blustering, with its fixed or loose fury, any ray of genius greet thee, be sure it is Camille’s. The thing that Camille teaches he, with his light finger, adorns: brightness plays, gentle, unexpected, amid horrible confusions; often is the word of Camille worth reading, when no other’s is. Questionable Camille, how thou glitterest with a fallen, rebellious, yet still semi-celestial light; as is the star-light on the brow of Lucifer! Son of the Morning, into what times and what lands, art thou fallen!

But in all things is good;—though not good for “consolidating Revolutions.” Thousand wagon-loads of this Pamphleteering and Newspaper matter, lie rotting slowly in the Public Libraries of our Europe. Snatched from the great gulf, like oysters by bibliomaniac pearl-divers, there must they first *rot*, then what was pearl, in Camille or others, may be seen as such, and continue as such.

Nor has public speaking declined, though Lafayette and his Patrols look sour on it. Loud always is the Palais Royal, loudest the Café de Foy; such a miscellany of Citizens and Citizenesses circulating there. “Now and then,” according to Camille, “some Citizens employ the liberty of the *press* for a private purpose; so that this or the other Patriot finds himself short of his watch or pocket-handkerchief!” But, for the rest, in Camille’s opinion, nothing can be a livelier image of the Roman Forum. “A Patriot proposes his motion; if it finds any supporters, they make him mount on a chair, and speak. If he is applauded, he prospers and redacts; if he is hissed, he goes his ways.” Thus they, circulating and perorating. Tall shaggy Marquis Saint-Huruge, a man that has had losses, and has deserved them, is seen eminent, and also heard. “Bellowing” is the character of his voice, like that of a Bull of Bashan; voice which drowns all voices, which causes frequently the hearts of men to leap. Cracked or half-cracked is this tall Marquis’s head; uncracked are his lungs; the cracked and the uncracked shall alike avail him.

Consider farther that each of the Forty-eight Districts has its own Committee; speaking and motioning continually; aiding in the search for grain, in the search for a Constitution; checking and spurring the poor Three Hundred of the Townhall. That Danton, with a “voice reverberating from the domes,” is President of the Cordeliers District; which has already become a Goshen of Patriotism. That apart from the “seventeen thousand utterly necessitous, digging on Montmartre,” most of whom, indeed, have got passes, and been dismissed into Space “with four shillings,”—there is a *strike*, or union, of Domestics out of place; who assemble for public speaking: next, a strike of Tailors, for even they will strike and speak; further, a strike of Journeymen Cordwainers; a strike of Apothecaries: so dear is bread. [\[226\]](#) All these, having struck, must speak; generally under the open canopy; and pass resolutions;—Lafayette and his Patrols watching them suspiciously from the distance.

Unhappy mortals: such tugging and lugging, and throttling of one another, to divide, in some not intolerable way, the joint Felicity of man in this Earth; when the whole lot to be divided is such a “feast of *shells!*”—Diligent are the Three Hundred; none equals Scipio Americanus in dealing with mobs. But surely all these things bode ill for the consolidating of a Revolution.

## BOOK VII.

### THE INSURRECTION OF WOMEN

#### Chapter 1.7.I.

#### Patrollotism.

No, Friends, this Revolution is not of the consolidating kind. Do not fires, fevers, sown seeds, chemical mixtures, men, events; all embodiments of Force that work in this miraculous Complex of Forces, named Universe,—go on *growing*, through their natural phases and developments, each according to its kind; reach their height, reach their visible decline; finally sink under, vanishing, and what we call *die*? They all grow; there is nothing but what grows, and shoots forth into its special expansion,—once give it leave to spring. Observe too that each grows with a rapidity proportioned, in general, to the madness and unhealthiness there is in it: slow regular growth, though this also ends in death, is what we name health and sanity.

A Sansculottism, which has prostrated Bastilles, which has got pike and musket, and now goes burning Châteaux, passing resolutions and haranguing under roof and sky, may be said to have sprung; and, by law of Nature, must grow. To judge by the madness and diseasedness both of itself, and of the soil and element it is in, one might expect the rapidity and monstrosity would be extreme.

Many things too, especially all diseased things, grow by shoots and fits. The first grand fit and shooting forth of Sansculottism with that of Paris conquering its King; for Bailly's figure of rhetoric was all-too sad a reality. The King is conquered; going at large on his parole; on condition, say, of absolutely good behaviour,—which, in these circumstances, will unhappily mean no behaviour whatever. A quite untenable position, that of Majesty put on its good behaviour! Alas, is it not natural that whatever lives try to keep itself living? Whereupon his Majesty's behaviour will soon become exceptionable; and so the Second grand Fit of Sansculottism, that of putting him in durance, cannot be distant.

Necker, in the National Assembly, is making moan, as usual about his Deficit: Barriers and Customhouses burnt; the Tax-gatherer hunted, not hunting; his Majesty's Exchequer all but empty. The remedy is a Loan of thirty millions; then, on still more enticing terms, a Loan of eighty millions: neither of which Loans, unhappily, will the Stockjobbers venture to lend. The Stockjobber has no country, except his own black pool of *Agio*.

And yet, in those days, for men that have a country, what a glow of patriotism burns in many a heart; penetrating inwards to the very purse! So early as the 7th of August, a *Don Patriotique*, “a Patriotic Gift of jewels to a considerable extent,” has been solemnly made by certain Parisian women; and solemnly accepted, with honourable mention. Whom forthwith all the world takes to imitating and emulating. Patriotic Gifts, always with some heroic eloquence, which the President must answer and the Assembly listen to, flow in from far and near: in such number that the honourable

mention can only be performed in “lists published at stated epochs.” Each gives what he can: the very cordwainers have behaved munificently; one landed proprietor gives a forest; fashionable society gives its shoebuckles, takes cheerfully to shoe-ties. Unfortunate females give what they “have amassed in loving.”<sup>[227]</sup> The smell of all cash, as Vespasian thought, is good.

Beautiful, and yet inadequate! The Clergy must be “invited” to melt their superfluous Church-plate,—in the Royal Mint. Nay finally, a Patriotic Contribution, of the forcible sort, must be determined on, though unwillingly: let the fourth part of your declared yearly revenue, for this once only, be paid down; so shall a National Assembly make the Constitution, undistracted at least by insolvency. Their own wages, as settled on the 17th of August, are but Eighteen Francs a day, each man; but the Public Service must have sinews, must have money. To *appease* the Deficit; not to “*combl*er, or choke the Deficit,” if you or mortal could! For withal, as Mirabeau was heard saying, ‘it is the Deficit that saves us.’

Towards the end of August, our National Assembly in its constitutional labours, has got so far as the question of *Veto*: shall Majesty have a *Veto* on the National Enactments; or not have a *Veto*? What speeches were spoken, within doors and without; clear, and also passionate logic; imprecations, comminations; gone happily, for most part, to Limbo! Through the cracked brain, and uncracked lungs of Saint-Huruge, the Palais Royal rebellows with *Veto*. Journalism is busy, France rings with *Veto*. “I shall never forget,” says Dumont, “my going to Paris, one of these days, with Mirabeau; and the crowd of people we found waiting for his carriage, about Le Jay the Bookseller’s shop. They flung themselves before him; conjuring him with tears in their eyes not to suffer the *Veto Absolu*. They were in a frenzy: ‘Monsieur le Comte, you are the people’s father; you must save us; you must defend us against those villains who are bringing back Despotism. If the King get this *Veto*, what is the use of National Assembly? We are slaves, all is done.’”<sup>[228]</sup> Friends, *if* the sky fall, there will be catching of larks! Mirabeau, adds Dumont, was eminent on such occasions: he answered vaguely, with a Patrician imperturbability, and bound himself to nothing.

Deputations go to the Hôtel-de-Ville; anonymous Letters to Aristocrats in the National Assembly, threatening that fifteen thousand, or sometimes that sixty thousand, “will march to illuminate you.” The Paris Districts are astir; Petitions signing: Saint-Huruge sets forth from the Palais Royal, with an escort of fifteen hundred individuals, to petition in person. Resolute, or seemingly so, is the tall shaggy Marquis, is the Café de Foy: but resolute also is Commandant-General Lafayette. The streets are all beset by Patrols: Saint-Huruge is stopped at the *Barrière des Bon Hommes*; he may bellow like the bulls of Bashan; but absolutely must return. The brethren of the Palais Royal

“circulate all night,” and make motions, under the open canopy; all Coffee-houses being shut. Nevertheless Lafayette and the Townhall do prevail: Saint-Huruge is thrown into prison; *Veto Absolu* adjusts itself into *Suspensive Veto*, prohibition not forever, but for a term of time; and this doom’s-clamour will grow silent, as the others have done.

So far has Consolidation prospered, though with difficulty; repressing the Nether Sansculottic world; and the Constitution shall be made. With difficulty: amid jubilee and scarcity; Patriotic Gifts, Bakers’-queues; Abbé-Fauchet Harangues, with their *Amen* of platoon-musketry! Scipio Americanus has deserved thanks from the National Assembly and France. They offer him stipends and emoluments, to a handsome extent; all which stipends and emoluments he, covetous of far other blessedness than mere money, does, in his chivalrous way, without scruple, refuse.

To the Parisian common man, meanwhile, one thing remains inconceivable: that now when the Bastille is down, and French Liberty restored, grain should continue so dear. Our Rights of Man are voted, Feudalism and all Tyranny abolished; yet behold we stand *in queue*! Is it Aristocrat forestallers; a Court still bent on intrigues? Something is rotten, somewhere.

And yet, alas, what to do? Lafayette, with his Patrols prohibits every thing, even complaint. Saint-Huruge and other heroes of the *Veto* lie in durance. People’s-Friend Marat was seized; Printers of Patriotic Journals are fettered and forbidden; the very Hawkers cannot cry, till they get license, and leaden badges. Blue National Guards ruthlessly dissipate all groups; scour, with levelled bayonets, the Palais Royal itself. Pass, on your affairs, along the Rue Taranne, the Patrol, presenting his bayonet, cries, *To the left!* Turn into the Rue Saint-Benoit, he cries, *To the right!* A judicious Patriot (like Camille Desmoulins, in this instance) is driven, for quietness’s sake, to take the gutter.

O much-suffering People, our glorious Revolution is evaporating in tricolor ceremonies, and complimentary harangues! Of which latter, as Loustalot acridly calculates, “upwards of two thousand have been delivered within the last month, at the Townhall alone.”<sup>[229]</sup> And our mouths, unfilled with bread, are to be shut, under penalties? The Caricaturist promulgates his emblematic Tablature: *Le Patrouillotisme chassant le Patriotisme*, Patriotism driven out by Patrollotism. Ruthless Patrols; long superfine harangues; and scanty ill-baked loaves, more like baked Bath bricks,—which produce an effect on the intestines! Where will this end? In consolidation?

Chapter 1.7.II.

O Richard, O my King.

For, alas, neither is the Townhall itself without misgivings. The Nether Sansculottic world has been suppressed hitherto: but then the Upper Court-world! Symptoms there are that the Œil-de-Bœuf is rallying.

More than once in the Townhall Sanhedrim; often enough, from those outspoken Bakers'-queues, has the wish uttered itself: O that our Restorer of French Liberty were here; that he could see with his own eyes, not with the false eyes of Queens and Cabals, and his really good heart be enlightened! For falsehood still environs him; intriguing Dukes de Guiche, with Bodyguards; scouts of Bouillé; a new flight of intriguers, now that the old is flown. What else means this advent of the *Regiment de Flandre*; entering Versailles, as we hear, on the 23rd of September, with two pieces of cannon? Did not the Versailles National Guard do duty at the Château? Had they not Swiss; Hundred Swiss; *Gardes-du-Corps*, Bodyguards so-called? Nay, it would seem, the number of Bodyguards on duty has, by a manœuvre, been doubled: the new relieving Battalion of them arrived at its time; but the old relieved one does not *depart*!

Actually, there runs a whisper through the best informed Upper-Circles, or a nod still more potentous than whispering, of his Majesty's flying to Metz; of a Bond (to stand by him therein) which has been signed by Noblesse and Clergy, to the incredible amount of thirty, or even of sixty thousand. Lafayette coldly whispers it, and coldly asseverates it, to Count d'Estaing at the Dinner-table; and d'Estaing, one of the bravest men, quakes to the core lest some lackey overhear it; and tumbles thoughtful, without sleep, all night. [\[230\]](#) Regiment Flandre, as we said, is clearly arrived. His Majesty, they say, hesitates about sanctioning the Fourth of August; makes observations, of chilling tenor, on the very Rights of Man! Likewise, may not all persons, the Bakers'-queues themselves discern on the streets of Paris, the most astonishing number of Officers on furlough, Crosses of St. Louis, and such like? Some reckon "from a thousand to twelve hundred." Officers of all uniforms; nay one uniform never before seen by eye: green faced with red! The tricolor cockade is not always visible: but what, in the name of Heaven, may these *black* cockades, which some wear, foreshadow?

Hunger whets everything, especially Suspicion and Indignation. Realities themselves, in this Paris, have grown unreal: preternatural. Phantasms once more stalk through the brain of hungry France. O ye laggards and dastards, cry shrill voices from the Queues, if ye had the hearts of men, ye would take your pikes and secondhand firelocks, and look into it; not leave your wives and daughters to be starved, murdered, and worse!—Peace, women! The heart of man is bitter and heavy; Patriotism, driven out by Patrollotism, knows not what to resolve on.

The truth is, the Œil-de-Bœuf has rallied; to a certain unknown extent. A changed Œil-de-Bœuf; with Versailles National Guards, in their tricolor cockades, doing duty there; a Court all flaring with tricolor! Yet even to a tricolor Court men will rally. Ye loyal hearts, burnt-out Seigneurs, rally round your Queen! With wishes; which will produce hopes; which will produce attempts!

For indeed self-preservation being such a law of Nature, what can a rallied Court do, but attempt and endeavour, or call it *plot*,—with such wisdom and unwisdom as it has? They will fly, escorted, to Metz, where brave Bouillé commands; they will raise the Royal Standard: the Bond-signatures shall become armed men. Were not the King so languid! Their Bond, if at all signed, must be signed without his privy.—Unhappy King, *he* has but one resolution: not to have a civil war. For the rest, he still hunts, having ceased lockmaking; he still dozes, and digests; is clay in the hands of the potter. Ill will it fare with him, in a world where all is helping itself; where, as has been written, “whosoever is not hammer must be stithy;” and “the very hyssop on the wall grows there, in that chink, because the whole Universe could not prevent its growing!”

But as for the coming up of this Regiment de Flandre, may it not be urged that there were Saint-Huruge Petitions, and continual meal-mobs? Undebauched Soldiers, be there plot, or only dim elements of a plot, are always good. Did not the Versailles Municipality (an old Monarchic one, not yet refounded into a Democratic) instantly second the proposal? Nay the very Versailles National Guard, wearied with continual duty at the Château, did not object; only Draper Lecointre, who is now Major Lecointre, shook his head.—Yes, Friends, surely it was natural this Regiment de Flandre should be sent for, since it could be got. It was natural that, at sight of military bandoleers, the heart of the rallied Œil-de-Bœuf should revive; and Maids of Honour, and gentlemen of honour, speak comfortable words to epauletted defenders, and to one another. Natural also, and mere common civility, that the Bodyguards, a Regiment of Gentlemen, should invite their Flandre brethren to a Dinner of welcome!—Such invitation, in the last days of September, is given and accepted.

Dinners are defined as “the *ultimate* act of communion;” men that can have communion in nothing else, can sympathetically eat together, can still rise into some glow of brotherhood over food and wine. The dinner is fixed on, for Thursday the First of October; and ought to have a fine effect. Further, as such Dinner may be rather extensive, and even the Noncommissioned and the Common man be introduced, to see and to hear, could not His Majesty’s Opera Apartment, which has lain quite silent ever since Kaiser Joseph was here, be obtained for the purpose?—The Hall of the Opera is granted; the Salon d’Hercule shall be drawingroom. Not only the Officers of

Flandre, but of the Swiss, of the Hundred Swiss, nay of the Versailles National Guard, such of them as have any loyalty, shall feast: it will be a Repast like few.

And now suppose this Repast, the solid part of it, transacted; and the first bottle over. Suppose the customary loyal toasts drunk; the King's health, the Queen's with deafening vivats;—that of the Nation “omitted,” or even “rejected.” Suppose champagne flowing; with pot-valorous speech, with instrumental music; empty feathered heads growing ever the noisier, in their own emptiness, in each other's noise! Her Majesty, who looks unusually sad tonight (his Majesty sitting dulled with the day's hunting), is told that the sight of it would cheer her. Behold! She enters there, issuing from her State-rooms, like the Moon from the clouds, this fairest unhappy Queen of Hearts; royal Husband by her side, young Dauphin in her arms! She descends from the Boxes, amid splendour and acclaim; walks queen-like, round the Tables; gracefully escorted, gracefully nodding; her looks full of sorrow, yet of gratitude and daring, with the hope of France on her mother-bosom! And now, the band striking up, *O Richard, O mon Roi, l'univers t'abandonne* (O Richard, O my King, and world is all forsaking thee)—could man do other than rise to height of pity, of loyal valour? Could featherheaded young ensigns do other than, by white Bourbon Cockades, handed them from fair fingers; by waving of swords, drawn to pledge the Queen's health; by trampling of National Cockades; by scaling the Boxes, whence intrusive murmurs may come; by vociferation, tripudiation, sound, fury and distraction, within doors and without,—testify what tempest-tost state of vacuity they are in? Till champagne and tripudiation do their work; and all lie silent, horizontal; passively slumbering, with meed-of-battle dreams!—

A natural Repast, in ordinary times, a harmless one: now fatal, as that of Thyestes; as that of Job's Sons, when a strong wind smote the four corners of their banquet-house! Poor ill-advised Marie-Antoinette; with a woman's vehemence, not with a sovereign's foresight! It was so natural, yet so unwise. Next day, in public speech of ceremony, her Majesty declares herself “delighted with the Thursday.”

The heart of the Œil-de-Bœuf glows into hope; into daring, which is premature. Rallied Maids of Honour, waited on by Abbés, sew “white cockades;” distribute them, with words, with glances, to epauletted youths; who in return, may kiss, not without fervour, the fair sewing fingers. Captains of horse and foot go swashing with “enormous white cockades;” nay one Versailles National Captain had mounted the like, so witching were the words and glances; and laid aside his tricolor! Well may Major Lecointre shake his head with a look of severity; and speak audible resentful words. But now a swashbuckler, with enormous white cockade, overhearing the Major, invites him insolently, once and then again elsewhere, to recant; and failing that, to

duel. Which latter feat Major Lecointre declares that he will not perform, not at least by any known laws of fence; that he nevertheless will, according to mere law of Nature, by dirk and blade, “exterminate” any “vile gladiator,” who may insult him or the Nation;—whereupon (for the Major is actually drawing his implement) “they are parted,” and no weasands slit.[\[231\]](#)

Chapter 1.7.III.

Black Cockades.

But fancy what effect this Thyestes Repast and trampling on the National Cockade, must have had in the *Salle des Menus*; in the famishing Bakers’-queues at Paris! Nay such Thyestes Repasts, it would seem, continue. Flandre has given its Counter-Dinner to the Swiss and Hundred Swiss; then on Saturday there has been another.

Yes, here with us is famine; but yonder at Versailles is food; enough and to spare! Patriotism stands in queue, shivering hungerstruck, insulted by Patrollotism; while bloodyminded Aristocrats, heated with excess of high living, trample on the National Cockade. Can the atrocity be true? Nay, look: green uniforms faced with red; black cockades,—the colour of Night! Are we to have military onfall; and death also by starvation? For behold the Corbeil Cornboat, which used to come twice a-day, with its Plaster-of-Paris meal, now comes only once. And the Townhall is deaf; and the men are laggard and dastard!—At the Café de Foy, this Saturday evening, a new thing is seen, not the last of its kind: a woman engaged in public speaking. Her poor man, she says, was put to silence by his District; their Presidents and Officials would not let him speak. Wherefore she here with her shrill tongue will speak; denouncing, while her breath endures, the Corbeil-Boat, the Plaster-of-Paris bread, sacrilegious Opera-dinners, green uniforms, Pirate Aristocrats, and those black cockades of theirs!—

Truly, it is time for the black cockades at least, to vanish. Them Patrollotism itself will not protect. Nay, sharp-tempered “M. Tassin,” at the Tuileries parade on Sunday morning, forgets all National military rule; starts from the ranks, wrenches down one black cockade which is swashing ominous there; and tramples it fiercely into the soil of France. Patrollotism itself is not without suppressed fury. Also the Districts begin to stir; the voice of President Danton reverberates in the Cordeliers: People’s-Friend Marat has flown to Versailles and back again;—swart bird, not of the halcyon kind![\[232\]](#)

And so Patriot meets promenading Patriot, this Sunday; and sees his own grim care reflected on the face of another. Groups, in spite of Patrollotism, which is not so alert as usual, fluctuate deliberative: groups on the Bridges, on the Quais, at the patriotic Cafés. And ever as any black cockade may emerge, rises the many-voiced growl and

bark: *À bas*, Down! All black cockades are ruthlessly plucked off: one individual picks his up again; kisses it, attempts to refix it; but a “hundred canes start into the air,” and he desists. Still worse went it with another individual; doomed, by extempore *Plebiscitum*, to the Lanterne; saved, with difficulty, by some active *Corps-de-Garde*.—Lafayette sees signs of an effervescence; which he doubles his Patrols, doubles his diligence, to prevent. So passes Sunday, the 4th of October 1789.

Sullen is the male heart, repressed by Patrollotism; vehement is the female, irrepressible. The public-speaking woman at the Palais Royal was not the only speaking one:—Men know not what the pantry is, when it grows empty, only house-mothers know. O women, wives of men that will only calculate and not act! Patrollotism is strong; but Death, by starvation and military onfall, is stronger. Patrollotism represses male Patriotism: but female Patriotism? Will Guards named National thrust their bayonets into the bosoms of women? Such thought, or rather such dim unshaped raw-material of a thought, ferments universally under the female night-cap; and, by earliest daybreak, on slight hint, will explode.

#### Chapter 1.7.IV.

##### The Menads.

If Voltaire once, in splenetic humour, asked his countrymen: ‘But you, *Gualches*, what have you invented?’ they can now answer: The Art of Insurrection. It was an art needed in these last singular times: an art, for which the French nature, so full of vehemence, so free from depth, was perhaps of all others the fittest.

Accordingly, to what a height, one may well say of perfection, has this branch of human industry been carried by France, within the last half-century! Insurrection, which, Lafayette thought, might be “the most sacred of duties,” ranks now, for the French people, among the duties which they can perform. Other mobs are dull masses; which roll onwards with a dull fierce tenacity, a dull fierce heat, but emit no light-flashes of genius as they go. The French mob, again, is among the liveliest phenomena of our world. So rapid, audacious; so clear-sighted, inventive, prompt to seize the moment; instinct with life to its finger-ends! That talent, were there no other, of spontaneously standing in queue, distinguishes, as we said, the French People from all Peoples, ancient and modern.

Let the Reader confess too that, taking one thing with another, perhaps few terrestrial Appearances are better worth considering than mobs. Your mob is a genuine outburst of Nature; issuing from, or communicating with, the deepest deep of Nature. When so much goes grinning and grimacing as a lifeless Formality, and under the stiff buckram no heart can be felt beating, here once more, if nowhere else, is a Sincerity and

Reality. Shudder at it; or even shriek over it, if thou must; nevertheless consider it. Such a Complex of human Forces and Individualities hurled forth, in their transcendental mood, to act and react, on circumstances and on one another; to work out what it is in them to work. The thing they will do is known to no man; least of all to themselves. It is the inflammablest immeasurable Fire-work, generating, consuming itself. With what phases, to what extent, with what results it will burn off, Philosophy and Perspicacity conjecture in vain.

“Man,” as has been written, “is for ever interesting to man; nay properly there is nothing else interesting.” In which light also, may we not discern why most Battles have become so wearisome? Battles, in these ages, are transacted by mechanism; with the slightest possible developement of human individuality or spontaneity: men now even die, and kill one another, in an artificial manner. Battles ever since Homer’s time, when they were Fighting Mobs, have mostly ceased to be worth looking at, worth reading of, or remembering. How many wearisome bloody Battles does History strive to represent; or even, in a husky way, to sing:—and she would omit or carelessly slur-over this one Insurrection of Women?

A thought, or dim raw-material of a thought, was fermenting all night, universally in the female head, and might explode. In squalid garret, on Monday morning, Maternity awakes, to hear children weeping for bread. Maternity must forth to the streets, to the herb-markets and Bakers’—queues; meets there with hunger-stricken Maternity, sympathetic, exasperative. O we unhappy women! But, instead of Bakers’-queues, why not to Aristocrats’ palaces, the root of the matter? *Allons!* Let us assemble. To the Hôtel-de-Ville; to Versailles; to the Lanterne!

In one of the Guardhouses of the Quartier Saint-Eustache, “a young woman” seizes a drum,—for how shall National Guards give fire on women, on a young woman? The young woman seizes the drum; sets forth, beating it, “uttering cries relative to the dearth of grains.” Descend, O mothers; descend, ye Judiths, to food and revenge!—All women gather and go; crowds storm all stairs, force out all women: the female Insurrectionary Force, according to Camille, resembles the English Naval one; there is a universal “Press of women.” Robust Dames of the Halle, slim Mantua-makers, assiduous, risen with the dawn; ancient Virginity tripping to matins; the Housemaid, with early broom; all must go. Rouse ye, O women; the laggard men will not act; they say, we ourselves may act!

And so, like snowbreak from the mountains, for every staircase is a melted brook, it storms; tumultuous, wild-shrilling, towards the Hôtel-de-Ville. Tumultuous, with or without drum-music: for the Faubourg Saint-Antoine also has tucked up its gown;

and, with besom-staves, fire-irons, and even rusty pistols (void of ammunition), is flowing on. Sound of it flies, with a velocity of sound, to the outmost Barriers. By seven o'clock, on this raw October morning, fifth of the month, the Townhall will see wonders. Nay, as chance would have it, a male party are already there; clustering tumultuously round some National Patrol, and a Baker who has been seized with short weights. They are there; and have even lowered the rope of the Lanterne. So that the official persons have to smuggle forth the short-weighing Baker by back doors, and even send "to all the Districts" for more force.

Grand it was, says Camille, to see so many Judiths, from eight to ten thousand of them in all, rushing out to search into the root of the matter! Not unfrightful it must have been; ludicro-terrific, and most unmanageable. At such hour the overwatched Three Hundred are not yet stirring: none but some Clerks, a company of National Guards; and M. de Gouvion, the Major-general. Gouvion has fought in America for the cause of civil Liberty; a man of no inconsiderable heart, but deficient in head. He is, for the moment, in his back apartment; assuaging Usher Maillard, the Bastille-serjeant, who has come, as too many do, with "representations." The assuagement is still incomplete when our Judiths arrive.

The National Guards form on the outer stairs, with levelled bayonets; the ten thousand Judiths press up, resistless; with obtestations, with outspread hands, — merely to speak to the Mayor. The rear forces them; nay, from male hands in the rear, stones already fly: the National Guards must do one of two things; sweep the Place de Grève with cannon, or else open to right and left. They open; the living deluge rushes in. Through all rooms and cabinets, upwards to the topmost belfry: ravenous; seeking arms, seeking Mayors, seeking justice; — while, again, the better-cressed (dressed?) speak kindly to the Clerks; point out the misery of these poor women; also their ailments, some even of an interesting sort. [\[233\]](#)

Poor M. de Gouvion is shiftless in this extremity; — a man shiftless, perturbed; who will one day commit suicide. How happy for him that Usher Maillard, the shifty, was there, at the moment, though making representations! Fly back, thou shifty Maillard; seek the Bastille Company; and O return fast with it; above all, with thy own shifty head! For, behold, the Judiths can find no Mayor or Municipal; scarcely, in the topmost belfry, can they find poor Abbé Lefevre the Powder-distributor. Him, for want of a better, they suspend there; in the pale morning light; over the top of all Paris, which swims in one's failing eyes: — a horrible end? Nay, the rope broke, as French ropes often did; or else an Amazon cut it. Abbé Lefevre falls, some twenty feet, rattling among the leads; and lives long years after, though always with "a *tremblement* in the limbs." [\[234\]](#)

And now doors fly under hatchets; the Judiths have broken the Armoury; have seized guns and cannons, three money-bags, paper-heaps; torches flare: in few minutes, our brave Hôtel-de-Ville which dates from the Fourth Henry, will, with all that it holds, be in flames!

Chapter 1.7.V.

Usher Maillard.

In flames, truly,—were it not that Usher Maillard, swift of foot, shifty of head, has returned!

Maillard, of his own motion, for Gouvion or the rest would not even sanction him,—snatches a drum; descends the Porch-stairs, ran-tan, beating sharp, with loud rolls, his Rogues'-march: To Versailles! *Allons; a Versailles!* As men beat on kettle or warmingpan, when angry she-bees, or say, flying desperate wasps, are to be hived; and the desperate insects hear it, and cluster round it,—simply as round a guidance, where there was none: so now these Menads round shifty Maillard, Riding-Usher of the Châtelet. The axe pauses uplifted; Abbé Lefevre is left half-hanged; from the belfry downwards all vomits itself. What rub-a-dub is that? Stanislas Maillard, Bastille-hero, will lead us to Versailles? Joy to thee, Maillard; blessed art thou above Riding-Ushers! Away then, away!

The seized cannon are yoked with seized cart-horses: brown-locked Demoiselle Théroigne, with pike and helmet, sits there as gunneress, “with haughty eye and serene fair countenance;” comparable, some think, to the *Maid* of Orléans, or even recalling “the idea of Pallas Athene.”[\[235\]](#) Maillard (for his drum still rolls) is, by heaven-rending acclamation, admitted General. Maillard hastens the languid march. Maillard, beating rhythmic, with sharp ran-tan, all along the Quais, leads forward, with difficulty his Menadic host. Such a host—marched not in silence! The bargeman pauses on the River; all wagoners and coachdrivers fly; men peer from windows,—not women, lest they be pressed. Sight of sights: Bacchantes, in these ultimate Formalized Ages! Bronze Henri looks on, from his Pont-Neuf; the Monarchic Louvre, Medicean Tuileries see a day not theretofore seen.

And now Maillard has his Menads in the *Champs Elysées* (Fields *Tartarean* rather); and the Hôtel-de-Ville has suffered comparatively nothing. Broken doors; an Abbé Lefevre, who shall never more distribute powder; three sacks of money, most part of which (for Sansculottism, though famishing, is not without honour) shall be returned:[\[236\]](#) this is all the damage. Great Maillard! A small nucleus of Order is round his drum; but his outskirts fluctuate like the mad Ocean: for Rascality male and female is flowing in on

him, from the four winds; guidance there is none but in his single head and two drumsticks.

O Maillard, when, since War first was, had General of Force such a task before him, as thou this day? Walter the Penniless still touches the feeling heart: but then Walter had sanction; had space to turn in; and also his Crusaders were of the male sex. Thou, this day, disowned of Heaven and Earth, art General of Menads. Their inarticulate frenzy thou must on the spur of the instant, render into articulate words, into actions that are not frantic. Fail in it, this way or that! Pragmatical Officiality, with its penalties and law-books, waits before thee; Menads storm behind. If such hewed off the melodious head of Orpheus, and hurled it into the Peneus waters, what may they not make of thee,—thee rhythmic merely, with no music but a sheepskin drum!—Maillard did not fail. Remarkable Maillard, if fame were not an accident, and History a distillation of Rumour, how remarkable wert thou!

On the Elysian Fields, there is pause and fluctuation; but, for Maillard, no return. He persuades his Menads, clamorous for arms and the Arsenal, that no arms are in the Arsenal; that an unarmed attitude, and petition to a National Assembly, will be the best: he hastily nominates or sanctions generalesses, captains of tens and fifties;—and so, in loosest-flowing order, to the rhythm of some “eight drums” (having laid aside his own), with the Bastille Volunteers bringing up his rear, once more takes the road.

Chaillot, which will promptly yield baked loaves, is not plundered; nor are the Sèvres Potteries broken. The old arches of Sèvres Bridge echo under Menadic feet; Seine River gushes on with his perpetual murmur; and Paris flings after us the boom of tocsin and alarm-drum,—inaudible, for the present, amid shrill-sounding hosts, and the splash of rainy weather. To Meudon, to Saint Cloud, on both hands, the report of them is gone abroad; and hearths, this evening, will have a topic. The press of women still continues, for it is the cause of all Eve’s Daughters, mothers that are, or that hope to be. No carriage-lady, were it with never such hysterics, but must dismount, in the mud roads, in her silk shoes, and walk.[\[237\]](#) In this manner, amid wild October weather, they a wild unwinged stork-flight, through the astonished country, wend their way. Travellers of all sorts they stop; especially travellers or couriers from Paris. Deputy Lechapelier, in his elegant vesture, from his elegant vehicle, looks forth amazed through his spectacles; apprehensive for life;—states eagerly that he is Patriot-Deputy Lechapelier, and even Old-President Lechapelier, who presided on the Night of Pentecost, and is original member of the Breton Club. Thereupon “rises huge shout of *Vive Lechapelier*, and several armed persons spring up behind and before to escort him.”[\[238\]](#)

Nevertheless, news, despatches from Lafayette, or vague noise of rumour, have pierced through, by side roads. In the National Assembly, while all is busy discussing the order of the day; regretting that there should be Anti-national Repasts in Opera-Halls; that his Majesty should still hesitate about accepting the Rights of Man, and hang conditions and peradventures on them,—Mirabeau steps up to the President, experienced Mounier as it chanced to be; and articulates, in bass under-tone: ‘*Mounier, Paris marche sur nous* (Paris is marching on us).’—‘May be (*Je n’en sais rien*)!’—‘Believe it or disbelieve it, that is not my concern; but Paris, I say, is marching on us. Fall suddenly unwell; go over to the Château; tell them this. There is not a moment to lose.’—‘Paris marching on us?’ responds Mounier, with an atrabiliar accent, ‘Well, so much the better! We shall the sooner be a Republic.’ Mirabeau quits him, as one quits an experienced President getting blindfold into deep waters; and the order of the day continues as before.

Yes, Paris is marching on us; and more than the women of Paris! Scarcely was Maillard gone, when M. de Gouvion’s message to all the Districts, and such tocsin and drumming of the *générale*, began to take effect. Armed National Guards from every District; especially the Grenadiers of the Centre, who are our old Gardes Françaises, arrive, in quick sequence, on the Place de Grève. An “immense people” is there; Saint-Antoine, with pike and rusty firelock, is all crowding thither, be it welcome or unwelcome. The Centre Grenadiers are received with cheering: ‘it is not cheers that we want,’ answer they gloomily; ‘the nation has been insulted; to arms, and come with us for orders!’ Ha, sits the wind so? Patriotism and Patrollotism are now one!

The Three Hundred have assembled; “all the Committees are in activity;” Lafayette is dictating despatches for Versailles, when a Deputation of the Centre Grenadiers introduces itself to him. The Deputation makes military obeisance; and thus speaks, not without a kind of thought in it: ‘*Mon Général*, we are deputed by the Six Companies of Grenadiers. We do not think you a traitor, but we think the Government betrays you; it is time that this end. We cannot turn our bayonets against women crying to us for bread. The people are miserable, the source of the mischief is at Versailles: we must go seek the King, and bring him to Paris. We must exterminate (*exterminer*) the *Regiment de Flandre* and the *Gardes-du-Corps*, who have dared to trample on the National Cockade. If the King be too weak to wear his crown, let him lay it down. You will crown his Son, you will name a Council of Regency; and all will go better.’[\[239\]](#) Reproachful astonishment paints itself on the face of Lafayette; speaks itself from his eloquent chivalrous lips: in vain. ‘My General, we would shed the last drop of our blood for you; but the root of the mischief is at Versailles; we must go and bring the King to Paris; all the people wish it, *tout le peuple le veut*.’

My General descends to the outer staircase; and harangues: once more in vain. 'To Versailles! To Versailles!' Mayor Bailly, sent for through floods of Sansculottism, attempts academic oratory from his gilt state-coach; realizes nothing but infinite hoarse cries of: 'Bread! To Versailles!'—and gladly shrinks within doors. Lafayette mounts the white charger; and again harangues and reharangues: with eloquence, with firmness, indignant demonstration; with all things but persuasion. 'To Versailles! To Versailles!' So lasts it, hour after hour; for the space of half a day.

The great Scipio Americanus can do nothing; not so much as escape. '*Morbleu, mon Général,*' cry the Grenadiers serrying their ranks as the white charger makes a motion that way, 'You will not leave us, you will abide with us!' A perilous juncture: Mayor Bailly and the Municipals sit quaking within doors; My General is prisoner without: the Place de Grève, with its thirty thousand Regulars, its whole irregular Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marceau, is one minatory mass of clear or rusty steel; all hearts set, with a moody fixedness, on one object. Moody, fixed are all hearts: tranquil is no heart,—if it be not that of the white charger, who paws there, with arched neck, composedly champing his bit; as if no world, with its Dynasties and Eras, were now rushing down. The drizzly day tends westward; the cry is still: 'To Versailles!'

Nay now, borne from afar, come quite sinister cries; hoarse, reverberating in longdrawn hollow murmurs, with syllables too like those of *Lanterne!* Or else, irregular Sansculottism may be marching off, of itself; with pikes, nay with cannon. The inflexible Scipio does at length, by aide-de-camp, ask of the Municipals: Whether or not he may go? A Letter is handed out to him, over armed heads; sixty thousand faces flash fixedly on his, there is stillness and no bosom breathes, till he have read. By Heaven, he grows suddenly pale! Do the Municipals permit? "Permit and even order,"—since he can no other. Clangour of approval rends the welkin. To your ranks, then; let us march!

It is, as we compute, towards three in the afternoon. Indignant National Guards may dine for once from their haversack: dined or undined, they march with one heart. Paris flings up her windows, claps hands, as the Avengers, with their shrilling drums and shalms tramp by; she will then sit pensive, apprehensive, and pass rather a sleepless night. [\[240\]](#) On the white charger, Lafayette, in the slowest possible manner, going and coming, and eloquently haranguing among the ranks, rolls onward with his thirty thousand. Saint-Antoine, with pike and cannon, has preceded him; a mixed multitude, of all and of no arms, hovers on his flanks and skirts; the country once more pauses agape: *Paris marche sur nous.*

## Chapter 1.7.VI.

### To Versailles.

For, indeed, about this same moment, Maillard has halted his draggled Menads on the last hill-top; and now Versailles, and the Château of Versailles, and far and wide the inheritance of Royalty opens to the wondering eye. From far on the right, over Marly and Saint-Germains-en-Laye; round towards Rambouillet, on the left: beautiful all; softly embosomed; as if in sadness, in the dim moist weather! And near before us is Versailles, New and Old; with that broad frondent *Avenue de Versailles* between,—stately-frondent, broad, three hundred feet as men reckon, with four Rows of Elms; and then the *Château de Versailles*, ending in royal Parks and Pleasances, gleaming lakelets, arbours, Labyrinths, the *Ménagerie*, and Great and Little Trianon. High-towered dwellings, leafy pleasant places; where the gods of this lower world abide: whence, nevertheless, black Care cannot be excluded; whither Menadic Hunger is even now advancing, armed with pike-thyrsi!

Yes, yonder, Mesdames, where our straight frondent Avenue, joined, as you note, by Two frondent brother Avenues from this hand and from that, spreads out into Place Royale and Palace Forecourt; yonder is the *Salle des Menus*. Yonder an august Assembly sits regenerating France. Forecourt, Grand Court, Court of Marble, Court narrowing into Court you may discern next, or fancy: on the extreme verge of which that glass-dome, visibly glittering like a star of hope, is the—*Œil-de-Bœuf*! Yonder, or nowhere in the world, is bread baked for us. But, O Mesdames, were not one thing good: That our cannons, with Demoiselle Théroigne and all show of war, be put to the rear? Submission beseems petitioners of a National Assembly; we are strangers in Versailles,—whence, too audibly, there comes even now sound as of tocsin and *générale*! Also to put on, if possible, a cheerful countenance, hiding our sorrows; and even to sing? Sorrow, pitied of the Heavens, is hateful, suspicious to the Earth.—So counsels shifty Maillard; haranguing his Menads, on the heights near Versailles.[\[241\]](#)

Cunning Maillard's dispositions are obeyed. The draggled Insurrectionists advance up the Avenue, "in three columns", among the four Elm-rows; "singing *Henri Quatre*," with what melody they can; and shouting *Vive le Roi*. Versailles, though the Elm-rows are dripping wet, crowds from both sides, with: '*Vivent nos Parisiennes*, Our Paris ones for ever!'

Prickers, scouts have been out towards Paris, as the rumour deepened: whereby his Majesty, gone to shoot in the Woods of Meudon, has been happily discovered, and got home; and the *générale* and tocsin set a-sounding. The Bodyguards are already drawn

up in front of the Palace Grates; and look down the Avenue de Versailles; sulky, in wet buckskins. Flandre too is there, repentant of the Opera-Repast. Also Dragoons dismounted are there. Finally Major Lecointre, and what he can gather of the Versailles National Guard; though, it is to be observed, our Colonel, that same sleepless Count d'Estaing, giving neither order nor ammunition, has vanished most improperly; one supposes, into the Œil-de-Bœuf. Red-coated Swiss stand within the Grates, under arms. There likewise, in their inner room, "all the Ministers," Saint-Priest, Lamentation Pompignan and the rest, are assembled with M. Necker: they sit with him there; blank, expecting what the hour will bring.

President Mounier, though he answered Mirabeau with a *tant mieux*, and affected to slight the matter, had his own forebodings. Surely, for these four weary hours, he has reclined not on roses! The order of the day is getting forward: a Deputation to his Majesty seems proper, that it might please him to grant "Acceptance pure and simple" to those Constitution-Articles of ours; the "mixed qualified Acceptance," with its peradventures, is satisfactory to neither gods nor men.

So much is clear. And yet there is more, which no man speaks, which all men now vaguely understand. Disquietude, absence of mind is on every face; Members whisper, uneasily come and go: the order of the day is evidently not the day's want. Till at length, from the outer gates, is heard a rustling and justling, shrill uproar and squabbling, muffled by walls; which testifies that the hour is come! Rushing and crushing one hears now; then enter Usher Maillard, with a Deputation of Fifteen muddy dripping Women,—having by incredible industry, and aid of all the macers, persuaded the rest to wait out of doors. National Assembly shall now, therefore, look its august task directly in the face: regenerative Constitutionalism has an unregenerate Sansculottism bodily in front of it; crying, 'Bread! Bread!'

Shifty Maillard, translating frenzy into articulation; repressive with the one hand, expostulative with the other, does his best; and really, though not bred to public speaking, manages rather well:—In the present dreadful rarity of grains, a Deputation of Female Citizens has, as the august Assembly can discern, come out from Paris to petition. Plots of Aristocrats are too evident in the matter; for example, one miller has been bribed "by a banknote of 200 livres" not to grind,—name unknown to the Usher, but fact provable, at least indubitable. Further, it seems, the National Cockade has been trampled on; also there are Black Cockades, or were. All which things will not an august National Assembly, the hope of France, take into its wise immediate consideration?

And Menadic Hunger, impressible, crying 'Black Cockades,' crying 'Bread, Bread,' adds, after such fashion: 'Will it not?—Yes, Messieurs, if a Deputation to his Majesty, for the "Acceptance pure and simple," seemed proper,—how much more now, for "the afflicting situation of Paris;" for the calming of this effervescence!' President Mounier, with a speedy Deputation, among whom we notice the respectable figure of Doctor Guillotin, gets himself forthwith on march. Vice-President shall continue the order of the day; Usher Maillard shall stay by him to repress the women. It is four o'clock, of the miserableness afternoon, when Mounier steps out.

O experienced Mounier, what an afternoon; the last of thy political existence! Better had it been to "fall suddenly unwell," while it was yet time. For, behold, the Esplanade, over all its spacious expanse, is covered with groups of squalid dripping Women; of lankhaired male Rascality, armed with axes, rusty pikes, old muskets, ironshod clubs (*batons ferrés*, which end in knives or sword-blades, a kind of extempore billhook);—looking nothing but hungry revolt. The rain pours: Gardes-du-Corps go caracoling through the groups "amid hisses;" irritating and agitating what is but dispersed here to reunite there.

Innumerable squalid women beleaguer the President and Deputation; insist on going with him: has not his Majesty himself, looking from the window, sent out to ask, What we wanted? 'Bread and speech with the King (*Du pain, et parler au Roi*),' that was the answer. Twelve women are clamorously added to the Deputation; and march with it, across the Esplanade; through dissipated groups, caracoling Bodyguards, and the pouring rain.

President Mounier, unexpectedly augmented by Twelve Women, copiously escorted by Hunger and Rascality, is himself mistaken for a group: himself and his Women are dispersed by caracolers; rally again with difficulty, among the mud.<sup>[242]</sup> Finally the Grates are opened: the Deputation gets access, with the Twelve Women too in it; of which latter, Five shall even see the face of his Majesty. Let wet Menadism, in the best spirits it can expect their return.

Chapter 1.7.VII.

At Versailles.

But already Pallas Athene (in the shape of Demoiselle Théroigne) is busy with Flandre and the dismounted Dragoons. She, and such women as are fittest, go through the ranks; speak with an earnest jocosity; clasp rough troopers to their patriot bosom, crush down spontoons and musketoons with soft arms: can a man, that were worthy of the name of man, attack famishing patriot women?

One reads that Théroigne had bags of money, which she distributed over Flandre:—furnished by whom? Alas, with money-bags one seldom sits on insurrectionary cannon. Calumnious Royalism! Théroigne had only the limited earnings of her profession of unfortunate-female; money she had not, but brown locks, the figure of a heathen Goddess, and an eloquent tongue and heart.

Meanwhile, Saint-Antoine, in groups and troops, is continually arriving; wetted, sulky; with pikes and impromptu billhooks: driven thus far by popular fixed-idea. So many hirsute figures driven hither, in that manner: figures that have come to do they know not what; figures that have come to see it done! Distinguished among all figures, who is this, of gaunt stature, with leaden breastplate, though a small one; [\[243\]](#) bushy in red grizzled locks; nay, with long tile-beard? It is Jourdan, unjust dealer in mules; a dealer no longer, but a Painter's Layfigure, playing truant this day. From the necessities of Art comes his long tile-beard; whence his leaden breastplate (unless indeed he were some Hawker licensed by leaden badge) may have come,—will perhaps remain for ever a Historical Problem. Another Saul among the people we discern: "*Père Adam*, Father Adam," as the groups name him; to us better known as bull-voiced Marquis Saint-Huruge; hero of the *Veto*; a man that has had losses, and deserved them. The tall Marquis, emitted some days ago from limbo, looks peripatetically on this scene, from under his umbrella, not without interest. All which persons and things, hurled together as we see; Pallas Athene, busy with Flandre; patriotic Versailles National Guards, short of ammunition, and deserted by d'Estaing their Colonel, and commanded by Lecointre their Major; then caracoling Bodyguards, sour, dispirited, with their buckskins wet; and finally this flowing sea of indignant Squalor,—may they not give rise to occurrences?

Behold, however, the Twelve She-deputies return from the Château. Without President Mounier, indeed; but radiant with joy, shouting '*Life to the King and his House*.' Apparently the news are good, Mesdames? News of the best! Five of us were admitted to the internal splendours, to the Royal Presence. This slim damsel, "Louison Chabray, worker in sculpture, aged only seventeen," as being of the best looks and address, her we appointed speaker. On whom, and indeed on all of us, his Majesty looked nothing but graciousness. Nay, when Louison, addressing him, was like to faint, he took her in his royal arms; and said gallantly, 'It was well worth while (*Elle en valût bien la peine*).' Consider, O women, what a King! His words were of comfort, and that only: there shall be provision sent to Paris, if provision is in the world; grains shall circulate free as air; millers shall grind, or do worse, while their millstones endure; and nothing be left wrong which a Restorer of French Liberty can right.

Good news these; but, to wet Menads, all too incredible! There seems no proof, then? *Words* of comfort are words only; which will feed nothing. O miserable people, betrayed by Aristocrats, who corrupt thy very messengers! In his royal arms, Mademoiselle Louison? In his arms? Thou shameless minx, worthy of a name—that shall be nameless! Yes, thy skin is soft: ours is rough with hardship; and well wetted, waiting here in the rain. No children hast thou hungry at home; only alabaster dolls, that weep not! The traitress! To the Lanterne!—And so poor Louison Chabray, no asseveration or shrieks availing her, fair slim damsel, late in the arms of Royalty, has a garter round her neck, and furibund Amazons at each end; is about to perish so,—when two Bodyguards gallop up, indignantly dissipating; and rescue her. The miscredited Twelve hasten back to the Château, for an “answer in writing.”

Nay, behold, a new flight of Menads, with “M. Brunout Bastille Volunteer,” as impressed-commandant, at the head of it. These also will advance to the Grate of the Grand Court, and see what is toward. Human patience, in wet buckskins, has its limits. Bodyguard Lieutenant, M. de Savonnières, for one moment, lets his temper, long provoked, long pent, give way. He not only dissipates these latter Menads; but caracoles and cuts, or indignantly flourishes, at M. Brunout, the impressed-commandant; and, finding great relief in it, even chases him; Brunout flying nimbly, though in a pirouette manner, and now with sword also drawn. At which sight of wrath and victory two other Bodyguards (for wrath is contagious, and to pent Bodyguards is so solacing) do likewise give way; give chase, with brandished sabre, and in the air make horrid circles. So that poor Brunout has nothing for it but to retreat with accelerated nimbleness, through rank after rank; Parthian-like, fencing as he flies; above all, shouting lustily, ‘*On nous laisse assassiner*, They are getting us assassinated?’

Shameful! Three against one! Growls come from the Lecointrian ranks; bellowings,—lastly shots. Savonnières’ arm is raised to strike: the bullet of a Lecointrian musket shatters it; the brandished sabre jingles down harmless. Brunout has escaped, this duel well ended: but the wild howl of war is everywhere beginning to pipe!

The Amazons recoil; Saint-Antoine has its cannon pointed (full of grapeshot); thrice applies the lit flambeau; which thrice refuses to catch,—the touchholes are so wetted; and voices cry: ‘*Arrêtez, il n’est pas temps encore*, Stop, it is not yet time!’<sup>[244]</sup> Messieurs of the Garde-du-Corps, ye had orders not to fire; nevertheless two of you limp dismounted, and one war-horse lies slain. Were it not well to draw back out of shot-range; finally to file off,—into the interior? If in so filing off, there did a musketoon or two discharge itself, at these armed shopkeepers, hooting and crowing, could man wonder? Draggled are your white cockades of an enormous size; would to

Heaven they were got exchanged for tricolor ones! Your buckskins are wet, your hearts heavy. Go, and return not!

The Bodyguards file off, as we hint; giving and receiving shots; drawing no life-blood; leaving boundless indignation. Some three times in the thickening dusk, a glimpse of them is seen, at this or the other Portal: saluted always with execrations, with the whew of lead. Let but a Bodyguard shew face, he is hunted by Rascality;—for instance, poor “M. de Moucheton of the Scotch Company,” owner of the slain war-horse; and has to be smuggled off by Versailles Captains. Or rusty firelocks belch after him, shivering asunder his—hat. In the end, by superior Order, the Bodyguards, all but the few on immediate duty, disappear; or as it were abscond; and march, under cloud of night, to Rambouillet.[\[245\]](#)

We remark also that the Versaillese have now got ammunition: all afternoon, the official Person could find none; till, in these so critical moments, a patriotic Sublieutenant set a pistol to his ear, and would thank him to find some,—which he thereupon succeeded in doing. Likewise that Flandre, disarmed by Pallas Athene, says openly, it will not fight with citizens; and for token of peace, has exchanged cartridges with the Versaillese.

Sansculottism is now among mere friends; and can “circulate freely;” indignant at Bodyguards;—complaining also considerably of hunger.

Chapter 1.7.VIII.

The Equal Diet.

But why lingers Mounier; returns not with his Deputation? It is six, it is seven o’clock; and still no Mounier, no Acceptance pure and simple.

And, behold, the dripping Menads, not now in deputation but in mass, have penetrated into the Assembly: to the shamefullest interruption of public speaking and order of the day. Neither Maillard nor Vice-President can restrain them, except within wide limits; not even, except for minutes, can the lion-voice of Mirabeau, though they applaud it: but ever and anon they break in upon the regeneration of France with cries of: ‘Bread; not so much discoursing! *Du pain; pas tant de longs discours!*’—So insensible were these poor creatures to bursts of Parliamentary eloquence!

One learns also that the royal Carriages are getting yoked, as if for Metz. Carriages, royal or not, have verily showed themselves at the back Gates. They even produced, or quoted, a written order from our Versailles Municipality,—which is a Monarchic not a Democratic one. However, Versailles Patroles drove them in again; as the vigilant Lecointre had strictly charged them to do.

A busy man, truly, is Major Lecointre, in these hours. For Colonel d'Estaing loiters invisible in the Œil-de-Bœuf; invisible, or still more questionably *visible*, for instants: then also a too loyal Municipality requires supervision: no order, civil or military, taken about any of these thousand things! Lecointre is at the Versailles Townhall: he is at the Grate of the Grand Court; communing with Swiss and Bodyguards. He is in the ranks of Flandre; he is here, he is there: studious to prevent bloodshed; to prevent the Royal Family from flying to Metz; the Menads from plundering Versailles.

At the fall of night, we behold him advance to those armed groups of Saint-Antoine, hovering all-too grim near the Salle des Menus. They receive him in a half-circle; twelve speakers behind cannons, with lighted torches in hand, the cannon-mouths *towards* Lecointre: a picture for Salvator! He asks, in temperate but courageous language: What they, by this their journey to Versailles, do specially want? The twelve speakers reply, in few words inclusive of much: 'Bread, and the end of these brabbles, *Du pain, et la fin des affaires*.' When the *affaires* will end, no Major Lecointre, nor no mortal, can say; but as to bread, he inquires, How many are you?—learns that they are six hundred, that a loaf each will suffice; and rides off to the Municipality to get six hundred loaves.

Which loaves, however, a Municipality of Monarchic temper will not give. It will give two tons of rice rather,—could you but know whether it should be boiled or raw. Nay when this too is accepted, the Municipals have disappeared;—ducked under, as the Six-and-Twenty Long-gowned of Paris did; and, leaving not the smallest vestage of rice, in the boiled or raw state, they there vanish from History!

Rice comes not; one's hope of food is balked; even one's hope of vengeance: is not M. de Moucheton of the Scotch Company, as we said, deceitfully smuggled off? Failing all which, behold only M. de Moucheton's slain warhorse, lying on the Esplanade there! Saint-Antoine, balked, esurient, pounces on the slain warhorse; flays it; roasts it, with such fuel, of paling, gates, portable timber as can be come at,—not without shouting: and, after the manner of ancient Greek Heroes, *they lifted their hands to the daintily readied repast*; such as it might be.[\[246\]](#) Other Rascality prowls discursive; seeking what it may devour. Flandre will retire to its barracks; Lecointre also with his Versaillese,—all but the vigilant Patrols, charged to be doubly vigilant.

So sink the shadows of Night, blustering, rainy; and all paths grow dark. Strangest Night ever seen in these regions,—perhaps since the Bartholomew Night, when Versailles, as Bassompierre writes of it, was a *chétif château*. O for the Lyre of some Orpheus, to constrain, with touch of melodious strings, these mad masses into Order! For here all seems fallen asunder, in wide-yawning dislocation. The highest, as in

down-rushing of a World, is come in contact with the lowest: the Rascality of France beleaguering the Royalty of France; “ironshod batons” lifted round the diadem, not to guard it! With denunciations of bloodthirsty Anti-national Bodyguards, are heard dark growlings against a Queenly Name.

The Court sits tremulous, powerless; varies with the varying temper of the Esplanade, with the varying colour of the rumours from Paris. Thick-coming rumours; now of peace, now of war. Necker and all the Ministers consult; with a blank issue. The Œil-de-Bœuf is one tempest of whispers:—We will fly to Metz; we will not fly. The royal Carriages again attempt egress;—though for trial merely; they are again driven in by Lecointre’s Patrols. In six hours, nothing has been resolved on; not even the Acceptance pure and simple.

In six hours? Alas, he who, in such circumstances, cannot resolve in six minutes, may give up the enterprise: him Fate has already resolved for. And Menadism, meanwhile, and Sansculottism takes counsel with the National Assembly; grows more and more tumultuous there. Mounier returns not; Authority nowhere shews itself: the Authority of France lies, for the present, with Lecointre and Usher Maillard.—This then is the abomination of desolation; come suddenly, though long foreshadowed as inevitable! For, to the blind, all things are sudden. Misery which, through long ages, had no spokesman, no helper, will now be its own helper and speak for itself. The dialect, one of the rudest, is, what it could be, *this*.

At eight o’clock there returns to our Assembly not the Deputation; but Doctor Guillotin announcing that it will return; also that there is hope of the Acceptance pure and simple. He himself has brought a Royal Letter, authorising and commanding the freest “circulation of grains.” Which Royal Letter Menadism with its whole heart applauds. Conformably to which the Assembly forthwith passes a Decree; also received with rapturous Menadic plaudits:—Only could not an august Assembly contrive further to ‘fix the price of bread at eight sous the half-quartern; butchers’-meat at six sous the pound;’ which seem fair rates? Such motion do “a multitude of men and women,” irrepressible by Usher Maillard, now make; does an august Assembly hear made. Usher Maillard himself is not always perfectly measured in speech; but if rebuked, he can justly excuse himself by the peculiarity of the circumstances. [\[247\]](#)

But finally, this Decree well passed, and the disorder continuing; and Members melting away, and no President Mounier returning,—what can the Vice-President do but also melt away? The Assembly melts, under such pressure, into deliquium; or, as it is officially called, adjourns. Maillard is despatched to Paris, with the “Decree concerning Grains” in his pocket; he and some women, in carriages belonging to the

King. Thitherward slim Louison Chabray has already set forth, with that “written answer,” which the Twelve She-deputies returned in to seek. Slim sylph, she has set forth, through the black muddy country: she has much to tell, her poor nerves so flurried; and travels, as indeed today on this road all persons do, with extreme slowness. President Mounier has not come, nor the Acceptance pure and simple; though six hours with their events have come; though courier on courier reports that Lafayette is coming. Coming, with war or with peace? It is time that the Château also should determine on one thing or another; that the Château also should show itself alive, if it would continue living!

Victorious, joyful after such delay, Mounier does arrive at last, and the hard-earned Acceptance with him; which now, alas, is of small value. Fancy Mounier’s surprise to find his Senate, whom he hoped to charm by the Acceptance pure and simple,—all gone; and in its stead a Senate of Menads! For as Erasmus’s Ape mimicked, say with wooden splint, Erasmus shaving, so do these Amazons hold, in mock majesty, some confused parody of National Assembly. They make motions; deliver speeches; pass enactments; productive at least of loud laughter. All galleries and benches are filled; a strong Dame of the Market is in Mounier’s Chair. Not without difficulty, Mounier, by aid of macers, and persuasive speaking, makes his way to the Female-President: the Strong Dame before abdicating signifies that, for one thing, she and indeed her whole senate male and female (for what was one roasted warhorse among so many?) are suffering very considerably from hunger.

Experienced Mounier, in these circumstances, takes a twofold resolution: To reconvoke his Assembly Members by sound of drum; also to procure a supply of food. Swift messengers fly, to all bakers, cooks, pastrycooks, vintners, restorers; drums beat, accompanied with shrill vocal proclamation, through all streets. They come: the Assembly Members come; what is still better, the provisions come. On tray and barrow come these latter; loaves, wine, great store of sausages. The nourishing baskets circulate harmoniously along the benches; nor, according to the Father of Epics, *did any soul lack a fair share of victual* (δαῖτος ἐῖσης), *an equal diet*; highly desirable, at the moment. [\[248\]](#)

Gradually some hundred or so of Assembly members get edged in, Menadism making way a little, round Mounier’s Chair; listen to the Acceptance pure and simple; and begin, what is the order of the night, “discussion of the Penal Code.” All benches are crowded; in the dusky galleries, duskier with unwashed heads, is a strange “coruscation,”—of impromptu billhooks. [\[249\]](#) It is exactly five months this day since these same galleries were filled with high-plumed jewelled Beauty, raining bright influences; and now? To such length have we got in regenerating France. Methinks the

travail-throes are of the sharpest!—Menadism will not be restrained from occasional remarks; asks, ‘What is use of the Penal Code? The thing we want is Bread.’ Mirabeau turns round with lion-voiced rebuke; Menadism applauds him; but recommences.

Thus they, chewing tough sausages, discussing the Penal Code, make night hideous. What the issue will be? Lafayette with his thirty thousand must arrive first: him, who cannot now be distant, all men expect, as the messenger of Destiny.

Chapter 1.7.IX.

Lafayette.

Towards midnight lights flare on the hill; Lafayette’s lights! The roll of his drums comes up the Avenue de Versailles. With peace, or with war? Patience, friends! With neither. Lafayette is come, but not yet the catastrophe.

He has halted and harangued so often, on the march; spent nine hours on four leagues of road. At Montreuil, close on Versailles, the whole Host had to pause; and, with uplifted right hand, in the murk of Night, to these pouring skies, swear solemnly to respect the King’s Dwelling; to be faithful to King and National Assembly. Rage is driven down out of sight, by the laggard march; the thirst of vengeance slaked in weariness and soaking clothes. Flandre is again drawn out under arms: but Flandre, grown so patriotic, now needs no “exterminating.” The wayworn Battalions halt in the Avenue: they have, for the present, no wish so pressing as that of shelter and rest.

Anxious sits President Mounier; anxious the Château. There is a message coming from the Château, that M. Mounier would please return thither with a fresh Deputation, swiftly; and so at least *unite* our two anxieties. Anxious Mounier does of himself send, meanwhile, to apprise the General that his Majesty has been so gracious as to grant us the Acceptance pure and simple. The General, with a small advance column, makes answer in passing; speaks vaguely some smooth words to the National President,—glances, only with the eye, at that so mixtiform National Assembly; then fares forward towards the Château. There are with him two Paris Municipals; they were chosen from the Three Hundred for that errand. He gets admittance through the locked and padlocked Grates, through sentries and ushers, to the Royal Halls.

The Court, male and female, crowds on his passage, to read their doom on his face; which exhibits, say Historians, a mixture “of sorrow, of fervour and valour,” singular to behold.[\[250\]](#) The King, with Monsieur, with Ministers and Marshals, is waiting to receive him: He ‘is come,’ in his highflown chivalrous way, ‘to offer his head for the safety of his Majesty’s.’ The two Municipals state the wish of Paris: four things, of quite pacific tenor. First, that the honour of Guarding his sacred person be conferred on

patriot National Guards;—say, the Centre Grenadiers, who as Gardes Françaises were wont to have that privilege. Second, that provisions be got, if possible. Third, that the Prisons, all crowded with political delinquents, may have judges sent them. Fourth, *that it would please his Majesty to come and live in Paris*. To all which four wishes, except the fourth, his Majesty answers readily, Yes; or indeed may almost say that he has already answered it. To the fourth he can answer only, Yes or No; would so gladly answer, Yes *and* No!—But, in any case, are not their dispositions, thank Heaven, so entirely pacific? There is time for deliberation. The brunt of the danger seems past!

Lafayette and d’Estaing settle the watches; Centre Grenadiers are to take the Guard-room they of old occupied as Gardes Françaises;—for indeed the Gardes du Corps, its late ill-advised occupants, are gone mostly to Rambouillet. That is the order of *this* night; sufficient for the night is the evil thereof. Whereupon Lafayette and the two Municipals, with highflown chivalry, take their leave.

So brief has the interview been, Mounier and his Deputation were not yet got up. So brief and satisfactory. A stone is rolled from every heart. The fair Palace Dames publicly declare that this Lafayette, detestable though he be, is their saviour for once. Even the ancient vinaigrous *Tantes* admit it; the King’s Aunts, ancient *Graille* and Sisterhood, known to us of old. Queen Marie-Antoinette has been heard often say the like. She alone, among all women and all men, wore a face of courage, of lofty calmness and resolve, this day. She alone saw clearly what she *meant* to do; and Theresa’s Daughter *dares* do what she means, were all France threatening her: abide where her children are, where her husband is.

Towards three in the morning all things are settled: the watches set, the Centre Grenadiers put into their old Guard-room, and harangued; the Swiss, and few remaining Bodyguards harangued. The wayworn Paris Batallions, consigned to “the hospitality of Versailles,” lie dormant in spare-beds, spare-barracks, coffeehouses, empty churches. A troop of them, on their way to the Church of Saint-Louis, awoke poor Weber, dreaming troublous, in the Rue Sartory. Weber has had his waistcoat-pocket full of balls all day; “two hundred balls, and two *pears* of powder!” For waistcoats were waistcoats then, and had flaps down to mid-thigh. So many balls he has had all day; but no opportunity of using them: he turns over now, execrating disloyal bandits; swears a prayer or two, and straight to sleep again.

Finally, the National Assembly is harangued; which thereupon, on motion of Mirabeau, discontinues the Penal Code, and dismisses for this night. Menadism, Sansculottism has cowered into guard-houses, barracks of Flandre, to the light of

cheerful fire; failing that, to churches, office-houses, sentry-boxes, wheresoever wretchedness can find a lair. The troublous Day has brawled itself to rest: no lives yet lost but that of one warhorse. Insurrectionary Chaos lies slumbering round the Palace, like Ocean round a Diving-bell,—no crevice yet disclosing itself.

Deep sleep has fallen promiscuously on the high and on the low; suspending most things, even wrath and famine. Darkness covers the Earth. But, far on the North-east, Paris flings up her great yellow gleam; far into the wet black Night. For all is illuminated there, as in the old July Nights; the streets deserted, for alarm of war; the Municipals all wakeful; Patrols hailing, with their hoarse *Who-goes*. There, as we discover, our poor slim Louison Chabray, her poor nerves all fluttered, is arriving about this very hour. There Usher Maillard will arrive, about an hour hence, “towards four in the morning.” They report, successively, to a wakeful Hôtel-de-Ville what comfort they can report; which again, with early dawn, large comfortable Placards, shall impart to all men.

Lafayette, in the Hôtel de Noailles, not far from the Château, having now finished haranguing, sits with his Officers consulting: at five o’clock the unanimous best counsel is, that a man so tost and toiled for twenty-four hours and more, fling himself on a bed, and seek some rest.

Thus, then, has ended the First Act of the Insurrection of Women. How it will turn on the morrow? The morrow, as always, is with the Fates! But his Majesty, one may hope, will consent to come honourably to Paris; at all events, he can visit Paris. Anti-national Bodyguards, here and elsewhere, must take the National Oath; make reparation to the Tricolor; Flandre will swear. There may be much swearing; much public speaking there will infallibly be: and so, with harangues and vows, may the matter in some handsome way, wind itself up.

Or, alas, may it not be all otherwise, unhandsome: the consent not honourable, but extorted, ignominious? Boundless Chaos of Insurrection presses slumbering round the Palace, like Ocean round a Diving-bell; and may penetrate at any crevice. Let but that accumulated insurrectionary mass find entrance! Like the infinite inburst of water; or say rather, of inflammable, self-igniting fluid; for example, “turpentine-and-phosphorus oil,”—fluid known to Spinola Santerre!

Chapter 1.7.X.

The Grand Entries.

The dull dawn of a new morning, drizzly and chill, had but broken over Versailles, when it pleased Destiny that a Bodyguard should look out of window, on the right wing of the

Château, to see what prospect there was in Heaven and in Earth. Rascality male and female is prowling in view of him. His fasting stomach is, with good cause, sour; he perhaps cannot forbear a passing malison on them; least of all can he forbear answering such.

Ill words breed worse: till the worst word came; and then the ill deed. Did the maledicent Bodyguard, getting (as was too inevitable) better malediction than he gave, load his musketoon, and threaten to fire; and actually fire? Were wise who wist! It stands asserted; to us not credibly. Be this as it may, menaced Rascality, in whinnying scorn, is shaking at all Grates: the fastening of one (some write, it was a chain merely) gives way; Rascality is in the Grand Court, whinnying louder still.

The maledicent Bodyguard, more Bodyguards than he do now give fire; a man's arm is shattered. Lecointre will depose<sup>[251]</sup> that "the Sieur Cardaine, a National Guard without arms, was stabbed." But see, sure enough, poor Jérôme l'Héritier, an unarmed National Guard he too, "cabinet-maker, a saddler's son, of Paris," with the down of youthhood still on his chin,—he reels death-stricken; rushes to the pavement, scattering it with his blood and brains!—Allelu! Wilder than Irish wakes, rises the howl: of pity; of infinite revenge. In few moments, the Grate of the inner and inmost Court, which they name Court of Marble, this too is forced, or surprised, and burst open: the Court of Marble too is overflowed: up the Grand Staircase, up all stairs and entrances rushes the living Deluge! Deshuttés and Varigny, the two sentry Bodyguards, are trodden down, are massacred with a hundred pikes. Women snatch their cutlasses, or any weapon, and storm-in Menadic:—other women lift the corpse of shot Jérôme; lay it down on the Marble steps; there shall the livid face and smashed head, dumb for ever, *speak*.

Wo now to all Bodyguards, mercy is none for them! Miomandre de Sainte-Marie pleads with soft words, on the Grand Staircase, "descending four steps:"—to the roaring tornado. His comrades snatch him up, by the skirts and belts; literally, from the jaws of Destruction; and slam-to their Door. This also will stand few instants; the panels shivering in, like potsherds. Barricading serves not: fly fast, ye Bodyguards; rabid Insurrection, like the hellhound Chase, uproaring at your heels!

The terrorstruck Bodyguards fly, bolting and barricading; it follows. Whitherward? Through hall on hall: wo, now! towards the Queen's Suite of Rooms, in the furthest room of which the Queen is now asleep. Five sentinels rush through that long Suite; they are in the Anteroom knocking loud: 'Save the Queen!' Trembling women fall at their feet with tears; are answered: 'Yes, we will die; save ye the Queen!'

Tremble not, women, but haste: for, lo, another voice shouts far through the outermost door, 'Save the Queen!' and the door shut. It is brave Miomandre's voice that shouts this second warning. He has stormed across imminent death to do it; fronts imminent death, having done it. Brave Tardivet du Repaire, bent on the same desperate service, was borne down with pikes; his comrades hardly snatched him in again alive. Miomandre and Tardivet: let the names of these two Bodyguards, as the names of brave men should, live long.

Trembling Maids of Honour, one of whom from afar caught glimpse of Miomandre as well as heard him, hastily wrap the Queen; not in robes of State. She flies for her life, across the Œil-de-Bœuf; against the main door of which too Insurrection batters. She is in the King's Apartment, in the King's arms; she clasps her children amid a faithful few. The Imperial-hearted bursts into mother's tears: 'O my friends, save me and my children, *O mes amis, sauvez moi et mes enfans!*' The battering of Insurrectionary axes clangs audible across the Œil-de-Bœuf. What an hour!

Yes, Friends: a hideous fearful hour; shameful alike to Governed and Governor; wherein Governed and Governor ignominiously testify that their relation is at an end. Rage, which had brewed itself in twenty thousand hearts, for the last four-and-twenty hours, has taken fire: Jerome's brained corpse lies there as live-coal. It is, as we said, the infinite Element bursting in: wild-surfing through all corridors and conduits.

Meanwhile, the poor Bodyguards have got hunted mostly into the Œil-de-Bœuf. They may die there, at the King's threshold; they can do little to defend it. They are heaping *tabourets* (stools of honour), benches and all moveables, against the door; at which the axe of Insurrection thunders.—But did brave Miomandre perish, then, at the Queen's door? No, he was fractured, slashed, lacerated, left for dead; he has nevertheless crawled hither; and shall live, honoured of loyal France. Remark also, in flat contradiction to much which has been said and sung, that Insurrection did *not* burst that door he had defended; but hurried elsewhere, seeking new bodyguards.[\[252\]](#)

Poor Bodyguards, with their Thyestes' Opera-Repast! Well for them, that Insurrection has only pikes and axes; no right sieging tools! It shakes and thunders. Must they all perish miserably, and Royalty with them? Deshuttés and Varigny, massacred at the first inbreak, have been beheaded in the Marble Court: a sacrifice to Jérôme's *manes*: Jourdan with the tile-beard did that duty willingly; and asked, If there were no more? Another captive they are leading round the corpse, with howl-chauntings: may not Jourdan again tuck up his sleeves?

And louder and louder rages Insurrection within, plundering if it cannot kill; louder and louder it thunders at the Œil-de-Bœuf: what can now hinder its bursting in?—On a sudden it ceases; the battering has ceased! Wild rushing: the cries grow fainter: there is silence, or the tramp of regular steps; then a friendly knocking: ‘We are the Centre Grenadiers, old Gardes Françaises: Open to us, Messieurs of the Garde-du-Corps; we have not forgotten how you saved us at Fontenoy!’<sup>[253]</sup> The door is opened; enter Captain Gondran and the Centre Grenadiers: there are military embracings; there is sudden deliverance from death into life.

Strange Sons of Adam! It was to “exterminate” these Gardes-du-Corps that the Centre Grenadiers left home: and now they have rushed to save them from extermination. The memory of common peril, of old help, melts the rough heart; bosom is clasped to bosom, not in war. The King shews himself, one moment, through the door of his Apartment, with: ‘Do not hurt my Guards!’—‘*Soyons frères*, Let us be brothers!’ cries Captain Gondran; and again dashes off, with levelled bayonets, to sweep the Palace clear.

Now too Lafayette, suddenly roused, not from sleep (for his eyes had not yet closed), arrives; with passionate popular eloquence, with prompt military word of command. National Guards, suddenly roused, by sound of trumpet and alarm-drum, are all arriving. The death-melody ceases: the first sky-lambent blaze of Insurrection is got damped down; it burns now, if unextinguished, yet flameless, as charred coals do, and not inextinguishable. The King’s Apartments are safe. Ministers, Officials, and even some loyal National deputies are assembling round their Majesties. The consternation will, with sobs and confusion, settle down gradually, into plan and counsel, better or worse.

But glance now, for a moment, from the royal windows! A roaring sea of human heads, inundating both Courts; billowing against all passages: Menadic women; infuriated men, mad with revenge, with love of mischief, love of plunder! Rascality has slipped its muzzle; and now bays, three-throated, like the Dog of Erebus. Fourteen Bodyguards are wounded; two massacred, and as we saw, beheaded; Jourdan asking, ‘Was it worth while to come so far for two?’ Hapless Deshottes and Varigny! Their fate surely was sad. Whirled down so suddenly to the abyss; as men are, suddenly, by the wide thunder of the Mountain Avalanche, awakened not by *them*, awakened far off by others! When the Château Clock last struck, they two were pacing languid, with poised musketoon; anxious mainly that the next hour would strike. It has struck; to them inaudible. Their trunks lie mangled: their heads parade, “on pikes twelve feet long,” through the streets of Versailles; and shall, about noon reach the Barriers of

Paris,—a too ghastly contradiction to the large comfortable Placards that have been posted there!

The other captive Bodyguard is still circling the corpse of Jerome, amid Indian war-whooping; bloody Tilebeard, with tucked sleeves, brandishing his bloody axe; when Gondran and the Grenadiers come in sight. ‘Comrades, will you see a man massacred in cold blood?’—‘Off, butchers!’ answer they; and the poor Bodyguard is free. Busy runs Gondran, busy run Guards and Captains; scouring at all corridors; dispersing Rascality and Robbery; sweeping the Palace clear. The mangled carnage is removed; Jerome’s body to the Townhall, for inquest: the fire of Insurrection gets damped, more and more, into measurable, manageable heat.

Transcendent things of all sorts, as in the general outburst of multitudinous Passion, are huddled together; the ludicrous, nay the ridiculous, with the horrible. Far over the billowy sea of heads, may be seen Rascality, caprioling on horses from the Royal Stud. The Spoilers these; for Patriotism is always infected so, with a proportion of mere thieves and scoundrels. Gondran snatched their prey from them in the Château; whereupon they hurried to the Stables, and took horse there. But the generous Diomedes’ steeds, according to Weber, disdained such scoundrel-burden; and, flinging up their royal heels, did soon project most of it, in parabolic curves, to a distance, amid peals of laughter: and were caught. Mounted National Guards secured the rest.

Now too is witnessed the touching last-flicker of Etiquette; which sinks not here, in the Cimmerian World-wreckage, without a sign, as the house-cricket might still chirp in the pealing of a Trump of Doom. ‘Monsieur,’ said some Master of Ceremonies (one hopes it might be de Brézé), as Lafayette, in these fearful moments, was rushing towards the inner Royal Apartments, ‘*Monsieur, le Roi vous accorde les grandes entrées*, Monsieur, the King grants you the Grand Entries,’—not finding it convenient to refuse them![\[254\]](#)

Chapter 1.7.XI.

From Versailles.

However, the Paris National Guard, wholly under arms, has cleared the Palace, and even occupies the nearer external spaces; extruding miscellaneous Patriotism, for most part, into the Grand Court, or even into the Forecourt.

The Bodyguards, you can observe, have now of a verity, “hoisted the National Cockade:” for they step forward to the windows or balconies, hat aloft in hand, on each hat a huge tricolor; and fling over their bandoleers in sign of surrender; and

shout *Vive la Nation*. To which how can the generous heart respond but with, *Vive le Roi; vivent les Gardes-du-Corps*? His Majesty himself has appeared with Lafayette on the balcony, and again appears: *Vive le Roi* greets him from all throats; but also from some one throat is heard '*Le Roi à Paris*, The King to Paris!'

Her Majesty too, on demand, shows herself, though there is peril in it: she steps out on the balcony, with her little boy and girl. 'No children, *Point d'enfants!*' cry the voices. She gently pushes back her children; and stands alone, her hands serenely crossed on her breast: 'should I die,' she had said, 'I will do it.' Such serenity of heroism has its effect. Lafayette, with ready wit, in his highflown chivalrous way, takes that fair queenly hand; and reverently kneeling, kisses it: thereupon the people do shout *Vive la Reine*. Nevertheless, poor Weber "saw" (or even thought he saw; for hardly the third part of poor Weber's experiences, in such hysterical days, will stand scrutiny) "one of these brigands level his musket at her Majesty,"—with or without intention to shoot; for another of the brigands "angrily struck it down."

So that all, and the Queen herself, nay the very Captain of the Bodyguards, have grown National! The very Captain of the Bodyguards steps out now with Lafayette. On the hat of the repentant man is an enormous tricolor; large as a soup-platter, or sun-flower; visible to the utmost Forecourt. He takes the National Oath with a loud voice, elevating his hat; at which sight all the army raise their bonnets on their bayonets, with shouts. Sweet is reconciliation to the heart of man. Lafayette has sworn Flandre; he swears the remaining Bodyguards, down in the Marble Court; the people clasp them in their arms:—O, my brothers, why would ye force us to slay you? Behold there is joy over you, as over returning prodigal sons!—The poor Bodyguards, now National and tricolor, exchange bonnets, exchange arms; there shall be peace and fraternity. And still '*Vive le Roi*;' and also '*Le Roi à Paris*,' not now from one throat, but from all throats as one, for it is the heart's wish of all mortals.

Yes, *The King to Paris*: what else? Ministers may consult, and National Deputies wag their heads: but there is now no other possibility. You have forced him to go willingly. 'At one o'clock!' Lafayette gives audible assurance to that purpose; and universal Insurrection, with immeasurable shout, and a discharge of all the firearms, clear and rusty, great and small, that it has, returns him acceptance. What a sound; heard for leagues: a doom peal!—That sound too rolls away, into the Silence of Ages. And the Château of Versailles stands ever since vacant, hushed still; its spacious Courts grassgrown, responsive to the hoe of the weeder. Times and generations roll on, in their confused Gulf-current; and buildings like builders have their destiny.

Till one o'clock, then, there will be three parties, National Assembly, National Rascality, National Royalty, all busy enough. Rascality rejoices; women trim themselves with tricolor. Nay motherly Paris has sent her Avengers sufficient "cartloads of loaves;" which are shouted over, which are gratefully consumed. The Avengers, in return, are searching for grain-stores; loading them in fifty waggons; that so a National King, probable harbinger of all blessings, may be the evident bringer of plenty, for one.

And thus has Sansculottism made prisoner its King; *revoking* his parole. The Monarchy has fallen; and not so much as honourably: no, ignominiously; with struggle, indeed, oft repeated; but then with unwise struggle; wasting its strength in fits and paroxysms; at every new paroxysm, foiled more pitifully than before. Thus Broglie's whiff of grapeshot, which might have been something, has dwindled to the pot-valour of an Opera Repast, and *O Richard, O mon Roi*. Which again we shall see dwindle to a Favras' Conspiracy, a thing to be settled by the hanging of one Chevalier.

Poor Monarchy! But what save foulest defeat can await that man, who wills, and yet wills not? Apparently the King either has a right, assertible as such to the death, before God and man; or else he has no right. Apparently, the one or the other; could he but know which! May Heaven pity him! Were Louis wise he would this day abdicate.—Is it not strange so few Kings abdicate; and none yet heard of has been known to commit suicide? Fritz the First, of Prussia, alone tried it; and they cut the rope.[\[255\]](#)

As for the National Assembly, which decrees this morning that it "is inseparable from his Majesty," and will follow him to Paris, there may one thing be noted: its extreme want of bodily health. After the Fourteenth of July there was a certain sickliness observable among honourable Members; so many demanding passports, on account of infirm health. But now, for these following days, there is a perfect murrian: President Mounier, Lally Tollendal, Clermont Tonnere, and all Constitutional Two-Chamber Royalists needing change of air; as most No-Chamber Royalists had formerly done.

For, in truth, it is the *second Emigration* this that has now come; most extensive among Commons Deputies, Noblesse, Clergy: so that "to Switzerland alone there go sixty thousand." They will return in the day of accounts! Yes, and have hot welcome.—But Emigration on Emigration is the peculiarity of France. One Emigration follows another; grounded on reasonable fear, unreasonable hope, largely also on childish pet. The highflyers have gone first, now the lower flyers; and ever the lower will go down to the crawlers. Whereby, however, cannot our National Assembly so much the

more commodiously make the Constitution; your Two-Chamber Anglomaniacs being all safe, distant on foreign shores? Abbé Maury is seized, and sent back again: he, tough as tanned leather, with eloquent Captain Cazalès and some others, will stand it out for another year.

But here, meanwhile, the question arises: Was Philippe d'Orléans seen, this day, "in the Bois de Boulogne, in grey surtout;" waiting under the wet sere foliage, what the day might bring forth? Alas, yes, the Eidolon of him was,—in Weber's and other such brains. The Chatelet shall make large inquisition into the matter, examining a hundred and seventy witnesses, and Deputy Chabroud publish his Report; but disclose nothing *farther*.[\[256\]](#) What then has caused these two unparalleled October Days? For surely such dramatic exhibition never yet enacted itself without Dramatist and Machinist. Wooden Punch emerges not, with his domestic sorrows, into the light of day, unless the wire be pulled: how can human mobs? Was it not d'Orléans then, and Laclos, Marquis Sillery, Mirabeau and the sons of confusion, hoping to drive the King to Metz, and gather the spoil? Nay was it not, quite contrariwise, the Œil-de-Bœuf, Bodyguard Colonel de Guiche, Minister Saint-Priest and highflying Loyalists; hoping also to drive him to Metz; and try it by the sword of civil war? Good Marquis Toulangeon, the Historian and Deputy, feels constrained to admit that it was *both*.[\[257\]](#)

Alas, my Friends, credulous incredulity is a strange matter. But when a whole Nation is smitten with Suspicion, and sees a dramatic miracle in the very operation of the gastric juices, what help is there? Such Nation is already a mere hypochondriac bundle of diseases; as good as changed into glass; atrabiliar, decadent; and will suffer crises. Is not Suspicion itself the one thing to be suspected, as Montaigne feared only fear?

Now, however, the short hour has struck. His Majesty is in his carriage, with his Queen, sister Elizabeth, and two royal children. Not for another hour can the infinite Procession get marshalled, and under way. The weather is dim drizzling; the mind confused; and noise great.

Processional marches not a few our world has seen; Roman triumphs and ovations, Cabiric cymbal-beatings, Royal progresses, Irish funerals: but this of the French Monarchy marching to its bed remained to be seen. Miles long, and of breadth losing itself in vagueness, for all the neighbouring country crowds to see. Slow; stagnating along, like shoreless Lake, yet with a noise like Niagara, like Babel and Bedlam. A splashing and a tramping; a hurraing, uproaring, musket-volleying;—the truest segment of Chaos seen in these latter Ages! Till slowly it disembogue itself, in the

thickening dusk, into expectant Paris, through a double row of faces all the way from Passy to the Hôtel-de-Ville.

Consider this: Vanguard of National troops; with trains of artillery; of pikemen and pikewomen, mounted on cannons, on carts, hackney-coaches, or on foot;—tripudiating, in tricolor ribbons from head to heel; loaves stuck on the points of bayonets, green boughs stuck in gun barrels. [258] Next, as main-march, “fifty cartloads of corn,” which have been lent, for peace, from the stores of Versailles. Behind which follow stragglers of the Garde-du-Corps; all humiliated, in Grenadier bonnets. Close on these comes the Royal Carriage; come Royal Carriages: for there are an Hundred National Deputies too, among whom sits Mirabeau,—his remarks not given. Then finally, pellmell, as rearguard, Flandre, Swiss, Hundred Swiss, other Bodyguards, Brigands, whosoever cannot get before. Between and among all which masses, flows without limit Saint-Antoine, and the Menadic Cohort. Menadic especially about the Royal Carriage; tripudiating there, covered with tricolor; singing “allusive songs;” pointing with one hand to the Royal Carriage, which the illusions hit, and pointing to the Provision-wagons, with the other hand, and these words: ‘Courage, Friends! We shall not want bread now; we are bringing you the Baker, the Bakeress, and Baker’s Boy (*le Boulanger, la Boulangère, et le petit Mitron*).’ [259]

The wet day draggles the tricolor, but the joy is unextinguishable. Is not all well now? ‘Ah, *Madame, notre bonne Reine*,’ said some of these Strong-women some days hence, ‘Ah Madame, our good Queen, don’t be a traitor any more (*ne soyez plus traître*), and we will all love you!’ Poor Weber went splashing along, close by the Royal carriage, with the tear in his eye: “their Majesties did me the honour,” or I thought they did it, “to testify, from time to time, by shrugging of the shoulders, by looks directed to Heaven, the emotions they felt.” Thus, like frail cockle, floats the Royal Life-boat, helmless, on black deluges of Rascality.

Mercier, in his loose way, estimates the Procession and assistants at two hundred thousand. He says it was one boundless inarticulate Haha;—*transcendent* World-Laughter; comparable to the Saturnalia of the Ancients. Why not? Here too, as we said, is Human Nature once more human; shudder at it whoso is of shuddering humour: yet behold it is human. It has “swallowed all formulas;” it tripudiates even so. For which reason they that collect Vases and Antiques, with figures of Dancing Bacchantes “in wild and all but impossible positions,” may look with some interest on it.

Thus, however, has the slow-moving Chaos or modern Saturnalia of the Ancients, reached the Barrier; and must halt, to be harangued by Mayor Bailly. Thereafter it has

to lumber along, between the double row of faces, in the transcendent heaven-lashing Haha; two hours longer, towards the Hôtel-de-Ville. Then again to be harangued there, by several persons; by Moreau de Saint-Méry, among others; Moreau of the Three-thousand orders, now National Deputy for St. Domingo. To all which poor Louis, who seemed to “experience a slight emotion” on entering this Townhall, can answer only that he ‘comes with pleasure, with confidence among his people.’ Mayor Bailly, in reporting it, forgets “confidence;” and the poor Queen says eagerly: ‘Add, with confidence.’—‘Messieurs,’ rejoins Bailly, ‘You are happier than if I had not forgot.’

Finally, the King is shewn on an upper balcony, by torchlight, with a huge tricolor in his hat: “And all the ‘people,’ says Weber, grasped one another’s hands;—thinking *now* surely the New Era was born.” Hardly till eleven at night can Royalty get to its vacant, long-deserted Palace of the Tuileries: to lodge there, somewhat in strolling-player fashion. It is Tuesday, the sixth of October, 1789.

Poor Louis has Two other Paris Processions to make: one ludicrous-ignominious like this; the other not ludicrous nor ignominious, but serious, nay sublime.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

VOLUME II.

THE CONSTITUTION

Mauern seh ich’ gestürzt, und Mauern seh’ ich errichtet  
Hier Gefangene, dort auch der Gefangenen viel.  
Ist vielleicht nur die Welt ein grosser Kerker? Und frei ist  
Wohl der Tolle, der sich Ketten zu Kränzen erkiest?

GOETHE.

BOOK 2.I.

THE FEAST OF PIKES

Chapter 2.1.I.

In the Tuileries.

The victim having once got his stroke-of-grace, the catastrophe can be considered as almost come. There is small interest now in watching his long low moans: notable only are his sharper agonies, what convulsive struggles he may take to cast the torture off from him; and then finally the last departure of life itself, and how he lies extinct and ended, either wrapt like Cæsar in decorous mantle-folds, or unseemly sunk together, like one that had not the force even to die.

Was French Royalty, when wrenched forth from its tapestries in that fashion, on that Sixth of October 1789, such a victim? Universal France, and Royal Proclamation to all the Provinces, answers anxiously, *No*. Nevertheless one may fear the worst. Royalty was beforehand so decrepit, moribund, there is little life in it to heal an injury. How much of its strength, which was of the imagination merely, has fled; Rascality having looked plainly in the King's face, and not died! When the assembled crows can pluck up their scarecrow, and say to it, Here shalt thou stand and not there; and can treat with it, and make it, from an infinite, a quite finite Constitutional scarecrow,—what is to be looked for? Not in the finite Constitutional scarecrow, but in what still unmeasured, infinite-seeming force may rally round it, is there thenceforth any hope. For it is most true that all available Authority is *mystic* in its conditions, and comes “by the grace of God.”

Cheerfuller than watching the death-struggles of Royalism will it be to watch the growth and gambollings of Sansculottism; for, in human things, especially in human society, all death is but a death-birth: thus if the sceptre is departing from Louis, it is only that, in other forms, other sceptres, were it even pike-sceptres, may bear sway. In a prurient element, rich with nutritive influences, we shall find that Sansculottism grows lustily, and even frisks in not ungraceful sport: as indeed most young creatures are sportful; nay, may it not be noted further, that as the grown cat, and cat-species generally, is the cruellest thing known, so the merriest is precisely the kitten, or growing cat?

But fancy the Royal Family risen from its truckle-beds on the morrow of that mad day: fancy the Municipal inquiry, ‘How would your Majesty please to lodge?’—and then that the King's rough answer, ‘Each may lodge as he can, I am well enough,’ is congeed and bowed away, in expressive grins, by the Townhall Functionaries, with obsequious upholsterers at their back; and how the Château of the Tuileries is repainted, regarnished into a golden Royal Residence; and Lafayette with his blue National Guards lies encompassing it, as blue Neptune (in the language of poets) does an island, wooingly. Thither may the wrecks of rehabilitated Loyalty gather; if it will become Constitutional; for Constitutionalism thinks no evil; Sansculottism itself rejoices in the King's countenance. The rubbish of a Menadic Insurrection, as in this ever-kindly world all rubbish can and must be, is swept aside; and so again, on clear arena, under new conditions, with something even of a new stateliness, we begin a new course of action.

Arthur Young has witnessed the strangest scene: Majesty walking unattended in the Tuileries Gardens; and miscellaneous tricolor crowds, who cheer it, and reverently make way for it: the very Queen commands at lowest respectful silence, regretful

avoidance.[\[260\]](#) Simple ducks, in those royal waters, quackle for crumbs from young royal fingers: the little Dauphin has a little railed garden, where he is seen delving, with ruddy cheeks and flaxen curled hair; also a little hutch to put his tools in, and screen himself against showers. What peaceable simplicity! Is it peace of a Father restored to his children? Or of a Taskmaster who has lost his whip? Lafayette and the Municipality and universal Constitutionalism assert the former, and do what is in them to realise it. Such Patriotism as snarls dangerously, and shows teeth, Patrollotism shall suppress; or far better, Royalty shall soothe down the angry hair of it, by gentle pappings; and, most effectual of all, by fuller diet. Yes, not only shall Paris be fed, but the King's hand be seen in that work. The household goods of the Poor shall, up to a certain amount, by royal bounty, be disengaged from pawn, and that insatiable *Mont de Piété* disgorge: rides in the city with their *Vive-le-Roi* need not fail; and so by substance and show, shall Royalty, if man's art can popularise it, be popularised.[\[261\]](#)

Or, alas, is it neither restored Father nor diswhipped Taskmaster that walks there; but an anomalous complex of both these, and of innumerable other heterogeneities; reducible to no rubric, if not to this newly devised one: *King Louis Restorer of French Liberty*? Man indeed, and King Louis like other men, lives in this world to make rule out of the ruleless; by his living energy, he shall force the absurd itself to become less absurd. But then if there *be* no living energy; living passivity only? King Serpent, hurled into his unexpected watery dominion, did at least bite, and assert credibly that he was there: but as for the poor King Log, tumbled hither and thither as thousandfold chance and other will than his might direct, how happy for him that he was indeed wooden; and, doing nothing, could also see and suffer nothing! It is a distracted business.

For his French Majesty, meanwhile, one of the worst things is that he can get no hunting. Alas, no hunting henceforth; only a fatal being-hunted! Scarcely, in the next June weeks, shall he taste again the joys of the game-destroyer; in next June, and never more. He sends for his smith-tools; gives, in the course of the day, official or ceremonial business being ended, "a few strokes of the file, *quelques coups de lime*."[\[262\]](#) Innocent brother mortal, why wert thou not an obscure substantial maker of locks; but doomed in that other far-seen craft, to be a maker only of world-follies, unrealities; things self destructive, which no mortal hammering could rivet into coherence!

Poor Louis is not without insight, nor even without the elements of will; some sharpness of temper, spurting at times from a stagnating character. If harmless inertness could save him, it were well; but he will slumber and painfully dream, and to *do* aught is not given him. Royalist Antiquarians still shew the rooms where Majesty and suite, in these extraordinary circumstances, had their lodging. Here sat the

Queen; reading,—for she had her library brought hither, though the King refused his; taking vehement counsel of the vehement uncounselled; sorrowing over altered times; yet with sure hope of better: in her young rosy Boy, has she not the living emblem of hope! It is a murky, working sky; yet with golden gleams—of dawn, or of deeper meteoric night? Here again this chamber, on the other side of the main entrance, was the King's: here his Majesty breakfasted, and did official work; here daily after breakfast he received the Queen; sometimes in pathetic friendliness; sometimes in human sulkiness, for flesh is weak; and, when questioned about business would answer: 'Madame, your business is with the children.' Nay, Sire, were it not better you, your Majesty's self, took the children? So asks impartial History; scornful that the *thicker* vessel was not also the stronger; pity-struck for the porcelain-clay of humanity rather than for the tile-clay,—though indeed *both* were broken!

So, however, in this Medicean Tuileries, shall the French King and Queen now sit, for one-and-forty months; and see a wild-fermenting France work out its own destiny, and theirs. Months bleak, ungenial, of rapid vicissitude; yet with a mild pale splendour, here and there: as of an April that were leading to leafiest Summer; as of an October that led only to everlasting Frost. Medicean Tuileries, how changed since it was a peaceful Tile field! Or is the ground itself fate-stricken, accursed: an Atreus' Palace; for that Louvre window is still nigh, out of which a Capet, whipt of the Furies, fired his signal of the Saint Bartholomew! Dark is the way of the Eternal as mirrored in this world of Time: God's way is in the sea, and His path in the great deep.

Chapter 2.1.II.

In the Salle de Manège.

To believing Patriots, however, it is now clear, that the Constitution will march, *marcher*,—had it once legs to stand on. Quick, then, ye Patriots, bestir yourselves, and make it; shape legs for it! In the *Archevêché*, or Archbishop's Palace, his Grace himself having fled; and afterwards in the Riding-hall, named Manege, close on the Tuileries: there does a National Assembly apply itself to the miraculous work. Successfully, had there been any heaven-scaling Prometheus among them; not successfully since there was none! There, in noisy debate, for the sessions are occasionally "scandalous," and as many as three speakers have been seen in the Tribune at once,—let us continue to fancy it wearing the slow months.

Tough, dogmatic, long of wind is Abbé Maury; Ciceronian pathetic is Cazalès. Keen-trenchant, on the other side, glitters a young Barnave; abhorrent of sophistry; sheering, like keen Damascus sabre, all sophistry asunder,—reckless what else he sheer with it. Simple seemest thou, O solid Dutch-built Pétion; if solid, surely dull. Nor

lifegiving in that tone of thine, livelier polemical Rabaut. With ineffable serenity sniffs great Sieyes, aloft, alone; his Constitution ye may babble over, ye may mar, but can by no possibility mend: is not Polity a science he has exhausted? Cool, slow, two military Lameths are visible, with their quality sneer, or demi-sneer; they shall gallantly refund their Mother's Pension, when the Red Book is produced; gallantly be wounded in duels. A Marquis Toulangeon, whose Pen we yet thank, sits there; in stoical meditative humour, oftenest silent, accepts what destiny will send. Thouret and Parliamentary Duport produce mountains of Reformed Law; liberal, Anglomaniac, available and unavailable. Mortals rise and fall. Shall goose Gobel, for example,—or Go(with an umlaut)bel, for he is of Strasburg German breed, be a Constitutional Archbishop?

Alone of all men there, Mirabeau may begin to discern clearly whither all this is tending. Patriotism, accordingly, regrets that his zeal seems to be getting cool. In that famed Pentecost-Night of the Fourth of August, when new Faith rose suddenly into miraculous fire, and old Feudality was burnt up, men remarked that Mirabeau took no hand in it; that, in fact, he luckily happened to be absent. But did he not defend the *Veto*, nay *Veto Absolu*; and tell vehement Barnave that six hundred irresponsible senators would make of all tyrannies the insupportablest? Again, how anxious was he that the King's Ministers should have seat and voice in the National Assembly;—doubtless with an eye to being Minister himself! Whereupon the National Assembly decides, what is very momentous, that no Deputy shall be Minister; he, in his haughty stormful manner, advising us to make it, “no Deputy called Mirabeau.”<sup>[263]</sup> A man of perhaps inveterate Feudalisms; of stratagems; too often visible leanings towards the Royalist side: a man suspect; whom Patriotism will unmask! Thus, in these June days, when the question *Who shall have right to declare war?* comes on, you hear hoarse Hawkers sound dolefully through the streets, ‘Grand Treason of Count Mirabeau, price only one sou;’—because he pleads that it shall be not the Assembly but the King! Pleads; nay prevails: for in spite of the hoarse Hawkers, and an endless Populace raised by them to the pitch even of “*Lanterne*,” he mounts the Tribune next day; grim-resolute; murmuring aside to his friends that speak of danger: ‘I know it: I must come hence either in triumph, or else torn in fragments;’ and it was in triumph that he came.

A man of stout heart; whose popularity is not of the populace, “*pas populacière*,” whom no clamour of unwashed mobs without doors, or of washed mobs within, can scarce from his way! Dumont remembers hearing him deliver a Report on Marseilles; “every word was interrupted on the part of the *Côté Droit* by abusive epithets; calumniator, liar, assassin, scoundrel (*scélérat*): Mirabeau pauses a moment, and, in a honeyed tone, addressing the most furious, says: ‘I wait, Messieurs, till these amenities be exhausted.’”<sup>[264]</sup> A man enigmatic, difficult to unmask! For example,

whence comes his money? Can the profit of a Newspaper, sorely eaten into by Dame Le Jay; can this, and the eighteen francs a-day your National Deputy has, be supposed equal to this expenditure? House in the Chaussée d'Antin; Country-house at Argenteuil; splendours, sumptuosities, orgies;—living as if he had a mint! All saloons barred against Adventurer Mirabeau, are flung wide open to King Mirabeau, the cynosure of Europe, whom female France flutters to behold,—though the Man Mirabeau is one and the same. As for money, one may conjecture that Royalism furnishes it; which if Royalism do, will not the same be welcome, as money always is to him?

“Sold,” whatever Patriotism thinks, he cannot readily be: the spiritual fire which is in that man; which shining through such confusions is nevertheless Conviction, and makes him strong, and without which he had no strength,—is not buyable nor saleable; in such transference of barter, it would vanish and not *be*. Perhaps “paid and not sold, *payé pas vendu*,” as poor Rivarol, in the unhappier converse way, calls himself “sold and not paid!” A man travelling, comet-like, in splendour and nebulosity, his wild way; whom telescopic Patriotism may long watch, but, without higher mathematics, will not make out. A questionable most blameable man; yet to us the far notablist of all. With rich munificence, as we often say, in a most blinkard, bespectacled, logic-chopping generation, Nature has gifted this man with an eye. Welcome is his word, there where he speaks and works; and growing ever welcomer; for it alone goes to the heart of the business: logical cobwebbery shrinks itself together; and thou seest a *thing*, how it is, how it may be worked with.

Unhappily our National Assembly has much to do: a France to regenerate; and France is short of so many requisites; short even of cash! These same Finances give trouble enough; no choking of the Deficit; which gapes ever, *Give, give!* To appease the Deficit we venture on a hazardous step, sale of the Clergy's Lands and superfluous Edifices; most hazardous. Nay, given the sale, who is to buy them, ready-money having fled? Wherefore, on the 19th day of December, a paper-money of “*Assignats*,” of Bonds secured, or *assigned*, on that Clerico-National Property, and unquestionable at least in payment of that,—is decreed: the first of a long series of like financial performances, which shall astonish mankind. So that now, while old rags last, there shall be no lack of circulating medium; whether of commodities to circulate thereon is another question. But, after all, does not this Assignat business speak volumes for modern science? Bankruptcy, we may say, was come, as the *end* of all Delusions needs must come: yet how gently, in softening diffusion, in mild succession, was it hereby made to fall;—like no all-destroying avalanche; like gentle showers of a powdery impalpable snow, shower after shower, till all was indeed buried, and yet

little was destroyed that could not be replaced, be dispensed with! To such length has modern machinery reached. Bankruptcy, we said, was great; but indeed Money itself is a standing miracle.

On the whole, it is a matter of endless difficulty, that of the Clergy. Clerical property may be made the Nation's, and the Clergy hired servants of the State; but if so, is it not an altered Church? Adjustment enough, of the most confused sort, has become unavoidable. Old landmarks, in any sense, avail not in a new France. Nay literally, the very Ground is new divided; your old party-coloured *Provinces* become new uniform *Departments*, Eighty-three in number;—whereby, as in some sudden shifting of the Earth's axis, no mortal knows his new latitude at once. The Twelve old Parlements too, what is to be done with them? The old Parlements are declared to be all "in permanent vacation,"—till once the new equal-justice, of Departmental Courts, National Appeal-Court, of elective Justices, Justices of Peace, and other Thouret-and-Duport apparatus be got ready. They have to sit there, these old Parlements, uneasily waiting; as it were, with the rope round their neck; crying as they can, *Is there none to deliver us?* But happily the answer being, *None, none*, they are a manageable class, these Parlements. They can be bullied, even into silence; the Paris Parliament, wiser than most, has never whimpered. They will and must sit there; in such vacation as is fit; their Chamber of Vacation distributes in the interim what little justice is going. With the rope round their neck, their destiny may be succinct! On the 13th of November 1790, Mayor Bailly shall walk to the Palais de Justice, few even heeding him; and with municipal seal-stamp and a little hot wax, seal up the Parliamentary Paper-rooms,—and the dread Parlement of Paris pass away, into Chaos, gently as does a Dream! So shall the Parlements perish, succinctly; and innumerable eyes be dry.

Not so the Clergy. For granting even that Religion were dead; that it had died, half-centuries ago, with unutterable Dubois; or emigrated lately, to Alsace, with Necklace-Cardinal Rohan; or that it now walked as goblin *revenant* with Bishop Talleyrand of Autun; yet does not the Shadow of Religion, the Cant of Religion, still linger? The Clergy have means and material: means, of number, organization, social weight; a material, at lowest, of public ignorance, known to be the mother of devotion. Nay, withal, is it incredible that there might, in simple hearts, latent here and there like gold grains in the mud-beach, still dwell some real Faith in God, of so singular and tenacious a sort that even a Maury or a Talleyrand, could still be the symbol for it?—Enough, and Clergy has strength, the Clergy has craft and indignation. It is a most fatal business this of the Clergy. A weltering hydra-coil, which the National Assembly has stirred up about its ears; hissing, stinging; which cannot be appeased, alive; which cannot be trampled dead! Fatal, from first to last! Scarcely after fifteen months'

debating, can a *Civil Constitution of the Clergy* be so much as got to paper; and then for getting it into reality? Alas, such Civil Constitution is but an agreement to disagree. It divides France from end to end, with a new split, infinitely complicating all the other splits;—Catholicism, what of it there is left, with the Cant of Catholicism, raging on the one side, and sceptic Heathenism on the other; both, by contradiction, waxing fanatic. What endless jarring, of Refractory hated Priests, and Constitutional despised ones; of tender consciences, like the King's, and consciences hot-seared, like certain of his People's: the whole to end in Feasts of Reason and a War of La Vendée! So deep-seated is Religion in the heart of man, and holds of all infinite passions. If the dead echo of it still did so much, what could not the living voice of it once do?

Finance and Constitution, Law and Gospel: this surely were work enough; yet this is not all. In fact, the Ministry, and Necker himself whom a brass inscription “fastened by the people over his door-lintel” testifies to be the “*Ministre adoré*,” are dwindling into clearer and clearer nullity. Execution or legislation, arrangement or detail, from their nerveless fingers all drops undone; all lights at last on the toiled shoulders of an august Representative Body. Heavy-laden National Assembly! It has to hear of innumerable fresh revolts, Brigand expeditions; of Châteaux in the West, especially of Charter-chests, *Chartiers*, set on fire; for there too the overloaded Ass frightfully recalcitrates. Of Cities in the South full of heats and jealousies; which will end in crossed sabres, Marseilles against Toulon, and Carpentras beleaguered by Avignon;—such Royalist collision in a career of Freedom; nay Patriot collision, which a mere difference of *velocity* will bring about! Of a Jourdan Coup-tete, who has skulked thitherward, from the claws of the Chatelet; and will raise whole scoundrel-regiments.

Also it has to hear of Royalist *Camp of Jalès*: Jalès mountain-girdled Plain, amid the rocks of the Cevennes; whence Royalism, as is feared and hoped, may dash down like a mountain deluge, and submerge France! A singular thing this camp of Jalès; existing mostly on paper. For the Soldiers at Jalès, being peasants or National Guards, were in heart sworn Sansculottes; and all that the Royalist Captains could do was, with false words, to keep them, or rather keep the report of them, drawn up there, visible to all imaginations, for a terror and a sign,—if peradventure France might be reconquered by theatrical machinery, by the *picture* of a Royalist Army done to the life! [\[265\]](#) Not till the third summer was this portent, burning out by fits and then fading, got finally extinguished; was the old Castle of Jalès, no Camp being visible to the bodily eye, got blown asunder by some National Guards.

Also it has to hear not only of Brissot and his *Friends of the Blacks*, but by and by of a whole St. Domingo blazing skyward; blazing in literal fire, and in far worse metaphorical; beacons the nightly main. Also of the shipping interest, and the

landed-interest, and all manner of interests, reduced to distress. Of Industry every where manacled, bewildered; and only Rebellion thriving. Of sub-officers, soldiers and sailors in mutiny by land and water. Of soldiers, at Nanci, as we shall see, needing to be cannonaded by a brave Bouillé. Of sailors, nay the very galley-slaves, at Brest, needing also to be cannonaded; but with no Bouillé to do it. For indeed, to say it in a word, in those days there was *no King* in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes.[\[266\]](#)

Such things has an august National Assembly to hear of, as it goes on regenerating France. Sad and stern: but what remedy? Get the Constitution ready; and all men will swear to it: for do not “Addresses of adhesion” arrive by the cartload? In this manner, by Heaven’s blessing, and a Constitution got ready, shall the bottomless fire-gulf be vaulted in, with rag-paper; and Order will wed Freedom, and live with her there,—till it grow too hot for them. *O Côté Gauche*, worthy are ye, as the adhesive Addresses generally say, to “fix the regards of the Universe;” the regards of this one poor Planet, at lowest!—

Nay, it must be owned, the *Côté Droit* makes a still madder figure. An irrational generation; irrational, imbecile, and with the vehement obstinacy characteristic of that; a generation which will not learn. Falling Bastilles, Insurrections of Women, thousands of smoking Manorhouses, a country bristling with no crop but that of Sansculottic steel: these were tolerably didactic lessons; but them they have not taught. There are still men, of whom it was of old written, Bray them in a mortar! Or, in milder language, They have *wedded* their delusions: fire nor steel, nor any sharpness of Experience, shall sever the bond; till death do us part! Of such may the Heavens have mercy; for the Earth, with her rigorous Necessity, will have none.

Admit, at the same time, that it was most natural. Man lives by Hope: Pandora when her box of gods’-gifts flew all out, and became gods’-curses, still retained Hope. How shall an irrational mortal, when his high-place is never so evidently pulled down, and he, being irrational, is left resourceless,—part with the belief that it will be rebuilt? It would make all so straight again; it seems so unspeakably desirable; so reasonable,—would you but look at it aright! For, must not the thing which was continue to be; or else the solid World dissolve? Yes, persist, O infatuated Sansculottes of France! Revolt against constituted Authorities; hunt out your rightful Seigneurs, who at bottom so loved you, and readily shed their blood for you,—in country’s battles as at Rossbach and elsewhere; and, even in preserving game, were preserving *you*, could ye but have understood it: hunt them out, as if they were wild wolves; set fire to their Châteaux and Chartiers as to wolf-dens; and what then? Why, then turn every man his

hand against his fellow! In confusion, famine, desolation, regret the days that are gone; rueful recall them, recall us with them. To repentant prayers we will not be deaf.

So, with dimmer or clearer consciousness, must the Right Side reason and act. An inevitable position perhaps; but a most false one for them. Evil, be thou our good: this henceforth must virtually be their prayer. The fiercer the effervescence grows, the sooner will it pass; for after all it is but some mad effervescence; the World is solid, and cannot dissolve.

For the rest, if they have any positive industry, it is that of plots, and backstairs conclaves. Plots which cannot be executed; which are mostly theoretic on their part;—for which nevertheless this and the other practical *Sieur Augeard*, *Sieur Maillebois*, *Sieur Bonne Savardin*, gets into trouble, gets imprisoned, and escapes with difficulty. Nay there is a poor practical *Chevalier Favras* who, not without some passing reflex on *Monsieur* himself, gets hanged for them, amid loud uproar of the world. Poor *Favras*, he keeps dictating his last will at the “*Hôtel-de-Ville*, through the whole remainder of the day,” a weary February day; offers to reveal secrets, if they will save him; handsomely declines since they will not; then dies, in the flare of torchlight, with politest composure; remarking, rather than exclaiming, with outspread hands: ‘People, I die innocent; pray for me.’<sup>[267]</sup> Poor *Favras*;—type of so much that has prowled indefatigable over France, in days now ending; and, in freer field, might have *earned* instead of prowling,—to thee it is no theory!

In the Senate-house again, the attitude of the Right Side is that of calm unbelief. Let an august National Assembly make a Fourth-of-August Abolition of Feudality; declare the Clergy State-servants who shall have wages; vote Suspensive Vetos, new Law-Courts; vote or decree what contested thing it will; have it responded to from the four corners of France, nay get King’s Sanction, and what other Acceptance were conceivable,—the Right Side, as we find, persists, with imperturbablest tenacity, in considering, and ever and anon shews that it still considers, all these so-called Decrees as mere temporary whims, which indeed stand on paper, but in practice and fact are not, and cannot be. Figure the brass head of an *Abbé Maury* flooding forth Jesuitic eloquence in this strain; dusky *d’Espréménil*, *Barrel Mirabeau* (probably in liquor), and enough of others, cheering him from the Right; and, for example, with what visage a seagreen *Robespierre* eyes him from the Left. And how *Sieyes* ineffably sniffs on him, or does not deign to sniff; and how the Galleries groan in spirit, or bark rabid on him: so that to escape the *Lanterne*, on stepping forth, he needs presence of mind, and a pair of pistols in his girdle! For he is one of the toughest of men.

Here indeed becomes notable one great difference between our two kinds of civil war; between the modern *lingual* or Parliamentary-logical kind, and the ancient, or *manual* kind, in the steel battle-field;—much to the disadvantage of the former. In the manual kind, where you front your foe with drawn weapon, one right stroke is final; for, physically speaking, when the brains are out the man does honestly die, and trouble you no more. But how different when it is with arguments you fight! Here no victory yet definable can be considered as final. Beat him down, with Parliamentary invective, till sense be fled; cut him in two, hanging one half in this dilemma-horn, the other on that; blow the brains or thinking-faculty quite out of him for the time: it skills not; he rallies and revives on the morrow; tomorrow he repairs his golden fires! The think that *will* logically extinguish him is perhaps still a desideratum in Constitutional civilisation. For how, till a man know, in some measure, at what point he becomes logically defunct, can Parliamentary Business be carried on, and Talk cease or slake?

Doubtless it was some feeling of this difficulty; and the clear insight how little such knowledge yet existed in the French Nation, new in the Constitutional career, and how defunct Aristocrats would continue to walk for unlimited periods, as Partridge the Alamanack-maker did,—that had sunk into the deep mind of People's-friend Marat, an eminently practical mind; and had grown there, in that richest putrescent soil, into the most original plan of action ever submitted to a People. Not yet has it grown; but it has germinated, it is growing; rooting itself into Tartarus, branching towards Heaven: the second season hence, we shall see it risen out of the bottomless Darkness, full-grown, into disastrous Twilight,—a Hemlock-tree, great as the world; on or under whose boughs all the People's-friends of the world may lodge. “Two hundred and sixty thousand Aristocrat heads:” that is the precisest calculation, though one would not stand on a few hundreds; yet we never rise as high as the round three hundred thousand. Shudder at it, O People; but it is as true as that ye yourselves, and your People's-friend, are alive. These prating Senators of yours hover ineffectual on the barren letter, and will never save the Revolution. A Cassandra-Marat cannot do it, with his single shrunk arm; but with a few determined men it were possible. ‘Give me,’ said the People's-friend, in his cold way, when young Barbaroux, once his pupil in a course of what was called Optics, went to see him, ‘Give me two hundred Naples Bravoos, armed each with a good dirk, and a muff on his left arm by way of shield: with them I will traverse France, and accomplish the Revolution.’[\[268\]](#) Nay, be brave, young Barbaroux; for thou seest, there is no jesting in those rheumy eyes; in that soot-bleared figure, most earnest of created things; neither indeed is there madness, of the strait-waistcoat sort.

Such produce shall the Time ripen in cavernous Marat, the man forbid; living in Paris cellars, lone as fanatic Anchorite in his Thebaid; say, as far-seen Simon on his Pillar,—taking peculiar views therefrom. Patriots may smile; and, using him as bandog now to be muzzled, now to be let bark, name him, as Desmoulins does, “Maximum of Patriotism” and “Cassandra-Marat:” but were it not singular if this dirk-and-muff plan of his (with superficial modifications) proved to be precisely the plan adopted?

After this manner, in these circumstances, do august Senators regenerate France. Nay, they are, in very deed, *believed* to be regenerating it; on account of which great fact, main fact of their history, the wearied eye can never be permitted wholly to ignore them.

But, looking away now from these precincts of the Tuileries, where Constitutional Royalty, let Lafayette water it as he will, languishes too like a cut branch; and august Senators are perhaps at bottom only perfecting their “theory of defective verbs,”—how does the young Reality, young Sansculottism thrive? The attentive observer can answer: It thrives bravely; putting forth new buds; expanding the old buds into leaves, into boughs. Is not French Existence, as before, most prurient, all *loosened*, most nutrient for it? Sansculottism has the property of growing by what other things die of: by agitation, contention, disarrangement; nay in a word, by what is the symbol and fruit of all these: Hunger.

In such a France as this, Hunger, as we have remarked, can hardly fail. The Provinces, the Southern Cities feel it in their turn; and what it brings: Exasperation, preternatural Suspicion. In Paris some halcyon days of abundance followed the Menadic Insurrection, with its Versailles grain-carts, and recovered Restorer of Liberty; but they could not continue. The month is still October when famishing Saint-Antoine, in a moment of passion, seizes a poor Baker, innocent “François the Baker;” [\[269\]](#) and hangs him, in Constantinople wise;—but even this, singular as it may seem, does not cheapen bread! Too clear it is, no Royal bounty, no Municipal dexterity can adequately feed a Bastille-destroying Paris. Wherefore, on view of the hanged Baker, Constitutionalism in sorrow and anger demands “*Loi Martiale*,” a kind of Riot Act;—and indeed gets it, most readily, almost before the sun goes down.

This is that famed *Martial law*, with its Red Flag, its “*Drapeau Rouge*:” in virtue of which Mayor Bailly, or any Mayor, has but henceforth to hang out that new *Oriflamme* of his; then to read or mumble something about the King’s peace; and, after certain pauses, serve any undispersing Assemblage with musket-shot, or whatever shot will disperse it. A decisive Law; and most just on one proviso: that all Patrollotism be of God, and all mob-assembling be of the Devil;—otherwise not so

just. Mayor Bailly be unwilling to use it! Hang not out that new Oriflamme, *flame* not of *gold* but of the want of gold! The thrice-blessed Revolution is *done*, thou thinkest? If so it will be well with thee.

But now let no mortal say henceforth that an august National Assembly wants riot: all it ever wanted was riot enough to balance Court-plotting; all it now wants, of Heaven or of Earth, is to get its theory of defective verbs perfected.

Chapter 2.1.III.

The Muster.

With famine and a Constitutional theory of defective verbs going on, all other excitement is conceivable. A universal shaking and sifting of French Existence this is: in the course of which, for one thing, what a multitude of low-lying figures are sifted to the top, and set busily to work there!

Dogleech Marat, now for-seen as Simon Stylites, we already know; him and others, raised aloft. The mere sample, these, of what is coming, of what continues coming, upwards from the realm of Night!—Chaumette, by and by Anaxagoras Chaumette, one already descries: mellifluous in street-groups; not now a sea-boy on the high and giddy mast: a mellifluous tribune of the common people, with long curling locks, on *bourne*stone of the thoroughfares; able sub-editor too; who shall rise—to the very gallows. Clerk Tallien, he also is become sub-editor; shall become able editor; and more. Bibliopolic Momoro, Typographic Pruhomme see new trades opening. Collot d’Herbois, tearing a passion to rags, pauses on the Thespian boards; listens, with that black bushy head, to the sound of the world’s drama: shall the Mimetic become Real? Did ye hiss him, O men of Lyons?[\[270\]](#) Better had ye clapped!

Happy now, indeed, for all manner of *mimetic*, half-original men! Tumid blustering, with more or less of sincerity, which need not be entirely sincere, yet the sincerer the better, is like to go far. Shall we say, the Revolution-element works itself rarer and rarer; so that only lighter and lighter bodies will float in it; till at last the mere blown-bladder is your only swimmer? Limitation of mind, then vehemence, promptitude, audacity, shall all be available; to which add only these two: cunning and good lungs. Good fortune must be presupposed. Accordingly, of all classes the rising one, we observe, is now the Attorney class: witness Bazires, Carriers, Fouquier-Tinville, Bazoche-Captain Bourdons: more than enough. Such figures shall Night, from her wonder-bearing bosom, emit; swarm after swarm. Of another deeper and deepest swarm, not yet dawned on the astonished eye; of pilfering Candle-snuffers, Thief-valets, disfrosted Capuchins, and so many Héberts, Henriots, Ronsins, Rossignols, let us, as long as possible, forbear speaking.

Thus, over France, all stirs that has what the Physiologists call *irritability* in it: how much more all wherein irritability has perfected itself into vitality; into actual vision, and force that can will! All stirs; and if not in Paris, flocks thither. Great and greater waxes President Danton in his Cordeliers Section; his rhetorical tropes are all “gigantic:” energy flashes from his black brows, menaces in his athletic figure, rolls in the sound of his voice “reverberating from the domes;” this man also, like Mirabeau, has a natural eye, and begins to see whither Constitutionalism is tending, though with a wish in it different from Mirabeau’s.

Remark, on the other hand, how General Dumouriez has quitted Normandy and the Cherbourg Breakwater, to come—whither we may guess. It is his second or even third trial at Paris, since this New Era began; but now it is in right earnest, for he has quitted all else. Wiry, elastic unwearied man; whose life was but a battle and a march!

No, *not* a creature of Choiseul’s; ‘the creature of God and of my sword,’—he fiercely answered in old days. Overfalling Corsican batteries, in the deadly fire-hail; wriggling invincible from under his horse, at Closterkamp of the Netherlands, though tethered with “crushed stirrup-iron and nineteen wounds;” tough, minatory, standing at bay, as forlorn hope, on the skirts of Poland; intriguing, battling in cabinet and field; roaming far out, obscure, as King’s spial, or sitting sealed up, enchanted in Bastille; fencing, pamphleteering, scheming and struggling from the very birth of him, [271]—the man has come thus far. How repressed, how irrepressible! Like some incarnate spirit in prison, which indeed he *was*; hewing on granite walls for deliverance; striking fire flashes from them. And now has the general earthquake rent his cavern too? Twenty years younger, what might he not have done! But his hair has a shade of gray: his way of thought is all fixed, military. He can *grow* no further, and the new world is in such growth. We will name him, on the whole, one of Heaven’s Swiss; without faith; wanting above all things work, work on *any* side. Work also is appointed him; and he will do it.

Not from over France only are the unrestful flocking towards Paris; but from all sides of Europe. Where the carcase is, thither will the eagles gather. Think how many a Spanish Guzman, Martinico Fournier named “Fournier *l’Américain*,” Engineer Miranda from the very Andes, were flocking or had flocked! Walloon Pereyra might boast of the strangest parentage: him, they say, Prince Kaunitz the Diplomatist heedlessly dropped;” like ostrich-egg, to be hatched of Chance—into an ostrich-eater! Jewish or German Freys do business in the great Cesspool of *Agio*; which Cesspool this *Assignat*-fiat has quickened, into a Mother of dead dogs. Swiss Clavière could found no Socinian Genevese Colony in Ireland; but he paused, years ago, prophetic before the Minister’s Hôtel at Paris; and said, it was borne on his mind that *he* one day was to be Minister, and laughed. [272] Swiss Pachc, on the other hand, sits

sleekheaded, frugal; the wonder of his own alley, and even of neighbouring ones, for humility of mind, and a thought deeper than most men's: sit there, Tartuffe, till wanted! Ye Italian Dufournys, Flemish Prolys, flit hither all ye bipeds of prey! Come whosoever head is hot; thou of mind *ungoverned*, be it chaos as of undevelopment or chaos as of ruin; the man who cannot get known, the man who is too well known; if thou have any vendible faculty, nay if thou have but edacity and loquacity, come! They come; with hot unutterabilities in their heart; as Pilgrims towards a miraculous shrine. Nay how many come as vacant Strollers, aimless, of whom Europe is full merely towards *something*! For benighted fowls, when you beat their bushes, rush towards any light. Thus Frederick Baron Trenck too is here; mazed, purblind, from the cells of Magdeburg; Minotauric cells, and his Ariadne lost! Singular to say, Trenck, in these years, sells wine; not indeed in bottle, but in wood.

Nor is our England without her missionaries. She has her live-saving Needham; [\[273\]](#) to whom was solemnly presented a "civic sword,"—long since rusted into nothingness. Her Paine: rebellious Staymaker; unkempt; who feels that he, a single Needleman, did by his "*Common-Sense*" Pamphlet, free America;—that he can and will free all this World; perhaps even the other. Price-Stanhope Constitutional Association sends over to congratulate; [\[274\]](#) welcomed by National Assembly, though they are but a London Club; whom Burke and Toryism eye askance.

On thee too, for country's sake, O Chevalier John Paul, be a word spent, or misspent! In faded naval uniform, Paul Jones lingers visible here; like a wine-skin from which the wine is all drawn. Like the ghost of himself! Low is his once loud bruit; scarcely audible, save, with extreme tedium in ministerial ante-chambers; in this or the other charitable dining-room, mindful of the past. What changes; culminatings and declinings! Not now, poor Paul, thou lookest wistful over the Solway brine, by the foot of native Criffel, into blue mountainous Cumberland, into blue Infinitude; environed with thrift, with humble friendliness; thyself, young fool, longing to be aloft from it, or even to be away from it. Yes, beyond that sapphire Promontory, which men name St. Bees, which is not sapphire either, but dull sandstone, when one gets *close* to it, there is a world. Which world thou too shalt taste of!—From yonder White Haven rise his smoke-clouds; ominous though ineffectual. Proud Forth quakes at his bellying sails; had not the wind suddenly shifted. Flamborough reapers, homegoing, pause on the hill-side: for what sulphur-cloud is that that defaces the sleek sea; sulphur-cloud spitting streaks of fire? A sea cockfight it is, and of the hottest; where British *Serapis* and French-American *Bon Homme Richard* do lash and throttle each other, in their fashion; and lo the desperate valour has suffocated the deliberate, and Paul Jones too is of the Kings of the Sea!

The Euxine, the Méotian waters felt thee next, and long-skirted Turks, O Paul; and thy fiery soul has wasted itself in thousand contradictions;—to no purpose. For, in far lands, with scarlet Nassau-Siegens, with sinful Imperial Catherines, is not the heart-broken, even as at home with the mean? Poor Paul! hunger and dispiritment track thy sinking footsteps: once or at most twice, in this Revolution-tumult the figure of thee emerges; mute, ghost-like, as “with stars dim-twinkling through.” And then, when the light is gone quite out, a National Legislature grants “ceremonial funeral!” As good had been the natural Presbyterian Kirk-bell, and six feet of Scottish earth, among the dust of thy loved ones.—*Such* world lay beyond the Promontory of St. Bees. Such is the life of sinful mankind here below.

But of all strangers, far the notablest for us is Baron Jean Baptiste de Clootz;—or, dropping baptisms and feudalisms, World-Citizen Anacharsis Clootz, from Cleves. Him mark, judicious Reader. Thou hast known his Uncle, sharp-sighted thorough-going Cornelius de Pauw, who mercilessly cuts down cherished illusions; and of the finest antique Spartans, will make mere modern cutthroat Mainots. [\[275\]](#) The like stuff is in Anacharsis: hot metal; full of scoriae, which should and could have been smelted out, but which will not. He has wandered over this terraqueous Planet; seeking, one may say, the Paradise we lost long ago. He has seen English Burke; has been seen of the Portugal Inquisition; has roamed, and fought, and written; is writing, among other things, “Evidences of the *Mahometan* Religion.” But now, like his Scythian adoptive godfather, he finds himself in the Paris Athens; surely, at last, the haven of his soul. A dashing man, beloved at Patriotic dinner-tables; with gaiety, nay with humour; headlong, trenchant, of free purse; in suitable costume; though what mortal ever more despised costumes? Under all costumes Anacharsis seeks the man; not Stylites Marat will more freely trample costumes, if they hold no man. This is the faith of Anacharsis: That there is a Paradise discoverable; that all costumes ought to hold men. O Anacharsis, it is a headlong, swift-going faith. Mounted thereon, meseems, thou art bound hastily for the City of *Nowhere*; and wilt *arrive!* At best, we may say, arrive *in good riding attitude*; which indeed is something.

So many new persons, and new things, have come to occupy this France. Her old Speech and Thought, and Activity which springs from those, are all changing; fermenting towards unknown issues. To the dullest peasant, as he sits sluggish, overtoiled, by his evening hearth, one idea has come: that of Châteaux burnt; of Châteaux combustible. How altered all Coffeehouses, in Province or Capital! The *Antre de Procope* has now other questions than the Three Stagyrte Unities to settle; not theatre-controversies, but a world-controversy: there, in the ancient pigtail mode, or with modern Brutus’ heads, do well-frizzed logicians hold hubbub, and

Chaos umpire sits. The ever-enduring Melody of Paris Saloons has got a new ground-tone: ever-enduring; which has been heard, and by the listening Heaven too, since Julian the Apostate's time and earlier; mad now as formerly.

Ex-Censor Suard, *Ex-Censor*, for we have freedom of the Press; he may be seen there; impartial, even neutral. Tyrant Grimm rolls large eyes, over a questionable coming Time. Atheist Naigeon, beloved disciple of Diderot, crows, in his small difficult way, heralding glad dawn.<sup>[276]</sup> But, on the other hand, how many Morellets, Marmontels, who had sat all their life hatching Philosophe eggs, cackle now, in a state bordering on distraction, at the brood they have brought out!<sup>[277]</sup> It was so delightful to have one's Philosophe Theorem demonstrated, crowned in the saloons: and now an infatuated people will not continue speculative, but have Practice?

There also observe Preceptress Genlis, or Sillery, or Sillery-Genlis,—for our husband is both Count and Marquis, and we have more than one title. Pretentious, frothy; a puritan yet creedless; darkening counsel by words without wisdom! For, it is in that thin element of the Sentimentalist and Distinguished-Female that Sillery-Genlis works; she would gladly be sincere, yet can grow no sincerer than sincere-cant: sincere-cant of many forms, ending in the devotional form. For the present, on a neck still of moderate whiteness, she wears as jewel a miniature Bastille, cut on mere sandstone, but then actual Bastille sandstone. M. le Marquis is one of d'Orléans's errandmen; in National Assembly, and elsewhere. Madame, for her part, trains up a youthful d'Orléans generation in what superfinest morality one can; gives meanwhile rather enigmatic account of fair Mademoiselle Pamela, the Daughter whom she has *adopted*. Thus she, in Palais Royal saloon;—whither, we remark, d'Orléans himself, spite of Lafayette, has returned from that English “mission” of his: surely no pleasant mission: for the English would not speak to him; and Saint Hannah More of England, so unlike Saint Sillery-Genlis of France, saw him shunned, in Vauxhall Gardens, like one pest-struck,<sup>[278]</sup> and his red-blue impassive visage waxing hardly a shade bluer.

#### Chapter 2.1.IV.

##### Journalism.

As for Constitutionalism, with its National Guards, it is doing what it can; and has enough to do: it must, as ever, with one hand wave persuasively, repressing Patriotism; and keep the other clenched to menace Royalty plotters. A most delicate task; requiring tact.

Thus, if People's-friend Marat has today his writ of “*prise de corps*, or seizure of body,” served on him, and dives out of sight, tomorrow he is left at large; or is even

encouraged, as a sort of bandog whose baying may be useful. President Danton, in open Hall, with reverberating voice, declares that, in a case like Marat's, 'force may be resisted by force.' Whereupon the Chatelet serves Danton also with a writ;—which, however, as the whole Cordeliers District responds to it, what Constable will be prompt to execute? Twice more, on new occasions, does the Chatelet launch its writ; and twice more in vain: the body of Danton cannot be seized by Châtelet; he unseized, should he even fly for a season, shall behold the Châtelet itself flung into limbo.

Municipality and Brissot, meanwhile, are far on with their Municipal Constitution. The Sixty *Districts* shall become Forty-eight *Sections*; much shall be adjusted, and Paris have its Constitution. A Constitution wholly Elective; as indeed all French Government shall and must be. And yet, one fatal element has been introduced: that of *citoyen actif*. No man who does not pay the *marc d'argent*, or yearly tax equal to three days' labour, shall be other than a *passive* citizen: not the slightest vote for him; were he *acting*, all the year round, with sledge hammer, with forest-levelling axe! Unheard of! cry Patriot Journals. Yes truly, my Patriot Friends, if Liberty, the passion and prayer of all men's souls, means Liberty to send your fifty-thousandth part of a new Tongue-fencer into National Debating-club, then, be the gods witness, ye are hardly entreated. Oh, if in National *Palaver* (as the Africans name it), such blessedness is verily found, what tyrant would deny it to Son of Adam! Nay, might there not be a Female Parliament too, with "screams from the Opposition benches," and "the honourable Member borne out in hysterics?" To a Children's Parliament would I gladly consent; or even lower if ye wished it. Beloved Brothers! Liberty, one might fear, is actually, as the ancient wise men said, of Heaven. On this Earth, where, thinks the enlightened public, did a brave little Dame de Staal (not Necker's Daughter, but a far shrewder than she) find the nearest approach to Liberty? After mature computation, cool as Dilworth's, her answer is, *In the Bastille*.<sup>[279]</sup> 'Of Heaven?' answer many, asking. Wo that they should *ask*; for that is the very misery! 'Of Heaven' means much; share in the National Palaver it may, or may as probably *not* mean.

One Sansculottic bough that cannot fail to flourish is Journalism. The voice of the People *being* the voice of God, shall not such divine voice make itself heard? To the ends of France; and in as many dialects as when the *first* great Babel was to be built! Some loud as the lion; some small as the sucking dove. Mirabeau himself has his instructive Journal or Journals, with Geneva hodmen working in them; and withal has quarrels enough with Dame le Jay, his Female Bookseller, so ultra-compliant otherwise.<sup>[280]</sup>

*King's-friend* Royou still prints himself. Barrère sheds tears of loyal sensibility in *Break of Day* Journal, though with declining sale. But why is Fréron so hot, democratic;

Fréron, the King's-friend's Nephew? He has it by kind, that heat of his: *wasp* Fréron begot him; Voltaire's *Frélon*; who fought stinging, while sting and poison-bag were left, were it only as Reviewer, and over Printed Waste-paper. Constant, illuminative, as the nightly lamplighter, issues the useful *Moniteur*, for it is now become diurnal: with facts and few commentaries; official, safe in the middle:—its able Editors sunk long since, recoverably or irrecoverably, in deep darkness. Acid Loustalot, with his “vigour,” as of young sloes, shall never ripen, but die untimely: his Prudhomme, however, will not let that *Révolutions de Paris* die; but edit it himself, with much else,—dull-blustering Printer though he be.

Of Cassandra-Marat we have spoken often; yet the most surprising truth remains to be spoken: that he actually does not want sense; but, with croaking gelid throat, croaks out masses of the truth, on several things. Nay sometimes, one might almost fancy he had a perception of humour, and were laughing a little, far down in his inner man. Camille is wittier than ever, and more outspoken, cynical; yet sunny as ever. A light melodious creature; “born,” as he shall yet say with bitter tears, “to write verses;” light Apollo, so clear, soft-lucent, in this war of the Titans, wherein he shall not conquer!

Folded and hawked Newspapers exist in all countries; but, in such a Journalistic element as this of France, other and stranger sorts are to be anticipated. What says the English reader to a *Journal-Affiche*, Placard Journal; legible to him that has no halfpenny; in bright prismatic colours, calling the eye from afar? Such, in the coming months, as Patriot Associations, public and private, advance, and can subscribe funds, shall plenteously hang themselves out: *leaves*, limed leaves, to catch what they can! The very Government shall have its Pasted Journal; Louvet, busy yet with a new “charming romance,” shall write *Sentinelles*, and post them with effect; nay Bertrand de Moleville, in his extremity, shall still more cunningly try it. [\[281\]](#) Great is Journalism. Is not every Able Editor a Ruler of the World, being a persuader of it; though self-elected, yet sanctioned, by the sale of his Numbers? Whom indeed the world has the readiest method of deposing, should need be: that of merely doing *nothing* to him; which ends in starvation!

Nor esteem it small what those Bill-stickers had to do in Paris: above Three Score of them: all with their crosspoles, haversacks, pastepots; nay with leaden badges, for the Municipality licenses them. A Sacred College, properly of World-rulers' Heralds, though not respected as such, in an Era still incipient and raw. They made the walls of Paris didactic, suasive, with an ever fresh Periodical Literature, wherein he that ran might read: Placard Journals, Placard Lampoons, Municipal Ordinances, Royal Proclamations; the whole other or vulgar Placard-department super-added,—or omitted from contempt! What unutterable things the stone-walls spoke, during these

five years! But it is all gone; Today swallowing Yesterday, and then being in its turn swallowed of Tomorrow, even as Speech ever is. Nay what, O thou immortal Man of Letters, is Writing itself but Speech conserved for a time? The Placard Journal conserved it for one day; some Books conserve it for the matter of ten years; nay some for three thousand: but what then? Why, *then*, the years being all run, it also dies, and the world is rid of it. Oh, were there not a spirit in the word of man, as in man himself, that survived the audible bodied word, and tended either Godward, or else Devilward for evermore, why should he trouble himself much with the truth of it, or the falsehood of it, except for commercial purposes? His immortality indeed, and whether it shall last half a lifetime, or a lifetime and half; is not that a very considerable thing? As mortality, was to the runaway, whom Great Fritz bullied back into the battle with a: ‘*R—, wollt ihr ewig leben*, Unprintable Off-scouring of Scoundrels, would ye live for ever!’

This is the Communication of Thought: how happy when there is any Thought to communicate! Neither let the simpler old methods be neglected, in their sphere. The Palais-Royal Tent, a tyrannous Patrollotism has removed; but can it remove the lungs of man? Anaxagoras Chaumette we saw mounted on bourne-stones, while Tallien worked sedentary at the subeditorial desk. In any corner of the civilised world, a tub can be inverted, and an articulate-speaking biped mount thereon. Nay, with contrivance, a portable trestle, or folding-stool, can be procured, for love or money; this the peripatetic Orator can take in his hand, and, driven out here, set it up again there; saying mildly, with a Sage Bias, *Omnia mea mecum porto*.

Such is Journalism, hawked, pasted, spoken. How changed since One old Métra walked this same Tuileries Garden, in gilt cocked hat, with Journal at his nose, or held loose-folded behind his back; and was a notability of Paris, “Métra the Newsman;”[\[282\]](#) and Louis himself was wont to say: *Qu’en dit Métra?* Since the first Venetian News-sheet was sold for a *gazza*, or farthing, and named *Gazette*! We live in a fertile world.

#### Chapter 2.1.V. Clubbism.

Where the heart is full, it seeks, for a thousand reasons, in a thousand ways, to impart itself. How sweet, indispensable, in such cases, is fellowship; soul mystically strengthening soul! The meditative Germans, some think, have been of opinion that Enthusiasm in the general means simply excessive Congregating—*Schwärmerey*, or *Swarming*. At any rate, do we not see glimmering half-red embers, if laid *together*, get into the brightest white glow?

In such a France, gregarious Reunions will needs multiply, intensify; French Life will step out of doors, and, from domestic, become a public Club Life. Old Clubs, which already germinated, grow and flourish; new every where bud forth. It is the sure symptom of Social Unrest: in such way, most infallibly of all, does Social Unrest exhibit itself; find solacement, and also nutriment. In every French head there hangs now, whether for terror or for hope, some prophetic picture of a New France: prophecy which brings, nay which almost is, its own fulfilment; and in all ways, consciously and unconsciously, works towards that.

Observe, moreover, how the Aggregative Principle, let it be but deep enough, goes on aggregating, and this even in a geometrical progression: how when the whole world, in such a plastic time, is forming itself into Clubs, some One Club, the strongest or luckiest, shall, by friendly attracting, by victorious compelling, grow ever stronger, till it become immeasurably strong; and all the others, with their strength, be either lovingly absorbed into it, or hostilely abolished by it! This if the Club-spirit is universal; if the time *is* plastic. Plastic enough is the time, universal the Club-spirit: such an all absorbing, paramount One Club cannot be wanting.

What a progress, since the first salient-point of the Breton Committee! It worked long in secret, not languidly; it has come with the National Assembly to Paris; calls itself *Club*; calls itself in imitation, as is thought, of those generous Price-Stanhope English, *French Revolution Club*; but soon, with more originality, *Club of Friends of the Constitution*. Moreover it has leased, for itself, at a fair rent, the Hall of the Jacobin's Convent, one of our "superfluous edifices;" and does therefrom now, in these spring months, begin shining out on an admiring Paris. And so, by degrees, under the shorter popular title of *Jacobins' Club*, it shall become memorable to all times and lands. Glance into the interior: strongly yet modestly benched and seated; as many as Thirteen Hundred chosen Patriots; Assembly Members not a few. Barnave, the two Lameths are seen there; occasionally Mirabeau, perpetually Robespierre; also the ferret-visage of Fouquier-Tinville with other attorneys; Anacharsis of Prussian Scythia, and miscellaneous Patriots,—though all is yet in the most perfectly clean-washed state; decent, nay dignified. President on platform, President's bell are not wanting; oratorical Tribune high-raised; nor strangers' galleries, wherein also sit women. Has any French Antiquarian Society preserved that written Lease of the Jacobins Convent Hall? Or was it, unluckier even than Magna Charta, *clipt* by sacrilegious Tailors? Universal History is not indifferent to it.

These Friends of the Constitution have met mainly, as their name may foreshadow, to look after Elections when an Election comes, and procure fit men; but likewise to consult generally that the Commonwealth take no damage; one as yet sees not how. For

indeed let two or three gather together any where, if it be not in Church, where all are bound to the *passive* state; no mortal can say accurately, themselves as little as any, for *what* they are gathered. How often has the broached barrel proved not to be for joy and heart effusion, but for duel and head-breakage; and the promised feast become a Feast of the Lapithae! This Jacobins Club, which at first shone resplendent, and was thought to be a new celestial Sun for enlightening the Nations, had, as things all have, to work through its appointed phases: it burned unfortunately more and more lurid, more sulphurous, distracted;—and swam at last, through the astonished Heaven, like a Tartarean Portent, and lurid-burning Prison of Spirits in Pain.

Its style of eloquence? Rejoice, Reader, that thou knowest it not, that thou canst never perfectly know. The Jacobins published a Journal of Debates, where they that have the heart may examine: Impassioned, full-droning Patriotic-eloquence; implacable, unfertile—save for Destruction, which was indeed its work: most wearisome, though most deadly. Be thankful that Oblivion covers so much; that all carrion is by and by buried in the green Earth's bosom, and even makes her grow the greener. The Jacobins are buried; but their work is not; it continues "making the tour of the world," as it can. It might be seen lately, for instance, with bared bosom and death-defiant eye, as far on as Greek Missolonghi; and, strange enough, old slumbering Hellas was resuscitated, into *somnambulism* which will become clear wakefulness, by a voice from the Rue St. Honoré! All dies, as we often say; except the spirit of man, of what man *does*. Thus has not the very House of the Jacobins vanished; scarcely lingering in a few old men's memories? The St. Honoré Market has brushed it away, and now where dull-droning eloquence, like a Trump of Doom, once shook the world, there is pacific chaffering for poultry and greens. The sacred National Assembly Hall itself has become common ground; President's platform permeable to wain and dustcart; for the Rue de Rivoli runs there. Verily, at Cockcrow (of this Cock or the other), *all* Apparitions do melt and dissolve in space.

The Paris *Jacobins* became "the Mother-Society, *Société-Mère*;" and had as many as "three hundred" shrill-tongued daughters in "direct correspondence" with her. Of indirectly corresponding, what we may call grand-daughters and minute progeny, she counted "forty-four thousand!"—But for the present we note only two things: the first of them a mere anecdote. One night, a couple of brother Jacobins are doorkeepers; for the members take this post of duty and honour in rotation, and admit none that have not tickets: one doorkeeper was the worthy Sieur Laïs, a patriotic Opera-singer, stricken in years, whose windpipe is long since closed without result; the other, young, and named Louis Philippe, D'Orléans's firstborn, has in this latter time, after unheard-

of destinies, become Citizen-King, and struggles to rule for a season. All-flesh is grass; higher reedgrass or creeping herb.

The second thing we have to note is historical: that the Mother-Society, even in this its effulgent period, cannot content all Patriots. Already it must throw off, so to speak, two dissatisfied swarms; a swarm to the right, a swarm to the left. One party, which thinks the Jacobins lukewarm, constitutes itself into *Club of the Cordeliers*; a hotter Club: it is Danton's element: with whom goes Desmoulins. The other party, again, which thinks the Jacobins scalding-hot, flies off to the right, and becomes "Club of 1789, Friends of the *Monarchic* Constitution." They are afterwards named "*Feuillans Club*;" their place of meeting being the Feuillans Convent. Lafayette is, or becomes, their chief-man; supported by the respectable Patriot everywhere, by the mass of Property and Intelligence,—with the most flourishing prospects. They, in these June days of 1790, do, in the Palais Royal, dine solemnly with open windows; to the cheers of the people; with toasts, with inspiriting songs,—with one song at least, among the feeblest ever sung.[\[283\]](#) They shall, in due time be hooted forth, over the borders, into Cimmerian Night.

Another expressly Monarchic or Royalist Club, "*Club des Monarchiens*," though a Club of ample funds, and all sitting in damask sofas, cannot realise the smallest momentary cheer; realises only scoffs and groans;—till, ere long, certain Patriots in disorderly sufficient number, proceed thither, for a night or for nights, and groan it out of pain. Vivacious alone shall the Mother-Society and her family be. The very Cordeliers may, as it were, return into her bosom, which will have grown warm enough.

Fatal-looking! Are not such Societies an incipient New Order of Society itself? The Aggregative Principle anew at work in a Society grown obsolete, cracked asunder, dissolving into rubbish and primary atoms?

Chapter 2.1.VI.

Je le jure.

With these signs of the times, is it not surprising that the dominant feeling all over France was still continually Hope? O blessed Hope, sole boon of man; whereby, on his strait prison walls, are painted beautiful far-stretching landscapes; and into the night of very Death is shed holiest dawn! Thou art to all an indefeasible possession in this God's-world: to the wise a sacred Constantine's-banner, written on the eternal skies; under which they *shall* conquer, for the battle itself is victory: to the foolish some secular *mirage*, or shadow of still waters, painted on the parched Earth; whereby at least their dusty pilgrimage, if devious, becomes cheerfuller, becomes possible.

In the death-tumults of a sinking Society, French Hope sees only the birth-struggles of a new unspeakably better Society; and sings, with full assurance of faith, her brisk Melody, which some inspired fiddler has in these very days composed for her,—the world-famous *Ça-ira*. Yes; “that will go:” and then there will *come*—? All men hope: even Marat hopes—that Patriotism will take muff and dirk. King Louis is not without hope: in the chapter of chances; in a flight to some Bouillé; in getting popularized at Paris. But what a hoping People he had, judge by the fact, and series of facts, now to be noted.

Poor Louis, meaning the best, with little insight and even less determination of his own, has to follow, in that dim wayfaring of his, such signal as may be given him; by backstairs Royalism, by official or backstairs Constitutionalism, whichever for the month may have convinced the royal mind. If flight to Bouillé, and (horrible to think!) a drawing of the civil sword do hang as theory, portentous in the background, much nearer is this fact of these Twelve Hundred Kings, who sit in the *Salle de Manège*. Kings uncontrollable by him, not yet irreverent to him. Could kind management of these but prosper, how much better were it than armed Emigrants, Turin-intrigues, and the help of Austria! Nay, are the *two* hopes inconsistent? Rides in the suburbs, we have found, cost little; yet they always brought *vivats*.<sup>[284]</sup> Still cheaper is a soft word; such as has many times turned away wrath. In these rapid days, while France is all getting divided into Departments, Clergy about to be remodelled, Popular Societies rising, and Feudalism and so much ever is ready to be hurled into the melting-pot,—might one not try?

On the 4th of February, accordingly, M. le Président reads to his National Assembly a short autograph, announcing that his Majesty will step over, quite in an unceremonious way, probably about noon. Think, therefore, Messieurs, what it may mean; especially, how ye will get the Hall decorated a little. The Secretaries’ Bureau can be shifted down from the platform; on the President’s chair be slipped this cover of velvet, “of a violet colour sprigged with gold fleur-de-lys;”—for indeed M. le Président has had previous notice underhand, and taken counsel with Doctor Guillotin. Then some fraction of “velvet carpet,” of like texture and colour, cannot that be spread in front of the chair, where the Secretaries usually sit? So has judicious Guillotin advised: and the effect is found satisfactory. Moreover, as it is probable that his Majesty, in spite of the fleur-de-lys-velvet, will stand and not sit at all, the President himself, in the interim, presides standing. And so, while some honourable Member is discussing, say, the division of a Department, Ushers announce: ‘His Majesty!’ In person, with small suite, enter Majesty: the honourable Member stops short; the Assembly starts to its feet; the Twelve Hundred Kings “almost all,” and the Galleries no

less, do welcome the Restorer of French Liberty with loyal shouts. His Majesty's Speech, in diluted conventional phraseology, expresses this mainly: That he, most of all Frenchmen, rejoices to see France getting regenerated; is sure, at the same time, that they will deal gently with her in the process, and not regenerate her *roughly*. Such was his Majesty's Speech: the feat he performed was coming to speak it, and going back again.

Surely, except to a very hoping People, there was not much here to build upon. Yet what did they not build! The fact that the King has spoken, that he has voluntarily come to speak, how inexpressibly encouraging! Did not the glance of his royal countenance, like concentrated sunbeams, kindle all hearts in an august Assembly; nay thereby in an inflammable enthusiastic France? To move "Deputation of thanks" can be the happy lot of but one man; to go in such Deputation the lot of not many. The Deputed have gone, and returned with what highest-flown compliment they could; whom also the Queen met, Dauphin in hand. And still do not our hearts burn with insatiable gratitude; and to one other man a still higher blessedness suggests itself: To move that we all renew the National Oath.

Happiest honourable Member, with his word so in season as word seldom was; magic Fugleman of a whole National Assembly, which sat there bursting to do somewhat; Fugleman of a whole onlooking France! The President swears; declares that every one shall swear, in distinct *je le jure*. Nay the very Gallery sends him down a written slip signed, with their Oath on it; and as the Assembly now casts an eye that way, the Gallery all stands up and swears again. And then out of doors, consider at the Hôtel-de-Ville how Bailly, the great Tennis-Court swearer, again swears, towards nightful, with all the Municipals, and Heads of Districts assembled there. And "M. Danton suggests that the public would like to partake:" whereupon Bailly, with escort of Twelve, steps forth to the great outer staircase; sways the ebullient multitude with stretched hand: takes their oath, with a thunder of "rolling drums," with shouts that rend the welkin. And on all streets the glad people, with moisture and fire in their eyes, "spontaneously formed groups, and swore one another," [\[285\]](#)—and the whole City was illuminated. This was the Fourth of February 1790: a day to be marked white in Constitutional annals.

Nor is the illumination for a night only, but partially or totally it lasts a series of nights. For each District, the Electors of each District, will swear specially; and always as the District swears; it illuminates itself. Behold them, District after District, in some open square, where the Non-Electing People can all see and join: with their uplifted right hands, and *je le jure*: with rolling drums, with embracings, and that infinite hurrah of

the enfranchised,—which any tyrant that there may be can consider! Faithful to the King, to the Law, to the Constitution which the National Assembly *shall* make.

Fancy, for example, the Professors of Universities parading the streets with their young France, and swearing, in an enthusiastic manner, not without tumult. By a larger exercise of fancy, expand duly this little word: The like was repeated in every Town and District of France! Nay one Patriot Mother, in Lagnon of Brittany, assembles her ten children; and, with her own aged hand, swears them all herself, the highsouled venerable woman. Of all which, moreover, a National Assembly must be eloquently apprised. Such three weeks of swearing! Saw the sun ever such a swearing people? Have they been bit by a swearing tarantula? No: but they are men and Frenchmen; they have Hope; and, singular to say, they have Faith, were it only in the Gospel according to Jean Jacques. O my Brothers! would to Heaven it were even as ye think and have sworn! But there are Lovers' Oaths, which, had they been true as love itself, *cannot* be kept; not to speak of Dicers' Oaths, also a known sort.

Chapter 2.1.VII.

Prodigies.

To such length had the *Contrat Social* brought it, in believing hearts. Man, as is well said, lives by faith; each generation has its own faith, more or less; and laughs at the faith of its predecessor,—most unwisely. Grant indeed that this faith in the Social Contract belongs to the stranger sorts; that an unborn generation may very wisely, if not laugh, yet stare at it, and piously consider. For, alas, what is *Contrat*? If all men were such that a mere spoken or sworn Contract would bind them, all men were then true men, and Government a superfluity. Not what thou and I have promised to each other, but what the balance of our forces can make us perform to each other: that, in so sinful a world as ours, is the thing to be counted on. But above all, a People and a Sovereign promising to one another; as if a whole People, changing from generation to generation, nay from hour to hour, could ever by any method be made to *speak* or promise; and to speak mere solecisms: 'We, be the Heavens witness, which Heavens however do no miracles now; we, ever-changing Millions, will *allow* thee, changeful Unit, to *force* us or govern us!' The world has perhaps seen few faiths comparable to that.

So nevertheless had the world then construed the matter. Had they *not* so construed it, how different had their hopes been, their attempts, their results! But so and not otherwise did the Upper Powers will it to be. Freedom by Social Contract: such was verily the Gospel of that Era. And all men had believed in it, as in a Heaven's Glad-tidings men should; and with overflowing heart and uplifted voice clave to it, and

stood fronting Time and Eternity on it. Nay smile not; or only with a smile sadder than tears! This too was a better faith than the one it had replaced: than faith merely in the Everlasting Nothing and man's Digestive Power; lower than *which* no faith can go.

Not that such universally prevalent, universally jurant, feeling of Hope, could be a unanimous one. Far from that! The time was ominous: social dissolution near and certain; social renovation still a problem, difficult and distant even though sure. But if ominous to some clearest onlooker, whose faith stood not with one side or with the other, nor in the ever-vexed jarring of Greek with Greek at all,—how unspeakably ominous to dim Royalist participators; for whom Royalism was Mankind's palladium; for whom, with the abolition of Most-Christian Kingship and Most-Talleyrand Bishopship, all loyal obedience, all religious faith was to expire, and final Night envelope the Destinies of Man! On serious hearts, of that persuasion, the matter sinks down deep; prompting, as we have seen, to backstairs Plots, to Emigration with pledge of war, to Monarchic Clubs; nay to still madder things.

The Spirit of Prophecy, for instance, had been considered extinct for some centuries: nevertheless these last-times, as indeed is the tendency of last-times, do revive it; that so, of French mad things, we might have sample also of the maddest. In remote rural districts, whither Philosophism has not yet radiated, where a heterodox Constitution of the Clergy is bringing strife round the altar itself, and the very Church-bells are getting melted into small money-coin, it appears probable that the End of the World cannot be far off. Deep-musing atrabiliar old men, especially old women, hint in an obscure way that they know what they know. The Holy Virgin, silent so long, has not gone dumb;—and truly now, if ever more in this world, were the time for her to speak. One Prophetess, though careless Historians have omitted her name, condition, and whereabouts, becomes audible to the general ear; credible to not a few: credible to Friar Gerle, poor Patriot Chartreux, in the National Assembly itself! She, in Pythoness' recitative, with wildstaring eye, sings that there shall be a Sign; that the heavenly Sun himself will hang out a Sign, or Mock-Sun,—which, many say, shall be stamped with the Head of hanged Favras. List, Dom Gerle, with that poor addled poll of thine; list, O list;—and hear nothing. [\[286\]](#)

Notable however was that “magnetic vellum, *vélin magnétique*,” of the Sieurs d'Hozier and Petit-Jean, Parlemeuteers of Rouen. Sweet young d'Hozier, “bred in the faith of his Missal, and of parchment genealogies,” and of parchment generally: adust, melancholic, middle-aged Petit-Jean: why came these two to Saint-Cloud, where his Majesty was hunting, on the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul; and waited there, in antechambers, a wonder to whispering Swiss, the livelong day; and even waited without the Grates, when turned out; and had dismissed their valets to Paris, as with

purpose of endless waiting? They have a *magnetic vellum*, these two; whereon the Virgin, wonderfully clothing herself in Mesmerean Cagliostroic Occult-Philosophy, has inspired them to jot down instructions and predictions for a much-straitened King. To whom, by Higher Order, they will this day present it; and save the Monarchy and World. Unaccountable pair of visual-objects! Ye should be men, and of the Eighteenth Century; but your magnetic vellum forbids us so to interpret. Say, are ye aught? Thus ask the Guardhouse Captains, the Mayor of St. Cloud; nay, at great length, thus asks the Committee of Researches, and not the Municipal, but the National Assembly one. No distinct answer, for weeks. At last it becomes plain that the right answer is *negative*. Go, ye Chimeras, with your magnetic vellum; sweet young Chimera, adust middle-aged one! The Prison-doors are open. Hardly again shall ye preside the Rouen Chamber of Accounts; but vanish obscurely into Limbo.[\[287\]](#)

#### Chapter 2.1.VIII.

##### Solemn League and Covenant.

Such dim masses, and specks of even deepest black, work in that white-hot glow of the French mind, now wholly in fusion, and *confusion*. Old women here swearing their ten children on the new Evangel of Jean Jacques; old women there looking up for Favras' Heads in the celestial Luminary: these *are* preternatural signs, prefiguring somewhat.

In fact, to the Patriot children of Hope themselves, it is undeniable that difficulties exist: emigrating Seigneurs; Parlements in sneaking but most malicious mutiny (though the rope is round their neck); above all, the most decided "deficiency of grains." Sorrowful: but, to a Nation that hopes, not irremediable. To a Nation which is in fusion and ardent communion of thought; which, for example, on signal of one Fugleman, will lift its right hand like a drilled regiment, and swear and illuminate, till every village from Ardennes to the Pyrenees has rolled its village-drum, and sent up its little oath, and glimmer of tallow-illumination some fathoms into the reign of Night!

If grains are defective, the fault is not of Nature or National Assembly, but of Art and Antinational Intriguers. Such malign individuals, of the scoundrel species, have power to vex us, while the Constitution is a-making. Endure it, ye heroic Patriots: nay rather, why not cure it? Grains do grow, they lie extant there in sheaf or sack; only that regraters and Royalist plotters, to provoke the people into illegality, obstruct the transport of grains. Quick, ye organised Patriot Authorities, armed National Guards, meet together; unite your goodwill; in union is tenfold strength: let the concentrated flash of your Patriotism strike stealthy Scoundrelism blind, paralytic, as with a *coup de soleil*.

Under which hat or nightcap of the Twenty-five millions, this pregnant Idea first rose, for in some one head it did rise, no man can now say. A most small idea, near at hand for the whole world: but a living one, fit; and which waxed, whether into greatness or not, into immeasurable size. When a Nation is in this state that the Fugleman can operate on it, what will the word in season, the act in season, not do! It will grow verily, like the Boy's Bean in the Fairy-Tale, heaven-high, with habitations and adventures on it, in one night. It is nevertheless unfortunately still a Bean (for your long-lived Oak grows *not* so); and, the next night, it may lie felled, horizontal, trodden into common mud.—But remark, at least, how natural to any agitated Nation, which has Faith, this business of Covenanting is. The Scotch, believing in a righteous Heaven above them, and also in a Gospel, far other than the Jean-Jacques one, swore, in their extreme need, a Solemn League and Covenant,—as Brothers on the forlorn-hope, and imminence of battle, who embrace looking Godward; and got the whole Isle to swear it; and even, in their tough Old-Saxon Hebrew-Presbyterian way, to keep it more or less;—for the thing, as such things are, was heard in Heaven, and partially ratified there; neither is it yet dead, if thou wilt look, nor like to die. The French too, with their Gallic-Ethnic excitability and effervescence, have, as we have seen, real Faith, of a sort; they are hard bestead, though in the middle of Hope: a National Solemn League and Covenant there may be in France too; under how different conditions; with how different developement and issue!

Note, accordingly, the small commencement; first spark of a mighty firework: for if the particular *hat* cannot be fixed upon, the particular District can. On the 29th day of last November, were National Guards by the thousand seen filing, from far and near, with military music, with Municipal officers in tricolor sashes, towards and along the Rhone-stream, to the little town of Etoile. There with ceremonial evolution and manœuvre, with fanfaronading, musketry-salvoes, and what else the Patriot genius could devise, they made oath and obtestation to stand faithfully by one another, under Law and King; in particular, to have all manner of grains, while grains there were, freely circulated, in spite both of robber and regrater. This was the meeting of Etoile, in the mild end of November 1789.

But now, if a mere empty Review, followed by Review-dinner, ball, and such gesticulation and flirtation as there may be, interests the happy County-town, and makes it the envy of surrounding County-towns, how much more might this! In a fortnight, larger Montélimart, half ashamed of itself, will do as good, and better. On the Plain of Montélimart, or what is equally sonorous, “under the Walls of Montélimart,” the thirteenth of December sees new gathering and obtestation; six thousand strong; and now indeed, with these three remarkable improvements, as

unanimously resolved on there. First that the men of Montélimart do federate with the already federated men of Etoile. Second, that, implying not expressing the circulation of grain, they “swear in the face of God and their Country” with much more emphasis and comprehensiveness, “to obey all decrees of the National Assembly, and see them obeyed, till death, *jusqu’à la mort*.” Third, and most important, that official record of all this be solemnly delivered in to the National Assembly, to M. de Lafayette, and “to the Restorer of French Liberty;” who shall all take what comfort from it they can. Thus does larger Montélimart vindicate its Patriot importance, and maintain its rank in the municipal scale.[\[288\]](#)

And so, with the New-year, the signal is hoisted; for is not a National Assembly, and solemn deliverance there, at lowest a National Telegraph? Not only grain shall circulate, while there is grain, on highways or the Rhone-waters, over all that South-Eastern region,—where also if Monseigneur d’Artois saw good to break in from Turin, hot welcome might wait him; but whatsoever Province of France is straitened for grain, or vexed with a mutinous Parlement, unconstitutional plotters, Monarchic Clubs, or any other Patriot ailment,—can go and do likewise, or even do better. And now, especially, when the February swearing has set them all agog! From Brittany to Burgundy, on most plains of France, under most City-walls, it is a blaring of trumpets, waving of banners, a constitutional manœuvring: under the vernal skies, while Nature too is putting forth her green Hopes, under bright sunshine defaced by the stormful East; like Patriotism victorious, though with difficulty, over Aristocracy and defect of grain! There march and constitutionally wheel, to the *ça-ira*-ing mood of fife and drum, under their tricolor Municipals, our clear-gleaming Phalanxes; or halt, with uplifted right-hand, and artillery-salvoes that imitate Jove’s thunder; and all the Country, and metaphorically all “the Universe,” is looking on. Wholly, in their best apparel, brave men, and beautifully dizen’d women, most of whom have lovers there; swearing, by the eternal Heavens and this green-growing all-nutritive Earth, that France is free!

Sweetest days, when (astonishing to say) mortals have actually met together in communion and fellowship; and man, were it only once through long despicable centuries, is for moments verily the brother of man!—And then the Deputations to the National Assembly, with highflown descriptive harangue; to M. de Lafayette, and the Restorer; very frequently moreover to the Mother of Patriotism sitting on her stout benches in that Hall of the Jacobins! The general ear is filled with Federation. New names of Patriots emerge, which shall one day become familiar: Boyer-Fonfrede eloquent denunciator of a rebellious Bourdeaux Parlement; Max Isnard eloquent reporter of the Federation of Draguignan; eloquent pair, separated by the whole breadth of France, who are nevertheless to meet. Ever wider burns the flame of

Federation; ever wider and also brighter. Thus the Brittany and Anjou brethren mention a Fraternity of *all* true Frenchmen; and go the length of invoking “perdition and death” on any renegade: moreover, if in their National-Assembly harangue, they glance plaintively at the *marc d’argent* which makes so many citizens *passive*, they, over in the Mother-Society, ask, being henceforth themselves “neither Bretons nor Angevins but French,” Why all France has not one Federation, and universal Oath of Brotherhood, once for all?[\[289\]](#) A most pertinent suggestion; dating from the end of March. Which pertinent suggestion the whole Patriot world cannot but catch, and reverberate and agitate till it become *loud*;—which, in that case, the Townhall Municipals had better take up, and meditate.

Some universal Federation seems inevitable: the Where is given; clearly Paris: only the When, the How? These also productive Time will give; is already giving. For always as the Federative work goes on, it perfects itself, and Patriot genius adds contribution after contribution. Thus, at Lyons, in the end of the May month, we behold as many as fifty, or some say sixty thousand, met to federate; and a multitude looking on, which it would be difficult to number. From dawn to dusk! For our Lyons Guardsmen took rank, at five in the bright dewy morning; came pouring in, bright-gleaming, to the Quai de Rhone, to march thence to the Federation-field; amid wavings of hats and lady-handkerchiefs; glad shoutings of some two hundred thousand Patriot voices and hearts; the beautiful and brave! Among whom, courting no notice, and yet the notablest of all, what queenlike Figure is this; with her escort of house-friends and Champagneux the Patriot Editor; come abroad with the earliest? Radiant with enthusiasm are those dark eyes, is that strong Minerva-face, looking dignity and earnest joy; joyfulest she where all are joyful. It is Roland de la Platrière’s Wife![\[290\]](#) Strict elderly Roland, King’s Inspector of Manufactures here; and now likewise, by popular choice, the strictest of our new Lyons Municipals: a man who has gained much, if worth and faculty be gain; but above all things, has gained to wife Phlipon the Paris Engraver’s daughter. Reader, mark that queenlike burgher-woman: beautiful, Amazonian-graceful to the eye; more so to the mind. Unconscious of her worth (as all worth is), of her greatness, of her crystal clearness; genuine, the creature of Sincerity and Nature, in an age of Artificiality, Pollution and Cant; there, in her still completeness, in her still invincibility, *she*, if thou knew it, is the noblest of all living Frenchwomen,—and will be seen, one day. O blessed rather while unseen, even of herself! For the present she gazes, nothing doubting, into this grand theatricality; and thinks her young dreams are to be fulfilled.

From dawn to dusk, as we said, it lasts; and truly a sight like few. Flourishes of drums and trumpets are something: but think of an “artificial Rock fifty feet high,” all cut into

crag-steps, not without the similitude of “shrubs!” The interior cavity, for in sooth it is made of deal,—stands solemn, a “Temple of Concord:” on the outer summit rises “a Statue of Liberty,” colossal, seen for miles, with her Pike and Phrygian Cap, and civic column; at her feet a Country’s Altar, “*Autel de la Patrie*:”—on all which neither deal-timber nor lath and plaster, with paint of various colours, have been spared. But fancy then the banners all placed on the steps of the Rock; high-mass chaunted; and the civic oath of fifty thousand: with what volcanic outburst of sound from iron and other throats, enough to frighten back the very Saone and Rhone; and how the brightest fireworks, and balls, and even repasts closed in that night of the gods![\[291\]](#) And so the Lyons Federation vanishes too, swallowed of darkness;—and yet not wholly, for our brave fair Roland was there; also she, though in the deepest privacy, writes her Narrative of it in Champagneux’s *Courier de Lyons*; a piece which “circulates to the extent of sixty thousand;” which one would like now to read.

But on the whole, Paris, we may see, will have little to devise; will only have to borrow and apply. And then as to the day, what day of all the calendar is fit, if the Bastille Anniversary be not? The particular spot too, it is easy to see, must be the Champ-de-Mars; where many a Julian the Apostate has been lifted on bucklers, to France’s or the world’s sovereignty; and iron Franks, loud-clanging, have responded to the voice of a Charlemagne; and from of old mere sublimities have been familiar.

#### Chapter 2.1.IX. Symbolic.

How natural, in all decisive circumstances, is Symbolic Representation to all kinds of men! Nay, what is man’s whole terrestrial Life but a Symbolic Representation, and making visible, of the Celestial invisible Force that is in him? By act and word he strives to do it; with sincerity, if possible; failing that, with theatricality, which latter also may have its meaning. An Almack’s Masquerade is not nothing; in more genial ages, your Christmas Guisings, Feasts of the Ass, Abbots of Unreason, were a considerable something: since sport they were; as Almacks may still be sincere wish for sport. But what, on the other hand, must not sincere earnest have been: say, a Hebrew Feast of Tabernacles have been! A whole Nation gathered, in the name of the Highest, under the eye of the Highest; imagination herself flagging under the reality; and all noblest Ceremony as yet not grown ceremonial, but solemn, significant to the outmost fringe! Neither, in modern private life, are theatrical scenes, of tearful women wetting whole ells of cambric in concert, of impassioned bushy-whiskered youth threatening suicide, and such like, to be so entirely detested: drop thou a tear over them thyself rather.

At any rate, one can remark that no Nation will throw-by its work, and deliberately go out to make a scene, without meaning something thereby. For indeed no scenic individual, with knavish hypocritical views, will take the trouble to *soliloquise* a scene: and now consider, is not a scenic Nation placed precisely in that predicament of soliloquising; for its own behoof alone; to solace its own sensibilities, maudlin or other?—Yet in this respect, of readiness for scenes, the difference of Nations, as of men, is very great. If our Saxon-Puritanic friends, for example, swore and signed their National Covenant, without discharge of gunpowder, or the beating of any drum, in a dingy Covenant-Close of the Edinburgh High-street, in a mean room, where men now drink mean liquor, it was consistent with their ways so to swear it. Our Gallic-Encyclopedic friends, again, must have a Champ-de-Mars, seen of all the world, or universe; and such a Scenic Exhibition, to which the Coliseum Amphitheatre was but a stroller's barn, as this old Globe of ours had never or hardly ever beheld. Which method also we reckon natural, then and there. Nor perhaps was the respective *keeping* of these two Oaths far out of due proportion to such respective display in taking them: inverse proportion, namely. For the theatricality of a People goes in a compound-ratio: ratio indeed of their trustfulness, sociability, fervency; but then also of their excitability, of their porosity, not *continent*; or say, of their explosiveness, hot-flashing, but which does not last.

How true also, once more, is it that no man or Nation of men, *conscious* of doing a great thing, was ever, in that thing, doing other than a small one! O Champ-de-Mars Federation, with three hundred drummers, twelve hundred wind-musicians, and artillery planted on height after height to boom the tidings of it all over France, in few minutes! Could no Atheist-Naigeon contrive to discern, eighteen centuries off, those Thirteen most poor mean-dressed men, at frugal Supper, in a mean Jewish dwelling, with no symbol but hearts god-initiated into the “Divine depth of Sorrow,” and a *Do this in remembrance of me*;—and so cease that small difficult crowing of his, if he were not doomed to it?

Chapter 2.1.X.  
Mankind.

Pardonable are human theatricalities; nay perhaps touching, like the passionate utterance of a tongue which with sincerity *stammers*; of a head which with insincerity *babbles*,—having gone distracted. Yet, in comparison with unpremeditated outbursts of Nature, such as an Insurrection of Women, how foisonless, unedifying, undelightful; like small ale palled, like an effervescence that has effervesced! Such scenes, coming of forethought, were they world-great, and never so cunningly devised, are at bottom mainly pasteboard and paint. But the others are original;

emitted from the great everliving heart of Nature herself: what figure *they* will assume is unspeakably significant. To us, therefore, let the French National Solemn League, and Federation, be the highest recorded triumph of the Thespian Art; triumphant surely, since the whole Pit, which was of Twenty-five Millions, not only claps hands, but does itself spring on the boards and passionately set to playing there. And being such, be it treated as such: with sincere cursory admiration; with wonder from afar. A whole Nation gone mumming deserves so much; but deserves not that loving minuteness a Menadic Insurrection did. Much more let prior, and as it were, rehearsal scenes of Federation come and go, henceforward, as they list; and, on Plains and under City-walls, innumerable regimental bands blare off into the Inane, without note from us.

One scene, however, the hastiest reader will momentarily pause on: that of Anacharsis Clootz and the Collective sinful Posterity of Adam.—For a Patriot Municipality has now, on the 4th of June, got its plan concocted, and got it sanctioned by National Assembly; a Patriot King assenting; to whom, were he even free to dissent, Federative harangues, overflowing with loyalty, have doubtless a transient sweetness. There shall come Deputed National Guards, so many in the hundred, from each of the Eighty-three Departments of France. Likewise from all Naval and Military King's Forces, shall Deputed quotas come; such Federation of National with Royal Soldier has, taking place spontaneously, been already seen and sanctioned. For the rest, it is hoped, as many as forty thousand may arrive: expenses to be borne by the Deputing District; of all which let District and Department take thought, and elect fit men,—whom the Paris brethren will fly to meet and welcome.

Now, therefore, judge if our Patriot Artists are busy; taking deep counsel how to make the Scene worthy of a look from the Universe! As many as fifteen thousand men, spade-men, barrow-men, stone-builders, rammers, with their engineers, are at work on the Champ-de-Mars; hollowing it out into a natural Amphitheatre, fit for such solemnity. For one may hope it will be annual and perennial; a “Feast of Pikes, *Fête des Piques*,” notablest among the high-tides of the year: in any case ought not a Scenic free Nation to have some permanent National Amphitheatre? The Champ-de-Mars is getting hollowed out; and the daily talk and the nightly dream in most Parisian heads is of Federation, and that only. Federate Deputies are already under way. National Assembly, what with its natural work, what with hearing and answering harangues of Federates, of this Federation, will have enough to do! Harangue of “American Committee,” among whom is that faint figure of Paul Jones “as with the stars dim-twinkling through it,”—come to congratulate us on the prospect of such auspicious day. Harangue of Bastille Conquerors, come to “renounce” any special

recompense, any peculiar place at the solemnity;—since the Centre Grenadiers rather grumble. Harangue of “Tennis-Court Club,” who enter with far-gleaming Brass-plate, aloft on a pole, and the Tennis-Court Oath engraved thereon; which fargleaming Brass-plate they purpose to affix solemnly in the Versailles original locality, on the 20th of this month, which is the anniversary, as a deathless memorial, for some years: they will then dine, as they come back, in the Bois de Boulogne; [\[292\]](#)—cannot, however, do it without apprising the world. To such things does the august National Assembly ever and anon cheerfully listen, suspending its regenerative labours; and with some touch of impromptu eloquence, make friendly reply;—as indeed the wont has long been; for it is a gesticulating, sympathetic People, and has a heart, and wears it on its sleeve.

In which circumstances, it occurred to the mind of Anacharsis Clootz that while so much was embodying itself into Club or Committee, and perorating applauded, there yet remained a greater and greatest; of which, if *it* also took body and perorated, what might not the effect be: Humankind namely, *le Genre Humain* itself! In what rapt creative moment the Thought rose in Anacharsis’s soul; all his throes, while he went about giving shape and birth to it; how he was sneered at by cold worldlings; but did sneer again, being a man of polished sarcasm; and moved to and fro persuasive in coffeehouse and soirée, and dived down assiduous-obscure in the great deep of Paris, making his Thought a Fact: of all this the spiritual biographies of that period say nothing. Enough that on the 19th evening of June 1790, the Sun’s slant rays lighted a spectacle such as our foolish little Planet has not often had to show: Anacharsis Clootz entering the august Salle de Manège, with the Human Species at his heels. Swedes, Spaniards, Polacks; Turks, Chaldeans, Greeks, dwellers in Mesopotamia: behold them all; they have come to claim place in the grand Federation, having an undoubted interest in it.

‘Our ambassador titles,’ said the fervid Clootz, ‘are not written on parchment, but on the living hearts of all men.’ These whiskered Polacks, long-flowing turbaned Ishmaelites, astrological Chaldeans, who stand so mute here, let them plead with you, august Senators, more eloquently than eloquence could. They are the mute representatives of their tongue-tied, befettered, heavy-laden Nations; who from out of that dark bewilderment gaze wistful, amazed, with half-incredulous hope, towards you, and this your bright light of a French Federation: bright particular day-star, the herald of universal day. We claim to stand there, as mute monuments, pathetically adumbrative of much.—From bench and gallery comes “repeated applause;” for what august Senator but is flattered even by the very shadow of Human Species depending on him? From President Sieyes, who presides this remarkable fortnight, in spite of his

small voice, there comes eloquent though shrill reply. Anacharsis and the “Foreigners Committee” shall have place at the Federation; on condition of telling their respective Peoples what they see there. In the mean time, we invite them to the “honours of the sitting, *honneur de la séance*.” A long-flowing Turk, for rejoinder, bows with Eastern solemnity, and utters articulate sounds: but owing to his imperfect knowledge of the French dialect, [\[293\]](#) his words are like spilt water; the thought he had in him remains conjectural to this day.

Anacharsis and Mankind accept the honours of the sitting; and have forthwith, as the old Newspapers still testify, the satisfaction to see several things. First and chief, on the motion of Lameth, Lafayette, Saint-Fargeau and other Patriot Nobles, let the others repugn as they will: all Titles of Nobility, from Duke to Esquire, or lower, are henceforth *abolished*. Then, in like manner, Livery Servants, or rather the Livery of Servants. Neither, for the future, shall any man or woman, self-styled noble, be “incensed,”—foolishly fumigated with incense, in Church; as the wont has been. In a word, Feudalism being dead these ten months, why should her empty trappings and scutcheons survive? The very Coats-of-arms will require to be obliterated;—and yet Cassandra Marat on this and the other coach-panel notices that they “are but painted-over,” and threaten to peer through again.

So that henceforth de Lafayette is but the Sieur Motier, and Saint-Fargeau is plain Michel Lepelletier; and Mirabeau soon after has to say huffingly, ‘With your *Riquetti* you have set Europe at cross-purposes for three days.’ For his Counthood is not indifferent to this man; which indeed the admiring People treat him with to the last. But let extreme Patriotism rejoice, and chiefly Anacharsis and Mankind; for now it seems to be taken for granted that one Adam is Father of us all!—

Such was, in historical accuracy, the famed feat of Anacharsis. Thus did the most extensive of Public Bodies find a sort of spokesman. Whereby at least we may judge of one thing: what a humour the once sniffing mocking City of Paris and Baron Cloatz had got into; when such exhibition could appear a propriety, next door to a sublimity. It is true, Envy did in after times, pervert this success of Anacharsis; making him, from incidental “Speaker of the Foreign-Nations Committee,” claim to be official permanent “Speaker, *Orateur*, of the Human Species,” which he only deserved to be; and alleging, calumniously, that his astrological Chaldeans, and the rest, were a mere French tag-rag-and-bobtail disguised for the nonce; and, in short, sneering and fleeing at him in *her* cold barren way; all which, however, he, the man he was, could receive on thick enough panoply, or even rebound therefrom, and also go *his* way.

Most extensive of Public Bodies, we may call it; and also the most unexpected: for who could have thought to see All Nations in the Tuileries Riding-Hall? But so it is; and truly as strange things may happen when a whole People goes mumming and miming. Hast not thou thyself perchance seen diademed Cleopatra, daughter of the Ptolemies, pleading, almost with bended knee, in unheroic tea-parlour, or dimlit retail-shop, to inflexible gross Burghal Dignitary, for leave to reign and die; being dressed for it, and moneyless, with small children;—while suddenly Constables have shut the Thespian barn, and her Antony pleaded in vain? Such visual spectra flit across this Earth, if the Thespian Stage be rudely interfered with: but much more, when, as was said, Pit jumps on Stage, then is it verily, as in Herr Tieck's Drama, a *Verkehrte Welt*, of World Topsy-turvier!

Having seen the Human Species itself, to have seen the “*Dean of the Human Species*,” ceased now to be a miracle. Such “*Doyen du Genre Humain*, Eldest of Men,” had shewn himself there, in these weeks: Jean Claude Jacob, a born Serf, deputed from his native Jura Mountains to thank the National Assembly for enfranchising them. On his bleached worn face are ploughed the furrowings of one hundred and twenty years. He has heard dim *patois*-talk, of immortal Grand-Monarch victories; of a burnt Palatinate, as *he* toiled and moiled to make a little speck of this Earth greener; of Cevennes Dragoonings; of Marlborough going to the war. Four generations have bloomed out, and loved and hated, and rustled off: he was forty-six when Louis Fourteenth died. The Assembly, as one man, spontaneously rose, and did reverence to the Eldest of the World; old Jean is to take *séance* among them, honourably, with covered head. He gazes feebly there, with his old eyes, on that new wonder-scene; dreamlike to him, and uncertain, wavering amid fragments of old memories and dreams. For Time is all growing unsubstantial, dreamlike; Jean's eyes and mind are weary, and about to close,—and open on a far other wonder-scene, which shall be real. Patriot Subscription, Royal Pension was got for him, and he returned home glad; but in two months more he left it all, and went on his unknown way. [\[294\]](#)

Chapter 2.1.XI.

As in the Age of Gold.

Meanwhile to Paris, ever going and returning, day after day, and all day long, towards that Field of Mars, it becomes painfully apparent that the spadework there cannot be got done in time. There is such an area of it; three hundred thousand square feet: for from the Ecole militaire (which will need to be done up in wood with balconies and galleries) westward to the Gate by the river (where also shall be wood, in triumphal arches), we count same thousand yards of length; and for breadth, from this umbrageous Avenue of eight rows, on the South side, to that corresponding one on

the North, some thousand feet, more or less. All this to be scooped out, and wheeled up in slope along the sides; high enough; for it must be rammed down there, and shaped stair-wise into as many as “thirty ranges of convenient seats,” firm-trimmed with turf, covered with enduring timber;—and then our huge pyramidal Fatherland’s-Altar, *Autel de la Patrie*, in the centre, also to be raised and stair-stepped! Force-work with a vengeance; it is a World’s Amphitheatre! There are but fifteen days good; and at this languid rate, it might take half as many weeks. What is singular too, the spademen seem to work lazily; they will not work double-tides, even for offer of more wages, though their tide is but seven hours; they declare angrily that the human tabernacle requires occasional rest!

Is it Aristocrats secretly bribing? Aristocrats were capable of that. Only six months since, did not evidence get afloat that subterranean Paris, for we stand over quarries and catacombs, dangerously, as it were midway between Heaven and the Abyss, and are hollow underground,—was charged with gunpowder, which should make us “leap?” Till a Cordelier’s Deputation actually went to examine, and found it—carried off again![\[295\]](#) An accursed, incurable brood; all asking for “passports,” in these sacred days. Trouble, of rioting, château-burning, is in the Limousin and elsewhere; for they are busy! Between the best of Peoples and the best of Restorer-Kings, they would sow grudges; with what a fiend’s-grin would they see this Federation, looked for by the Universe, fail!

Fail for want of spadework, however, it shall not. He that has four limbs, and a French heart, can do spadework; and will! On the first July Monday, scarcely has the signal-cannon boomed; scarcely have the languescient mercenary Fifteen Thousand laid down their tools, and the eyes of onlookers turned sorrowfully of the still high Sun; when this and the other Patriot, fire in his eye, snatches barrow and mattock, and himself begins indignantly wheeling. Whom scores and then hundreds follow; and soon a volunteer Fifteen Thousand are shovelling and trundling; with the heart of giants; and all in right order, with that extemporaneous adroitness of theirs: whereby *such* a lift has been given, worth three mercenary ones;—which may end when the late twilight thickens, in triumph shouts, heard or heard of beyond Montmartre!

A sympathetic population will *wait*, next day, with eagerness, till the tools are free. Or why wait? Spades elsewhere exist! And so now bursts forth that effulgence of Parisian enthusiasm, good-heartedness and brotherly love; such, if Chroniclers are trustworthy, as was not witnessed since the Age of Gold. Paris, male and female, precipitates itself towards its South-west extremity, spade on shoulder. Streams of men, without order; or in order, as ranked fellow-craftsmen, as natural or accidental

reunions, march towards the Field of Mars. Three-deep these march; to the sound of stringed music; preceded by young girls with green boughs, and tricolor streamers: they have shouldered, soldier-wise, their shovels and picks; and with one throat are singing *ça-ira*. Yes, *pardieu ça-ira*, cry the passengers on the streets. All corporate Guilds, and public and private Bodies of Citizens, from the highest to the lowest, march; the very Hawkers, one finds, have ceased bawling for one day. The neighbouring Villages turn out: their able men come marching, to village fiddle or tambourine and triangle, under their Mayor, or Mayor and Curate, who also walk bespaded, and in tricolor sash. As many as one hundred and fifty thousand workers: nay at certain seasons, as some count, two hundred and fifty thousand; for, in the afternoon especially, what mortal but, finishing his hasty day's work, would run! A stirring city: from the time you reach the Place Louis Quinze, southward over the River, by all Avenues, it is one living throng. So many workers; and no mercenary mock-workers, but real ones that lie freely to it: each Patriot *stretches* himself against the stubborn glebe; hews and wheels with the whole weight that is in him.

Amiable infants, *aimables enfans*! They do the "*police des l'atelier*" too, the guidance and governance, themselves; with that ready will of theirs, with that extemporaneous adroitness. It is a true brethren's work; all distinctions confounded, abolished; as it was in the beginning, when Adam himself delved. Longfrooked tonsured Monks, with short-skirted Water-carriers, with swallow-tailed well-frizzled *Incroyables* of a Patriot turn; dark Charcoalmen, meal-white Peruke-makers; or Peruke-wearers, for Advocate and Judge are there, and all Heads of Districts: sober Nuns sisterlike with flaunting Nymphs of the Opera, and females in common circumstances named unfortunate: the patriot Rag-picker, and perfumed dweller in palaces; for Patriotism like New-birth, and also like Death, levels all. The Printers have come marching, Prudhomme's all in Paper-caps with *Révolutions de Paris* printed on them; as Camille notes; wishing that in these great days there should be a *Pacte des Ecrivains* too, or Federation of Able Editors.[\[296\]](#) Beautiful to see! The snowy linen and delicate pantaloons alternates with the soiled check-shirt and bushel-breeches; for both have cast their coats, and under both are four limbs and a set of Patriot muscles. There do they pick and shovel; or bend forward, yoked in long strings to box-barrow or overloaded tumbril; joyous, with one mind. Abbé Sieyès is seen pulling, wiry, vehement, if too light for draught; by the side of Beauharnais, who shall get Kings though he be none. Abbé Maury did not pull; but the Charcoalmen brought a mummer guised like him, so he had to pull in effigy. Let no august Senator disdain the work: Mayor Bailly, Generalissimo Lafayette are there;—and, alas, shall be there again another day! The King himself comes to see: sky-rending *Vive-le-Roi*; "and suddenly with shouldered spades they form a guard of

honour round him.” Whosoever can come comes, to work, or to look, and bless the work.

Whole families have come. One whole family we see clearly, of three generations: the father picking, the mother shovelling, the young ones wheeling assiduous; old grandfather, hoary with ninety-three years, holds in his arms the youngest of all:[\[297\]](#) frisky, not helpful this one; who nevertheless may tell it to *his* grandchildren; and how the Future and the Past alike looked on, and with failing or with half-formed voice, faltered their *ça-ira*. A vintner has wheeled in, on Patriot truck, beverage of wine: ‘Drink not, my brothers, if ye are not dry; that your cask may last the longer;’ neither did any drink, but men “evidently exhausted.” A dapper Abbé looks on, sneering. ‘To the barrow!’ cry several; whom he, lest a worse thing befall him, obeys: nevertheless one wiser Patriot barrowman, arriving now, interposes his ‘*arrêtez*,’ setting down his own barrow, he snatches the Abbé’s; trundles it fast, like an infected thing; forth of the Champ-de-Mars circuit, and discharges it *there*. Thus too a certain person (of some quality, or private capital, to appearance), entering hastily, flings down his coat, waistcoat and two watches, and is rushing to the thick of the work: ‘But your watches?’ cries the general voice.—‘Does one distrust his brothers?’ answers he; nor were the watches stolen. How beautiful is noble-sentiment: like gossamer gauze, beautiful and cheap; which will stand no tear and wear! Beautiful cheap gossamer gauze, thou film-shadow of a raw-material of Virtue, which art not woven, nor likely to be, into Duty; thou art better than nothing, and also worse!

Young Boarding-school Boys, College Students, shout *Vive la Nation*, and regret that they have yet “only their sweat to give.” What say we of Boys? Beautifullest Hebes; the loveliest of Paris, in their light air-robcs, with riband-girdle of tricolor, are there; shovelling and wheeling with the rest; their Hebe eyes brighter with enthusiasm, and long hair in beautiful dishevelment: hard-pressed are their small fingers; but they make the patriot barrow go, and even force it to the summit of the slope (with a little tracing, which what man’s arm were not too happy to lend?)—then bound down with it again, and go for more; with their long locks and tricolors blown back: graceful as the rosy Hours. O, as that evening Sun fell over the Champ-de-Mars, and tinted with fire the thick umbrageous boscage that shelters it on this hand and on that, and struck direct on those Domes and two-and-forty Windows of the Ecole Militaire, and made them all of burnished gold,—saw he on his wide zodiac road other such sight? A living garden spotted and dotted with such flowerage; all colours of the prism; the beautifullest blent friendly with the usefulest; all growing and working brotherlike there, under one warm feeling, were it but for days; once and no second time! But Night is sinking; these Nights too, into Eternity. The hastiest Traveller Versailles-ward

has drawn bridle on the heights of Chaillot: and looked for moments over the River; reporting at Versailles what he saw, not without tears. [\[298\]](#)

Meanwhile, from all points of the compass, Federates are arriving: fervid children of the South, “who glory in their Mirabeau;” considerate North-blooded Mountaineers of Jura; sharp Bretons, with their Gaelic suddenness; Normans not to be overreached in bargain: all now animated with one noblest fire of Patriotism. Whom the Paris brethren march forth to receive; with military solemnities, with fraternal embracing, and a hospitality worthy of the heroic ages. They assist at the Assembly’s Debates, these Federates: the Galleries are reserved for them. They assist in the toils of the Champ-de-Mars; each new troop will put its hand to the spade; lift a hod of earth on the Altar of the Fatherland. But the flourishes of rhetoric, for it is a gesticulating People; the moral-sublime of those Addresses to an august Assembly, to a Patriot Restorer! Our Breton Captain of Federates kneels even, in a fit of enthusiasm, and gives up his sword; he wet-eyed to a King wet-eyed. Poor Louis! These, as he said afterwards, were among the bright days of his life.

Reviews also there must be; royal Federate-reviews, with King, Queen and tricolor Court looking on: at lowest, if, as is too common, it rains, our Federate Volunteers will file through the inner gateways, Royalty standing dry. Nay there, should some stop occur, the beautifullest fingers in France may take you softly by the lapelle, and, in mild flute-voice, ask: ‘Monsieur, of what Province are you?’ Happy he who can reply, chivalrously lowering his sword’s point, ‘Madame, from the Province your ancestors reigned over.’ He that happy “Provincial Advocate,” now Provincial Federate, shall be rewarded by a sun-smile, and such melodious glad words addressed to a King: ‘Sire, these are your faithful Lorrainers.’ Cheerier verily, in these holidays, is this “skyblue faced with red” of a National Guardsman, than the dull black and gray of a Provincial Advocate, which in workdays one was used to. For the same thrice-blessed Lorrainer shall, this evening, stand sentry at a Queen’s door; and feel that he could die a thousand deaths for her: then again, at the outer gate, and even a third time, she shall see him; nay he will make her do it; presenting arms with emphasis, “making his musket jingle again”: and in her salute there shall again be a sun-smile, and that little blonde-locked too hasty Dauphin shall be admonished, ‘Salute then, Monsieur, don’t be unpolite;’ and therewith she, like a bright Sky-wanderer or Planet with her little Moon, issues forth peculiar. [\[299\]](#)

But at night, when Patriot spadework is over, figure the sacred rights of hospitality! Lepelletier Saint-Fargeau, a mere private senator, but with great possessions, has daily his “hundred dinner-guests;” the table of Generalissimo Lafayette may double that number. In lowly parlour, as in lofty saloon, the wine-cup passes round; crowned

by the smiles of Beauty; be it of lightly-tripping Grisette, or of high-sailing Dame, for both equally have beauty, and smiles precious to the brave.

Chapter 2.1.XII.

Sound and Smoke.

And so now, in spite of plotting Aristocrats, lazy hired spademen, and almost of Destiny itself (for there has been much rain), the Champ-de-Mars, on the 13th of the month is fairly ready; trimmed, rammed, buttressed with firm masonry; and Patriotism can stroll over it admiring; and as it were rehearsing, for in every head is some unutterable image of the morrow. Pray Heaven there be not clouds. Nay what far worse cloud is this, of a misguided Municipality that talks of admitting Patriotism, to the solemnity, by tickets! Was it by tickets we were admitted to the work; and to what brought the work? Did we take the Bastille by tickets? A misguided Municipality sees the error; at late midnight, rolling drums announce to Patriotism starting half out of its bed-clothes, that it is to be ticketless. Pull down thy night-cap therefore; and, with demi-articulate grumble, significant of several things, go pacified to sleep again. Tomorrow is Wednesday morning; unforgettable among the *fasti* of the world.

The morning comes, cold for a July one; but such a festivity would make Greenland smile. Through every inlet of that National Amphitheatre (for it is a league in circuit, cut with openings at due intervals), floods-in the living throng; covers without tumult space after space. The Ecole Militaire has galleries and overvaulting canopies, where Carpentry and Painting have vied, for the upper Authorities; triumphal arches, at the Gate by the River, bear inscriptions, if weak, yet well-meant, and orthodox. Far aloft, over the Altar of the Fatherland, on their tall crane standards of iron, swing pensile our antique *Cassolettes* or pans of incense; dispensing sweet incense-fumes,—unless for the Heathen Mythology, one sees not for whom. Two hundred thousand Patriotic Men; and, twice as good, one hundred thousand Patriotic Women, all decked and glorified as one can fancy, sit waiting in this Champ-de-Mars.

What a picture: that circle of bright-eyed Life, spread up there, on its thirty-seated Slope; leaning, one would say, on the thick umbrage of those Avenue-Trees, for the stems of them are hidden by the height; and all beyond it mere greenness of Summer Earth, with the gleams of waters, or white sparklings of stone-edifices: little circular enamel-picture in the centre of such a vase—of emerald! A vase not empty: the Invalides Cupolas want not their population, nor the distant Windmills of Montmartre; on remotest steeple and invisible village belfry, stand men with spy-glasses. On the heights of Chaillot are many-coloured undulating groups; round and far on, over all the circling heights that embosom Paris, it is as one more or less peopled

Amphitheatre; which the eye grows dim with measuring. Nay heights, as was before hinted, have cannon; and a floating-battery of cannon is on the Seine. When eye fails, ear shall serve; and all France properly is but one Amphitheatre: for in paved town and unpaved hamlet, men walk listening; till the muffled thunder sound audible on their horizon, that they too may begin swearing and firing![\[300\]](#) But now, to streams of music, come Federates enough,—for they have assembled on the Boulevard Saint-Antoine or thereby, and come marching through the City, with their Eighty-three Department Banners, and blessings not loud but deep; comes National Assembly, and takes seat under its Canopy; comes Royalty, and takes seat on a throne beside it. And Lafayette, on white charger, is here, and all the civic Functionaries; and the Federates form dances, till their strictly military evolutions and manœuvres can begin.

Evolutions and manœuvres? Task not the pen of mortal to describe them: truant imagination droops;—declares that it is not worth while. There is wheeling and sweeping, to slow, to quick, and double quick-time: Sieur Motier, or Generalissimo Lafayette, for they are one and the same, and he is General of France, in the King's stead, for four-and-twenty hours; Sieur Motier must step forth, with that sublime chivalrous gait of his; solemnly ascend the steps of the Fatherland's Altar, in sight of Heaven and of the scarcely breathing Earth; and, under the creak of those swinging *Cassolettes*, “pressing his sword's point firmly there,” pronounce the Oath, *To King, to Law, and Nation* (not to mention “grains” with their circulating), in his own name and that of armed France. Whereat there is waving of banners and acclaim sufficient. The National Assembly must swear, standing in its place; the King himself audibly. The King swears; and now *be* the welkin split with vivats; let citizens enfranchised embrace, each smiting heartily his palm into his fellow's; and armed Federates clang their arms; above all, that floating battery speak! It has spoken,—to the four corners of France. From eminence to eminence, bursts the thunder; faint-heard, loud-repeated. What a stone, cast into what a lake; in circles that do *not* grow fainter. From Arras to Avignon; from Metz to Bayonne! Over Orléans and Blois it rolls, in cannon-recitative; Puy bellows of it amid his granite mountains; Pau where is the shell-cradle of Great Henri. At far Marseilles, one can think, the ruddy evening witnesses it; over the deep-blue Mediterranean waters, the Castle of If ruddy-tinted darts forth, from every cannon's mouth, its tongue of fire; and all the people shout: Yes, France is free. O glorious France that has burst out so; into universal sound and smoke; and attained—the Phrygian *Cap* of Liberty! In all Towns, Trees of Liberty also may be planted; with or without advantage. Said we not, it is the highest stretch attained by the Thespian Art on this Planet, or perhaps attainable?

The Thespian Art, unfortunately, one must still call it; for behold there, on this Field of Mars, the National Banners, before there could be any swearing, were to be all blessed. A most proper operation; since surely without Heaven's blessing bestowed, say even, audibly or inaudibly *sought*, no Earthly banner or contrivance can prove victorious: but now the means of doing it? By what thrice-divine Franklin thunder-rod shall miraculous fire be drawn out of Heaven; and descend gently, life-giving, with health to the souls of men? Alas, by the simplest: by Two Hundred shaven-crowned Individuals, "in snow-white albs, with tricolor girdles," arranged on the steps of Fatherland's Altar; and, at their head for spokesman, Soul's Overseer Talleyrand-Perigord! These shall act as miraculous thunder-rod,—to such length as they can. O ye deep azure Heavens, and thou green all-nursing Earth; ye Streams ever-flowing; deciduous Forests that die and are born again, continually, like the sons of men; stone Mountains that die daily with every rain-shower, yet are not dead and levelled for ages of ages, nor born again (it seems) but with new world-explosions, and such tumultuous seething and tumbling, steam half way to the Moon; O thou unfathomable mystic All, garment and dwellingplace of the UNNAMED; O spirit, lastly, of Man, who moulded and modelled that Unfathomable Unnameable even as we see,—is not *there* a miracle: That some French mortal should, we say not have believed, but pretended to imagine that he believed that Talleyrand and Two Hundred pieces of white Calico could do it!

Here, however, we are to remark with the sorrowing Historians of that day, that suddenly, while Episcopus Talleyrand, long-stoled, with mitre and tricolor belt, was yet but hitching up the Altar-steps, to do his miracle, the material Heaven grew black; a north-wind, moaning cold moisture, began to sing; and there descended a very deluge of rain. Sad to see! The thirty-staired Seats, all round our Amphitheatre, get instantaneously slated with mere umbrellas, fallacious when so thick set: our antique *Cassolettes* become Water-pots; their incense-smoke gone hissing, in a whiff of muddy vapour. Alas, instead of vivats, there is nothing now but the furious peppering and rattling. From three to four hundred thousand human individuals feel that they have a skin; happily *impervious*. The General's sash runs water: how all military banners droop; and will not wave, but lazily flap, as if metamorphosed into painted tin-banners! Worse, far worse, these hundred thousand, such is the Historian's testimony, of the fairest of France! Their snowy muslins all splashed and draggled; the ostrich feather shrunk shamefully to the backbone of a feather: all caps are ruined; innermost pasteboard molten into its original pap: Beauty no longer swims decorated in her garniture, like Love-goddess hidden-revealed in her Paphian clouds, but struggles in disastrous imprisonment in it, for "the shape was noticeable;" and

now only sympathetic interjections, titterings, teeheeings, and resolute good-humour will avail. A deluge; an incessant sheet or fluid-column of rain;—such that our Overseer’s very mitre must be filled; not a mitre, but a filled and leaky fire-bucket on his reverend head!—Regardless of which, Overseer Talleyrand performs his miracle: the Blessing of Talleyrand, another than that of Jacob, is on all the Eighty-three departmental flags of France; which wave or flap, with such thankfulness as needs. Towards three o’clock, the sun beams out again: the remaining evolutions can be transacted under bright heavens, though with decorations much damaged. [\[301\]](#)

On Wednesday our Federation is consummated: but the festivities last out the week, and over into the next. Festivities such as no Bagdad Caliph, or Aladdin with the Lamp, could have equalled. There is a Jousting on the River; with its water-somersets, splashing and haha-ing: Abbé Fauchet, *Te-Deum* Fauchet, preaches, for his part, in “the rotunda of the Corn-market,” a Harangue on Franklin; for whom the National Assembly has lately gone three days in black. The Motier and Lepelletier tables still groan with viands; roofs ringing with patriotic toasts. On the fifth evening, which is the Christian Sabbath, there is a universal Ball. Paris, out of doors and in, man, woman and child, is jigging it, to the sound of harp and four-stringed fiddle. The hoariest-headed man will tread one other measure, under this nether Moon; speechless nurselings, *infants* as we call them, νήπια τέκνα, crow in arms; and sprawl out numb-plump little limbs,—impatient for muscularity, they know not why. The stiffest balk bends more or less; all joists creak.

Or out, on the Earth’s breast itself, behold the Ruins of the Bastille. All lamplit, allegorically decorated: a Tree of Liberty sixty feet high; and Phrygian Cap on it, of size enormous, under which King Arthur and his round-table might have dined! In the depths of the background, is a single lugubrious lamp, rendering dim-visible one of your iron cages, half-buried, and some Prison stones,—Tyranny vanishing downwards, all gone but the skirt: the rest wholly lamp-festoons, trees real or of pasteboard; in the similitude of a fairy grove; with this inscription, readable to runner: “ *Ici l’on danse, Dancing Here.*” As indeed had been obscurely foreshadowed by Cagliostro [\[302\]](#) prophetic Quack of Quacks, when he, four years ago, quitted the grim durance;—to fall into a grimmer, of the Roman Inquisition, and not quit it.

But, after all, what is this Bastille business to that of the *Champs Elysées*! Thither, to these Fields well named Elysian, all feet tend. It is radiant as day with festooned lamps; little oil-cups, like variegated fire-flies, daintily illumine the highest leaves: trees there are all sheeted with variegated fire, shedding far a glimmer into the dubious wood. There, under the free sky, do tight-limbed Federates, with fairest newfound sweethearts, elastic as Diana, and not of that coyness and tart humour of

Diana, thread their jocund mazes, all through the ambrosial night; and hearts were touched and fired; and seldom surely had our old Planet, in that huge conic Shadow of hers “which goes beyond the Moon, and is named *Night*,” curtained such a Ball-room. O if, according to Seneca, the very gods look down on a good man struggling with adversity, and smile; what must they think of Five-and-twenty million indifferent ones victorious over it,—for eight days and more?

In this way, and in such ways, however, has the Feast of Pikes danced itself off; gallant Federates wending homewards, towards every point of the compass, with feverish nerves, heart and head much heated; some of them, indeed, as Dampmartin’s elderly respectable friend, from Strasbourg, quite “burnt out with liquors,” and flickering towards extinction.<sup>[303]</sup> The Feast of Pikes has danced itself off, and become defunct, and the ghost of a Feast;—nothing of it now remaining but this vision in men’s memory; and the place that knew it (for the slope of that Champ-de-Mars is crumbled to half the original height<sup>[304]</sup>) now knowing it no more. Undoubtedly one of the memorabest National Hightides. Never or hardly ever, as we said, was Oath sworn with such heart-effusion, emphasis and expenditure of joyance; and then it was broken irremediably within year and day. Ah, why? When the swearing of it was so heavenly-joyful, bosom clasped to bosom, and Five-and-twenty million hearts all burning together: O ye inexorable Destinies, why?—Partly *because* it was sworn with such over-joyance; but chiefly, indeed, for an older reason: that Sin had come into the world and Misery by Sin! These Five-and-twenty millions, if we will consider it, have now henceforth, with that Phrygian Cap of theirs, no force over them, to bind and guide; neither in them, more than heretofore, is guiding force, or rule of just living: how then, while they all go rushing at such a *pace*, on unknown ways, with no bridle, towards no aim, can hurlyburly unutterable fail? For verily not Federation-rosepink is the colour of this Earth and her work: not by outbursts of noble-sentiment, but with far other ammunition, shall a man front the world.

But how wise, in all cases, to “husband your fire;” to keep it deep down, rather, as genial radical-heat! Explosions, the forciblest, and never so well directed, are questionable; far oftenest futile, always frightfully wasteful: but think of a man, of a Nation of men, spending its whole stock of fire in one artificial Firework! So have we seen fond weddings (for individuals, like Nations, have their Hightides) celebrated with an outburst of triumph and deray, at which the elderly shook their heads. Better had a serious cheerfulness been; for the enterprise was great. Fond pair! the more triumphant ye feel, and victorious over terrestrial evil, which seems all abolished, the wider-eyed will your disappointment be to find terrestrial evil still extant. ‘And why extant?’ will each of you cry: ‘Because my false mate has played the traitor: evil was

abolished; I meant faithfully, and did, or would have done.' Whereby the oversweet moon of honey changes itself into long years of vinegar; perhaps divulsive vinegar, like Hannibal's.

Shall we say then, the French Nation has led Royalty, or wooed and teased poor Royalty to lead *her*, to the hymeneal Fatherland's Altar, in such oversweet manner; and has, most thoughtlessly, to celebrate the nuptials with due shine and demonstration,—burnt her bed?

BOOK 2.II.

NANCI

Chapter 2.2.I.

Bouillé.

Dimly visible, at Metz on the North-Eastern frontier, a certain brave Bouillé, last refuge of Royalty in all straits and meditations of flight, has for many months hovered occasionally in our eye; some name or shadow of a brave Bouillé: let us now, for a little, look fixedly at him, till he become a substance and person for us. The man himself is worth a glance; his position and procedure there, in these days, will throw light on many things.

For it is with Bouillé as with all French Commanding Officers; only in a more emphatic degree. The grand National Federation, we already guess, was but empty sound, or worse: a last loudest universal *Hep-hep-hurrah*, with full bumpers, in that National Lapithae-feast of Constitution-making; as in loud denial of the palpably existing; as if, with hurrahings, you would shut out notice of the inevitable already knocking at the gates! Which new National bumper, one may say, can but deepen the drunkenness; and so, the *louder* it swears Brotherhood, will the sooner and the more surely lead to Cannibalism. Ah, under that fraternal shine and clangour, what a deep world of irreconcilable discords lie momentarily assuaged, damped down for one moment! Respectable military Federates have barely got home to their quarters; and the inflammablest, "dying, burnt up with liquors, and kindness," has not yet got extinct; the shine is hardly out of men's eyes, and still blazes filling all men's memories,—when your discords burst forth again very considerably darker than ever. Let us look at Bouillé, and see how.

Bouillé for the present commands in the Garrison of Metz, and far and wide over the East and North; being indeed, by a late act of Government with sanction of National Assembly, appointed one of our Four supreme Generals. Rochambeau and Mailly, men and Marshals of note in these days, though to us of small moment, are two of his

colleagues; tough old babbling Lückner, also of small moment for us, will probably be the third. Marquis de Bouillé is a determined Loyalist; not indeed disinclined to moderate reform, but resolute against immoderate. A man long suspect to Patriotism; who has more than once given the august Assembly trouble; who would not, for example, take the National Oath, as he was bound to do, but always put it off on this or the other pretext, till an autograph of Majesty requested him to do it as a favour. There, in this post if not of honour, yet of eminence and danger, he waits, in a silent concentrated manner; very dubious of the future. "Alone," as he says, or almost alone, of all the old military Notabilities, he has not emigrated; but thinks always, in atrabiliar moments, that there will be nothing for him too but to cross the marches. He might cross, say, to Treves or Coblenz where Exiled Princes will be one day ranking; or say, over into Luxemburg where old Broglie loiters and languishes. Or is there not the great dim Deep of European Diplomacy; where your Calannes, your Bréteuils are beginning to hover, dimly discernible?

With immeasurable confused outlooks and purposes, with no clear purpose but this of still trying to do His Majesty a service, Bouillé waits; struggling what he can to keep his district loyal, his troops faithful, his garrisons furnished. He maintains, as yet, with his Cousin Lafayette, some thin diplomatic correspondence, by letter and messenger; chivalrous constitutional professions on the one side, military gravity and brevity on the other; which thin correspondence one can see growing ever the thinner and hollower, towards the verge of entire vacuity. [305] A quick, choleric, sharply discerning, stubbornly endeavouring man; with suppressed-explosive resolution, with valour, nay headlong audacity: a man who was more in his place, lionlike defending those Windward Isles, or, as with military tiger-spring, clutching Nevis and Montserrat from the English,—than here in this suppressed condition, muzzled and fettered by diplomatic packthreads; looking out for a civil war, which may never arrive. Few years ago Bouillé was to have led a French East-Indian Expedition, and reconquered or conquered Pondicherry and the Kingdoms of the Sun: but the whole world is suddenly changed, and he with it; Destiny willed it not in that way but in this.

## Chapter 2.2.II.

### Arrears and Aristocrats.

Indeed, as to the general outlook of things, Bouillé himself augurs not well of it. The French Army, ever since those old Bastille days, and earlier, has been universally in the questionablest state, and growing daily worse. Discipline, which is at all times a kind of miracle, and works by faith, broke down then; one sees not with that near prospect of recovering itself. The Gardes Françaises played a deadly game; but how they won it, and wear the prizes of it, all men know. In that general overturn, we saw

the Hired Fighters refuse to fight. The very Swiss of Château-Vieux, which indeed is a kind of French Swiss, from Geneva and the Pays de Vaud, are understood to have declined. Deserters glided over; Royal-Allemand itself looked disconsolate, though stanch of purpose. In a word, we there saw *Military Rule*, in the shape of poor Besenval with that convulsive unmanageable Camp of his, pass two martyr days on the Champ-de-Mars; and then, veiling itself, so to speak, “under the cloud of night,” depart “down the left bank of the Seine,” to seek refuge elsewhere; *this* ground having clearly become too hot for it.

But what new ground to seek, what remedy to try? Quarters that were “uninfected:” this doubtless, with judicious strictness of drilling, were the plan. Alas, in all quarters and places, from Paris onward to the remotest hamlet, is infection, is seditious contagion: inhaled, propagated by contact and converse, till the dullest soldier catch it! There is speech of men in uniform with men not in uniform; men in uniform read journals, and even write in them. [\[306\]](#) There are public petitions or remonstrances, private emissaries and associations; there is discontent, jealousy, uncertainty, sullen suspicious humour. The whole French Army, fermenting in dark heat, glooms ominous, boding good to no one.

So that, in the general social dissolution and revolt, we are to have this deepest and dimmest kind of it, a revolting soldiery? Barren, desolate to look upon is this same business of revolt under all its aspects; but how infinitely more so, when it takes the aspect of military mutiny! The very implement of rule and restraint, whereby all the rest was managed and held in order, has become precisely the frightfullest immeasurable implement of misrule; like the element of Fire, our indispensable all-ministering servant, when it gets the *mastery*, and becomes conflagration. Discipline we called a kind of miracle: in fact, is it not miraculous how one man moves hundreds of thousands; each unit of whom it may be loves him not, and singly fears him not, yet has to obey him, to go hither or go thither, to march and halt, to give death, and even to receive it, as if a Fate had spoken; and the word-of-command becomes, almost in the literal sense, a magic-word?

Which magic-word, again, if it be once *forgotten*; the spell of it once broken! The legions of assiduous ministering spirits rise on you now as menacing fiends; your free orderly arena becomes a tumult-place of the Nether Pit, and the hapless magician is rent limb from limb. Military mobs are mobs with muskets in their hands; and also with death hanging over their heads, for death is the penalty of disobedience and they have disobeyed. And now if all mobs are properly frenzies, and work frenetically with mad fits of hot and of cold, fierce rage alternating so incoherently with panic terror, consider what your military mob will be, with such a conflict of duties and penalties,

whirled between remorse and fury, and, for the hot fit, loaded fire-arms in its hand! To the soldier himself, revolt is frightful, and oftenest perhaps pitiable; and yet so dangerous, it can only be hated, cannot be pitied. An anomalous class of mortals these poor Hired Killers! With a frankness, which to the Moralists in these times seems surprising, they have sworn to become machines; and nevertheless they are still partly men. Let no prudent person in authority remind them of this latter fact; but always let force, let injustice above all, stop short clearly on *this* side of the rebounding-point! Soldiers, as we often say, do revolt: were it not so, several things which are transient in this world might be perennial.

Over and above the general quarrel which all sons of Adam maintain with their lot here below, the grievances of the French soldiery reduce themselves to two, First that their Officers are Aristocrats; secondly that they cheat them of their Pay. Two grievances; or rather we might say one, capable of becoming a hundred; for in that single first proposition, that the Officers are Aristocrats, what a multitude of corollaries lie ready! It is a bottomless ever-flowing fountain of grievances this; what you may call a general raw-material of grievance, wherefrom individual grievance after grievance will daily body itself forth. Nay there will even be a kind of comfort in getting it, from time to time, so embodied. Peculation of one's Pay! It is embodied; made tangible, made denounceable; exhalable, if only in angry words.

For unluckily that grand fountain of grievances does exist: Aristocrats almost all our Officers necessarily are; they have it in the blood and bone. By the law of the case, no man can pretend to be the pitifullest lieutenant of militia, till he have first verified, to the satisfaction of the Lion-King, a Nobility of four generations. Not Nobility only, but four generations of it: this latter is the improvement hit upon, in comparatively late years, by a certain War-minister much pressed for commissions.[\[307\]](#) An improvement which did relieve the over-pressed War-minister, but which split France still further into yawning contrasts of Commonalty and Nobility, nay of new Nobility and old; as if already with your new and old, and then with your old, older and oldest, there were not contrasts and discrepancies enough;—the general clash whereof men now see and hear, and in the singular whirlpool, all contrasts gone together to the bottom! Gone to the bottom or going; with uproar, without return; going every where save in the Military section of things; and there, it may be asked, can they hope to continue always at the top? Apparently, not.

It is true, in a time of external Peace, when there is no fighting but only drilling, this question, How you rise from the ranks, may seem theoretical rather. But in reference to the Rights of Man it is continually practical. The soldier has sworn to be faithful not to the King only, but to the Law and the Nation. Do our commanders love the

Revolution? ask all soldiers. Unhappily no, they hate it, and love the Counter-Revolution. Young epauletted men, with quality-blood in them, poisoned with quality-pride, do sniff openly, with indignation struggling to become contempt, at our Rights of Man, as at some newfangled cobweb, which shall be brushed down again. Old officers, more cautious, keep silent, with closed uncurled lips; but one guesses what is passing within. Nay who knows, how, under the plausiblest word of command, might lie Counter-Revolution itself, sale to Exiled Princes and the Austrian Kaiser: treacherous Aristocrats hoodwinking the small insight of us common men?—In such manner works that general raw-material of grievance; disastrous; instead of trust and reverence, breeding hate, endless suspicion, the impossibility of commanding and obeying. And now when this second more tangible grievance has articulated itself universally in the mind of the common man: Peculation of his Pay! Peculation of the despicablest sort does exist, and has long existed; but, unless the new-declared Rights of Man, and all rights whatsoever, be a cobweb, it shall no longer exist.

The French Military System seems dying a sorrowful suicidal death. Nay more, citizen, as is natural, ranks himself against citizen in this cause. The soldier finds audience, of numbers and sympathy unlimited, among the Patriot lower-classes. Nor are the higher wanting to the officer. The officer still dresses and perfumes himself for such sad unemigrated *soirée* as there may still be; and speaks his woes,—which woes, are they not Majesty's and Nature's? Speaks, at the same time, his gay defiance, his firm-set resolution. Citizens, still more Citizenesses, see the right and the wrong; not the Military System alone will die by suicide, but much along with it. As was said, there is yet possible a deepest overturn than any yet witnessed: that deepest *upturn* of the black-burning sulphurous stratum whereon all rests and grows!

But how these things may act on the rude soldier-mind, with its military pedantries, its inexperience of all that lies off the parade-ground; inexperience as of a child, yet fierceness of a man and vehemence of a Frenchman! It is long that secret communings in mess-room and guard-room, sour looks, thousandfold petty vexations between commander and commanded, measure every where the weary military day. Ask Captain Dampmartin; an authentic, ingenious literary officer of horse; who loves the Reign of Liberty, after a sort; yet has had his heart grieved to the quick many times, in the hot South-Western region and elsewhere; and has seen riot, civil battle by daylight and by torchlight, and anarchy hatefuller than death. How insubordinate Troopers, with drink in their heads, meet Captain Dampmartin and another on the ramparts, where there is no escape or side-path; and make military salute punctually, for we look calm on them; yet make it in a snappish, almost insulting manner: how one morning they “leave all their chamois shirts” and superfluous buffs, which they

are tired of, laid in piles at the Captain's doors; whereat "we laugh," as the ass does, eating thistles: nay how they "knot two forage-cords together," with universal noisy cursing, with evident intent to hang the Quarter-master:—all this the worthy Captain, looking on it through the ruddy-and-sable of fond regretful memory, has flowingly written down.[\[308\]](#) Men growl in vague discontent; officers fling up their commissions, and emigrate in disgust.

Or let us ask another literary Officer; not yet Captain; Sublieutenant only, in the Artillery Regiment La Fère: a young man of twenty-one; not unentitled to speak; the name of him is *Napoleon Buonaparte*. To such height of Sublieutenancy has he now got promoted, from Brienne School, five years ago; "being found qualified in mathematics by La Place." He is lying at Auxonne, in the West, in these months; not sumptuously lodged—"in the house of a Barber, to whose wife he did not pay the customary degree of respect;" or even over at the Pavilion, in a chamber with bare walls; the only furniture an indifferent "bed without curtains, two chairs, and in the recess of a window a table covered with books and papers: his Brother Louis sleeps on a coarse mattress in an adjoining room." However, he is doing something great: writing his first Book or Pamphlet,—eloquent vehement *Letter to M. Matteo Buttafuoco*, our Corsican Deputy, who is not a Patriot but an Aristocrat, unworthy of Deputyship. Joly of Dôle is Publisher. The literary Sublieutenant corrects the proofs; "sets out on foot from Auxonne, every morning at four o'clock, for Dôle: after looking over the proofs, he partakes of an extremely frugal breakfast with Joly, and immediately prepares for returning to his Garrison; where he arrives before noon, having thus walked above twenty miles in the course of the morning."

This Sublieutenant can remark that, in drawing-rooms, on streets, on highways, at inns, every where men's minds are ready to kindle into a flame. That a Patriot, if he appear in the drawing-room, or amid a group of officers, is liable enough to be discouraged, so great is the majority against him: but no sooner does he get into the street, or among the soldiers, than he feels again as if the whole Nation were with him. That after the famous Oath, *To the King, to the Nation and Law*, there was a great change; that before this, if ordered to fire on the people, he for one would have done it in the King's name; but that after this, in the Nation's name, he would not have done it. Likewise that the Patriot officers, more numerous too in the Artillery and Engineers than elsewhere, were few in number; yet that having the soldiers on their side, they ruled the regiment; and did often deliver the Aristocrat brother officer out of peril and strait. One day, for example, "a member of our own mess roused the mob, by singing, from the windows of our dining-room, *O Richard, O my King*; and I had to snatch him from their fury."[\[309\]](#)

All which let the reader multiply by ten thousand; and spread it with slight variations over all the camps and garrisons of France. The French Army seems on the verge of universal mutiny.

Universal mutiny! There is in that what may well make Patriot Constitutionalism and an august Assembly shudder. Something behoves to be done; yet what to do no man can tell. Mirabeau proposes even that the Soldiery, having come to such a pass, be forthwith disbanded, the whole Two Hundred and Eighty Thousands of them; and organised anew.[\[310\]](#) Impossible this, in so sudden a manner! cry all men. And yet literally, answer we, it is inevitable, in one manner or another. Such an Army, with its four-generation Nobles, its Peculated Pay, and men knotting forage cords to hang their quartermaster, cannot subsist beside such a Revolution. Your alternative is a slow-pining chronic dissolution and new organization; or a swift decisive one; the agonies spread over years, or concentrated into an hour. With a Mirabeau for Minister or Governor the latter had been the choice; with no Mirabeau for Governor it will naturally be the former.

#### Chapter 2.2.III.

##### Bouillé at Metz.

To Bouillé, in his North-Eastern circle, none of these things are altogether hid. Many times flight over the marches gleams out on him as a last guidance in such bewilderment: nevertheless he continues here: struggling always to hope the best, not from new organisation but from happy Counter-Revolution and return to the old. For the rest it is clear to him that this same National Federation, and universal swearing and fraternising of People and Soldiers, has done “incalculable mischief.” So much that fermented secretly has hereby got vent and become open: National Guards and Soldiers of the line, solemnly embracing one another on all parade-fields, drinking, swearing patriotic oaths, fall into disorderly street-processions, constitutional unmilitary exclamations and hurrahings. On which account the Regiment Picardie, for one, has to be drawn out in the square of the barracks, here at Metz, and sharply harangued by the General himself; but expresses penitence.[\[311\]](#)

Far and near, as accounts testify, insubordination has begun grumbling louder and louder. Officers have been seen shut up in their mess-rooms; assaulted with clamorous demands, not without menaces. The insubordinate ringleader is dismissed with “yellow furlough,” yellow infamous thing they call *cartouche jaune*: but ten new ringleaders rise in his stead, and the yellow *cartouche* ceases to be thought disgraceful. “Within a fortnight,” or at furthest a month, of that sublime Feast of Pikes, the whole French Army, demanding Arrears, forming Reading Clubs, frequenting

Popular Societies, is in a state which Bouillé can call by no name but that of mutiny. Bouillé knows it as few do; and speaks by dire experience. Take one instance instead of many.

It is still an early day of August, the precise date now undiscoverable, when Bouillé, about to set out for the waters of Aix la Chapelle, is once more suddenly summoned to the barracks of Metz. The soldiers stand ranked in fighting order, muskets loaded, the officers all there on compulsion; and require, with many-voiced emphasis, to have their arrears paid. Picardie was penitent; but we see it has relapsed: the wide space bristles and lours with mere mutinous armed men. Brave Bouillé advances to the nearest Regiment, opens his commanding lips to harangue; obtains nothing but querulous-indignant discordance, and the sound of so many thousand livres legally due. The moment is trying; there are some ten thousand soldiers now in Metz, and one spirit seems to have spread among them.

Bouillé is firm as the adamant; but what shall he do? A German Regiment, named of Salm, is thought to be of better temper: nevertheless Salm too may have heard of the precept, *Thou shalt not steal*; Salm too may know that money is money. Bouillé walks trustfully towards the Regiment de Salm, speaks trustful words; but here again is answered by the cry of forty-four thousand livres odd sous. A cry waxing more and more vociferous, as Salm's humour mounts; which cry, as it will produce no cash or promise of cash, ends in the wide simultaneous whirr of shouldered muskets, and a determined quick-time march on the part of Salm—towards its Colonel's house, in the next street, there to seize the colours and military chest. Thus does Salm, for its part; strong in the faith that *meum* is not *tuum*, that fair speeches are not forty-four thousand livres odd sous.

Unrestrainable! Salm tramps to military time, quick consuming the way. Bouillé and the officers, drawing sword, have to dash into double quick *pas-de-charge*, or unmilitary running; to get the start; to station themselves on the outer staircase, and stand there with what of death-defiance and sharp steel they have; Salm truculently coiling itself up, rank after rank, opposite them, in such humour as we can fancy, which happily has not yet mounted to the murder-pitch. There will Bouillé stand, certain at least of *one* man's purpose; in grim calmness, awaiting the issue. What the intrepidest of men and generals can do is done. Bouillé, though there is a barricading picket at each end of the street, and death under his eyes, contrives to send for a Dragoon Regiment with orders to charge: the dragoon officers mount; the dragoon men will not: hope is none there for him. The street, as we say, barricaded; the Earth all shut out, only the indifferent heavenly Vault overhead: perhaps here or there a timorous householder peering out of window, with prayer for Bouillé; copious

Rascality, on the pavement, with prayer for Salm: there do the two parties stand;—like chariots locked in a narrow thoroughfare; like locked wrestlers at a dead-grip! For two hours they stand; Bouillé's sword glittering in his hand, adamant resolution clouding his brows: for two hours by the clocks of Metz. Moody-silent stands Salm, with occasional clangour; but does not fire. Rascality from time to time urges some grenadier to level his musket at the General; who looks on it as a bronze General would; and always some corporal or other strikes it up.

In such remarkable attitude, standing on that staircase for two hours, does brave Bouillé, long a shadow, dawn on us visibly out of the dimness, and become a person. For the rest, since Salm has not shot him at the first instant, and since in himself there is no variableness, the danger will diminish. The Mayor, "a man infinitely respectable," with his Municipals and tricolor sashes, finally gains entrance; remonstrates, perorates, promises; gets Salm persuaded home to its barracks. Next day, our respectable Mayor lending the money, the officers pay down the *half* of the demand in ready cash. With which liquidation Salm pacifies itself, and for the present all is hushed up, as much as may be. [\[312\]](#)

Such scenes as this of Metz, or preparations and demonstrations towards such, are universal over France: Dampmartin, with his knotted forage-cords and piled chamois jackets, is at Strasburg in the South-East; in these same days or rather nights, Royal Champagne is "shouting *Vive la Nation, au diable les Aristocrates*, with some thirty lit candles," at Hesdin, on the far North-West. 'The garrison of Bitche,' Deputy Rewbell is sorry to state, 'went out of the town, with drums beating; deposed its officers; and then returned into the town, sabre in hand.' [\[313\]](#) Ought not a National Assembly to occupy itself with these objects? Military France is everywhere full of sour inflammatory humour, which exhales itself fuliginously, this way or that: a whole continent of smoking flax; which, blown on here or there by any angry wind, might so easily start into a blaze, into a continent of fire!

Constitutional Patriotism is in deep natural alarm at these things. The august Assembly sits diligently deliberating; dare nowise resolve, with Mirabeau, on an instantaneous disbandment and extinction; finds that a course of palliatives is easier. But at least and lowest, this grievance of the Arrears shall be rectified. A plan, much noised of in those days, under the name "Decree of the Sixth of August," has been devised for that. Inspectors shall visit all armies; and, with certain elected corporals and "soldiers able to write," verify what arrears and peculations do lie due, and make them good. Well, if in this way the smoky heat be cooled down; if it be not, as we say, ventilated over-much, or, by sparks and collision somewhere, sent *up*!