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## EDITOR'S ADVERTISEMENT.

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Few remarks can be needed, in addition to those which the Translator has stated, to explain the objects of introducing the Oratorical "Portraits" of Viscount de Cormenin, to the American people. So far as the prevalent fever for book-making might furnish an explanation, it would be sufficient to say, that no work issued in Europe for some years past, has been more extensively popular than these singular and powerful sketches, or "Portraits," as the Author more aptly entitles them. They originally appeared at Paris under the signature of "Timon," and, with various brilliant political pamphlets under the same name, attracted extraordinary attention. Sixteen or eighteen editions have since been published at Paris, and twelve separate editions at Brussels; and by examining the various sketches of the public men of France that have appeared lately in the English periodicals, it would be found that many of their most effective limnings have been transferred from Cormenin. This popularity has been owing, not more to the quality and distinction of the characters portrayed, than to the original and striking style of their portraiture. With very great and powerful discrimination, a singular logical acuteness, perspicuity, and frequent eloquence, "Timon" displays a scornful elegance, a subtle force of sarcasm, and grace of *badinage*, not excelled by any writer since Voltaire. It is power, concealed in a garb of lightness—the blow is felt when only the rustling of the robes is seen. His skill in characterization has not been surpassed.

Several of the Sketches are of Orators previous to the age of Cormenin. Of these the first two, of Mirabeau and Danton, are, in themselves, among the finest specimens of descriptive oratory; and the third is the only good representation yet given of the extraordinary military eloquence of Napoleon. Of the modern Orators, the author's limnings of Lamartine, Thiers, Guizot, and O'Connell—the only foreigner admitted to the gallery—will attract particular attention, and those of Manuel, Constant, Collard, and others less known to us, must be acknowledged models of political portraiture.

But, aside from the evident popular qualities of the book,

two other considerations had a decisive influence in determining their publication in this country. The first is, the fact that nearly all our impressions of the men and public affairs of Continental Europe, have been obtained through English books and the English press. It is time that we should acquaint ourselves with those nations directly,—through their own politics and their own literature. Of the French literature introduced among us, moreover, we have generally had the feeblest and least instructive part.

The second was a consideration of style, having reference to the literary productions of this country. It is a topic of common remark, that the style of American authors has come to be, in nearly all departments of writing, of too labored and too uniform a character;—that in philosophy, law, theology, politics, narrative, fiction, addresses, newspaper and periodical writing, alike, though grave and forcible, it has too little ease and too similar a movement. It needs to be broken up:—if so, there can be no readier, or more effective way to accomplish this, than by introducing among our English models, which we have too closely followed, a variety of brilliant works from the pens of foreign authors. Our Saxon mind possesses, in its earnestness, a most excellent quality;—but it wears its armor too heavily. It does not seem too much to hope, that these “Portraits” of “Timon” will affect, to a very sensible degree, the future style of the writings of this country, especially on all political topics.

The translation was executed by a member of the New York Bar, and with a force and aptness of language, it will be found, not very common in our versions of foreign authors. The Essay, which was needed to illustrate some points, on which Cormenin does not touch, as the rise of French Revolutionary eloquence, with some notice of the Orators of the Girondists, was furnished by Mr. Headley, whose studies and writings have made him familiar with that period. The only parts supplied by the Editor are some fifty pages of “Biographical Addenda,” giving more dates and particulars in the lives of the most distinguished of Cormenin’s subjects, than the author has furnished—for “Timon” does not so much sketch their lives as their characters. The orators, to whom this matter relates, are Mirabeau, Danton, Benjamin Constant, Royer Collard, Lamartine, Guizot, and Thiers.

THE EDITOR.

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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Two or three objects have been principally contemplated in the introduction of this celebrated book to the American public: they relate to the Nature of the subject, the Execution of the original, and the Aim of the translation.

The importance of the Oratorical art it would doubtless be superfluous to urge upon a community wherein, daily, even its semblance is seen to command that political consideration which is accessible only to birth, or to fortune, or (but rarer alas!) to wisdom, in other conditions of society: of its productive value, at least in this personal respect, our readers are all sufficiently sensible. But the urgency, especially of the public interest, for something more of the reality, is felt, perhaps, not so generally; and by fewer still conceived, the proper mode and means of attaining it.

To such a situation and purpose nothing could well be more suitable than the treatise of DE CORMENIN; as should, indeed, be expected from a man of European distinction in nearly all the qualifications, practical as well as theoretical, for the task. Of the two Parts, into which it is divided, the present publication contains but the Second. The First lays down the Principles and Precepts, and in the several species of eloquence, the Forensic, Military, Pulpit, Popular as well as the Parliamentary—including, also, the "Tactics" of parties, of deliberative assemblies, of Opposition and Ministerial policy; all which the Portraits, here presented, were meant to illustrate by example, in a corresponding series. And this was the methodical arrangement, undoubtedly. But the inverse order is better adapted, probably, to the readers of this translation. And, at all events, the counterpart may be expected to follow soon—composing a volume of nearly equal size.

Besides the interest of the matter, the work presents, moreover, in its method and style, a consummate model, especially for political writing, that is to say the writing which is long to remain in chief request in our country. This feature must be obvious to the least instructed of the readers. It is, in fact, as a writer unapproached in the combination of dialectical precision with amplitude of view, of polished and even courteous elegance of language with the most truculent severity of invective, and of picturesqueness of expression with profundity of thought—it is for this that the author's name, or rather pseudonyme, is renowned, in even Europe, rather than for his qualities, scarce less eminent, as statesman and jurist. But more express than his general example, we are furnished, in the didactic part alluded to, with a chapter devoted to the regular institution of political writing.

To evince the deplorable need of amendment in this particular also, it is not necessary, and were invidious, to go into the actual character of this principal branch of our literature. If it have any, one might describe it—a confused compost of the hacknied and half-obsolete forms and phraseology of British journalism and politics, always without system, frequently without signification, utterly without style. Evidence of this will occur, indirectly, in the following pages, where care has been taken, with this very view, to render several terms of the original, chiefly political, according to reason and the analogy, rather than the corrupt practice, of our idiom. And if the reader, when his attention shall probably be arrested by such as “strange,” will, instead of dismissing them for French fantasies, but compare them intelligently with the word he would have expected according to popular usage, he will find this contrast open curious gleams into the real condition of much of our political and juridical terminology. It must be suggestive to him of still more than this. He will doubtless proceed to ask himself, how the French, a people so much younger politically than the English race, have yet already come to be

our masters in the dialects of politics and of administration, as well as of fashion and cookery? The inevitable answer will lead him to generalize his inference of defectiveness, from a special department, to the body, of our language; and will, at the same time, strikingly exhibit, by results of fact, what is so difficult of direct demonstration—the immense and universal advantages of a logical and scientific superiority of language.

To direct the thoughtful reader's attention to this comparative deficiency, not alone of our political, but also of our popular and literary vocabulary, was the third object, above-mentioned, proposed by this publication. Or rather, it was to inculcate by a slight example, the most efficient, perhaps, or at least the most available mode of gradually supplying it—I mean *intelligent translation*. Translation amongst us—and the reproach may be extended to England—since it has become a mere handcraft, is but a wretched travesty, at least in books of the æsthetical kind. Especially is this the case with versions from the French, in consequence chiefly of the disparity of development alluded to, between the languages. Now, this mutilation, besides the implied insult to the “reading public” and the flagrant outrage upon the author, is censurable, moreover, in neglecting, in abusing, this excellent means of amending and enriching the vernacular language, excellent especially when the dialect of the original is, like the French, the more advanced. But the excuse is ready and recognized. Idiomatic expressions are to be insurmountably revered, says one of those pedantic superstitions which, in language, as well as law, politics and the rest, would ever have the manhood of the mind still move in the go-car of its infancy. To hear the herd of our critics descant upon, as beauties of the language, what are really badges of its barbarism—necessarily vulgarities of the populace before they became refinements of the purists—do you not fancy a crowd of cripples who, though now quite healed by the unconscious overflow of the Siloan waters of advancing science, should not only persist in using

the crutches instead of their legs, but limp about priding themselves upon their enlightened preference, and preaching it to all around ?

But the subject is too large for this place. Be the principle as it may, to any one really competent to translate (an accomplishment by the way not so common perhaps as most people think) these peculiarities of expression can offer little or no difficulty, in dialects come, to the stage of maturity to own a literature worth translating. To explain briefly : Idioms, as they take rise from an extremely concrete state of the language, so tend to disappear with its proficiency in generalization ; thus we find no idioms in the language of philosophy and science. In the merely literary and popular phraseology, the epuration proceeds variously, according as they are idioms of *phrase*, or only of *terms*. The former begin to drop off at an earlier stage of logical refinement, and fall into utter disuse. Already, no English writer would venture to use the greater part of even the famous idioms of Addison, though still canting about them, mechanically, as the last perfections of the language. And amongst ourselves, what educated writer or talker now employs the American *idioms* of Sam Slick, for example ?—which, however, would no doubt have been, to-day, in a fair way of becoming the Addisonian elegancies of our men of letters, had our society been left, in anything, to the natural growth, and had not the language especially been under the wholesome control, or the nipping criticism, of British literature. Inaccuracy or uncouthness in our translations, then, should find no excuse on the score of idioms of this class ; of which any that remain still in use are for the most part general maxims of common sense, such as proverbs, and susceptible, by reason of this universality, of being rendered by equivalent, when not by analogical, expressions.

The idioms of word or term are more permanent and form in fact the chief part of the difficulty in question. In these the progression operates, not as in the other by decay, but by a species of transformation. And the reason is conclu-

sive. The idiom of phrase is a *combination*, good for only a special purpose, with which it must consequently cease; whereas the word is an *element*, and thus equally adapts itself to other combinations or modifications. Now, it is precisely in the imperfect development of these derivative forms, in the deficiency of its abstract and generalized vocabulary, that our language, and our translators (from the French especially) seem both to be at fault. But this is ordinarily remediable under the guidance of analogy, and not only so legitimately, but laudably. The process has received special attention in the following version. And if we duly consider the characteristic refinements of style together with the evanescent metaphysics of moral portraiture, which make this book perhaps the most difficult in any language to translate, it will be allowed that the experiment has been put fairly to the test. If at all successful, it may lead our translators to attempt, or at least the public to exact, more care in the manufacture of this the present, and indeed prospective, staple of our original or unpilfered literature. Not, however, that I pretend the translation does not remain very susceptible of improvement, as I have found but too sensibly on a running revision of the proofs. In truth it was done hastily, and with the design of ulterior correction, which has been precluded by other engagements deemed of more consequence. At the same time, I do not decline the responsibility at least of two qualities, which it may look, indeed, like satire to profess: *The diction is English; the thought is that of the Author, not merely in substance but even form.*

In avering fidelity, I should in rigor perhaps except a few effusions of transcendental democracy; which, though excellent, of course, upon occasion, I took the liberty of suppressing, at the suggestion of the proverb against "carrying coals to Newcastle."

But here the responsibility of the translator ends. For the residue of the contents, the credit (or otherwise) is fairly due to the publishers, who, with the friend whose name is affixed as editor, have (in consequence of the en-

gements alluded to) discharged me of all attention to the details of publication.

As to the general merits of the work itself, with these few observations, I leave them to the readers to appreciate, or perhaps only postpone them to the issue of the other volume. I close with transcribing from a late Paris Journal (*le National*) the following notice of the work, announcing the *sixteenth edition*.

“What remains, at this day, to be said of the *Livre des Orateurs*, except that it has proved a fortune to the publisher, and a source of new triumphs to the author: the rapid sale of fifteen editions speaks abundantly the opinion of the public. But with M. DE CORMENIN the editions succeed each other without being alike. He touches and retouches unceasingly his elaborate pages; he adds, retrenches, transposes, polishes: he is eminently the writer of the file and smoothing-plane (*de la lime et du rabot*), a rare merit in our days, and which evinces in the author a proper respect for both the public and himself.

“The edition now issued contains some new Portraits, or rather outlines, in the modest expression of the author. For as soon as an orator appears, ‘TIMON’ takes his pencil, draws a profile, sketches a head, completes a bust according to the rank assigned to each in the parliamentary hierarchy. Thus does he constantly keep up to the current of parliamentary life, though, in truth, at present, neither active nor brilliant. And as the sessions march on, the ‘Book of the Orators’ marches with them, advancing daily more and more in public admiration, and above all, in pecuniary productiveness.”

THE TRANSLATOR.

# AN ESSAY

ON THE

## RISE AND FALL OF ELOQUENCE IN THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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BY J. T. HEADLEY.

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THE end of all eloquence is to sway men. It is therefore bound by no arbitrary rules of diction or style—formed on no specific models, and governed by no edicts of self-selected judges. It is true, there are degrees of eloquence, and equal success does not imply equal excellence. That which is adapted to sway the strongest minds of an enlightened age, ought to be esteemed the most perfect, and doubtless should be the gauge by which to test the abstract excellence of all oratory. But every nation has its peculiar temperament and tastes, which must be regarded in making up our judgments. Indeed, the language itself of different countries compels a widely different style and manner. To the cold and immobile Englishman, the eloquence of Italy appears like frothy declamation; while to the latter, the passionless manner, and naked argument of the former, seem tame and commonplace. No man of sense would harangue the French, with their volatile feelings and love of scenic effect, in the same manner he would the Dutch their neighbors. A similar contrast often exists in the same nation. He who could chain a Boston audience by the depth and originality of his philosophy, might be esteemed a dreamer in the far West. Colonel Crockett and Mr. Emerson would be very unequal

candidates for fame amid our frontier population. A similar though not so striking a contrast, exists between the North and South. A speech, best adapted to win the attention of a mixed southern assembly, would be regarded too ornamental, nay, perhaps meretricious by one in New England. The warm blood of a southern clime will bear richer ornament and more imaginative style, than the calculating spirit of a northern man. The same law of adaptation must be consulted in the changes of feeling and taste that come over the same people. Once our forefathers liked the stern, unadorned old Saxon in which the Bible is written, and which characterized the sturdy English divines. A few years passed by, and the classic era, as it was called, came—that is, a preference of Latin-derived words to Saxon, or of harmony to strength. Johnson's lofty diction threw Cicero's high-sounding sentences into the shade, and Addison's faultless elegance became to language what miniature painting is to the art of painting itself. At length another generation came, and the strong energetic style of Macaulay, or the equally strong but uncouth sentences of Carlyle, and the concentration of Brougham, shoved the English classics from the stage. Now the man who sighs over this departure from *classic* models, and prates of corrupt English, shows himself shallow both in intellect and philosophy. Let him mourn over the *new spirit* that has seized the world—*there* lies the root of the evil, if there be any. Men at auction now-a-days will not talk as Dr. Johnson did in the sale of Thrale's brewery—nor in the present earnestness, nay eagerness of human thought and feeling, will the fiery Saxon heart sacrifice vigor to beauty—directness to harmony. He is a good writer who ein-

bodies in his works the soul and spirit of the times in which he lives, provided they are worth embodying—and the common sympathy of the great mass is sounder criticism by far than the rules of mere scholars, who, buried up in their formulas, cannot speak so as to arrest the attention or move the heart.

Adaptation without degeneracy is the great law to be followed.

If the speech of Patrick Henry before the House of Delegates had been made when the Stamp Act first began to be discussed, it would have been considered foolish bluster; but delivered at the very moment when the national heart was on fire, and needed but a touch to kindle it into a blaze, it was the perfection of eloquence. So, the speech that Sir Walter Scott puts into the mouth of Ephraim Macbriar, on one of the successful battle fields of the Covenanters, is in itself a piece of wild declamation, but in the circumstances under which it was delivered, and to secure the object in view, the truest oratory. As the young preacher stood, pale with watchings and fastings and long imprisonment, and cast his faded eye over the field of slaughter, and over those brave men whose brows were yet unbent from the strife, he knew that reason and argument would be lost in the swelling passions that panted for action, and he burst forth into a harangue that thrilled every heart, and sent every hand to its sword:—and when he closed, those persecuted men “would have rushed to battle as to a banquet, and embraced death with rapture.”

When the national heart is heaving with excitement, he who would control its pulsations and direct its energies, must speak in the language of enthusiasm. The power of an orator lies in the sympathy between

him and the people. This is the chord which binds heart to heart, and when it is struck, thousands burst into tears or rouse into passion, like a single individual.

If these principles be true, it is necessary to throw ourselves into the scenes of the French Revolution, in order to judge correctly of the orators who controlled it. The Duke of Wellington, addressing the English army in India in the language Bonaparte used to his troops at the base of the Pyramids, would be guilty of ridiculous bombast; but in the mouth of the latter, and to such men as followed his standard, it exhibited the true orator. Nelson saying to his crew before the battle of Trafalgar, "England expects every man to do his duty," and Cromwell reading the Psalms of David to his steel-clad Ironsides before the battle of Naseby, present a widely different appearance, but show equal skill and art.

In ordinary times, there are three great departments of oratory: the bar, the parliament, and the pulpit. The latter, no doubt, ought to take the highest rank. With three worlds for a field from which to gather thoughts, images and motives to action—with the soul of man, its hopes, fears and sympathies, and awful destiny, its theme—it embraces all that is great and fearful and commanding. But in Catholic countries it has sunk into neglect. Hooded over and fettered by superstition, and wrapped in endless forms, its power is lost. This country is fast following in their footsteps. Inspiration is gone, enthusiasm derided or shunned, and good, plain instruction has usurped the place of eloquence.

In the legislative hall, powerful appeals to the feelings are dangerous, for the watchful eye of opposition

is ever ready to make bathos of pathos. At the bar, oratory is apt to become mere acting. The habit of taking any side, and advocating directly opposite principles, destroys the earnestness of sincere feeling, and compels the pleader to resort to art for success. Like a fine actor, he must *study the hearts of others*, and not trust to his own impulses, if he would awaken sympathy.

But the advocate and the divine disappeared in the French Revolution, and the press and legislative hall were the media through which the soul of the nation uttered itself.

The Convention of the States-General, and final organization of the National Assembly, fixed irretrievably the French Revolution. The deputies of the people, assembled from every quarter of France, found themselves at the outset in collision with the throne and aristocracy. The nation was to be saved from the famine, and distress, and bankruptcy, which threatened to overthrow it; and they boldly entered on the task. They had not come together to speak, but to act. Met at every turn by a corrupt Court and nobility, they found themselves compelled to spend months on the plainest principles of civil liberty. But facts were more potent than words, and it needed only an eloquent tongue in order to bind the Assembly together, and encourage it to put forth those acts which the welfare of the nation demanded.

It was not easy at once to destroy reverence for the throne, and set at nought royal authority, yet the reformations which the state of the kingdom rendered imperative would do both. Right onward must this National Assembly move, or France be lost! To carry it thus forward, united, strong and bold, one all-

powerful tongue was sufficient,—and the great orator of the Assembly was Mirabeau. At the outset, hurling mingled defiance and scorn both on the nobility, from whom he had been excluded, and the king, who thought to intimidate the deputies, he inspired the *Tiers-Etat* with his own boldness. No matter what vacillation or fears might agitate the members, when his voice of thunder shook the hall in which they sat, every heart grew determined and resolute. With his bushy black hair standing on end, and his eye flashing fire, he became at once the hope of the people and the terror of the aristocracy. Incoherent and unwieldy in the commencement of his speech, steady and strong when fairly under motion, he carried irresistible power in his appeals. As a huge ship in a dead calm rolls and rocks on the heavy swell, but the moment the wind fills its sails stretches proudly away, throwing the foam from its front,—so he tossed irregular and blind upon the sea of thought, until caught by the breath of passion, when he moved majestically, irresistibly onward.

The Constituent Assembly of France sat from 1789 to 1791. The overthrow of the Bastille and triumph of the people frightened the nobility, so that they fled in crowds from France. Hitherto they had constituted the opposition against which the deputies of the people had to struggle. After their flight, there being no longer an opposition, the deputies naturally split into two parties among themselves. The Girondists were at first the republicans, and demanded a government founded on the principles of the ancient republics; but a faction springing up more radical than their own, and pushing the state towards anarchy,

they became conservatives. In the meantime Mirabeau, full of forebodings, died.

This Assembly, however, lasted but nine months, for the revolt of the 10th of August came; the Tuileries ran blood, and the Bourbon dynasty closed. The Legislative Assembly then changed itself into the Convention, and the great struggle between the Girondists and Jacobins commenced. It was a life and death struggle, and all the mental powers of these two bodies were brought to the task. The Girondists embraced in their number some of the finest orators France has ever produced. They were the philosophers of the Revolution, ever talking of Greece and Rome, and fondly dreaming that the glorious days of those ancient republics could be recalled. Their eloquence had given immense popularity to the Revolution and hastened it on. Grand and generous in their plans, they filled the imaginations of the people with beautiful but unreal forms. But while they were thus speaking of Cataline and Cicero, and Brutus and Cæsar, and the heroes of Greece, the Jacobins were talking of aristocrats in Paris, and arousing the passions rather than exciting the imaginations of men.

There could be no combination of circumstances better adapted to call forth the spirit and power of the nation, than that in which France now found herself. The fall of the throne, and sudden rising of a republic in its place—the removal of all those restraints which had for ages fettered thought—the terrific events that had just passed, and the still more terrible ones at the door—the vast field opened at once to the untried powers—the dark and troubled sea rolling around this phantom republic, blazing with artificial light; nay, the excited soul itself—called-on man trumpet-tongued,

to give his greatest utterance. Into this new freedom the emancipated spirit stepped with a bewildered look, and stretching forth its arms, giant-like, made everything hitherto stable and steady, rock and shake on its ancient foundations. Never before was the human mind roused to such intense action, and never did it work with such fearful rapidity and awful power. The hall of the National Convention became the theatre of the most exciting scenes ever witnessed in a legislative body. The terrible struggle between ancient despotism and young and fierce democracy had closed, and the throne gone down in the tumult. The elements which had been gathering into strength for ages—the swell which had not been born of a sudden gust of passion, but came sweeping from the realms of antiquity had burst, and there lay the fragments of a strong monarchy—the splendid wreck of a system hoary with age and rich with the fruits of oppression. Into this chaos the soul of France was cast, and began to work out its own ends. In the meantime, Europe, affrighted at the apparition of a new republic rising in its midst, based on fallen kingship, moved to arms, and trusted, with one fell blow, to overthrow it. All the great interests of life—everything that kindles feeling and passion—awakens thought and stimulates to action, were here gathered together; and no wonder the genius of France burst forth with astonishing splendor! Grecian art and learning were the offspring of the struggle between the young republic of Greece and Persian despotism; and out of the desperate resistance of early Rome to the efforts put forth for her overthrow, sprung that power which finally overshadowed the earth; while from our own Revolution emerged the spirit of enterprise of which the history

of the race furnishes no parallel, and those principles destined to make the tour of the world.

But if the French Revolution gave birth to grand displays of genius and intellect, it also furnished exhibitions of human depravity and ferocity never before equalled.

The chief leaders that entered this great arena, were Robespierre, Danton, Marat, Camille Desmoulins, Varennes, St. Just, and Collot d'Herbois, on the side of the Radicals, or Mountain—Vergniaud, Guadet, Gensonne, Lanjuinais, Roland, Barbaroux, Louvet, and others, on that of the Girondists. The collision between these noble and eloquent men, on the one side, and those dark, intriguing, desperate characters on the other, produced the finest specimens of oratory ever witnessed in France. Vergniaud, generous and noble—too good to believe in the irredeemable depravity of his adversaries—was the most eloquent speaker that ever mounted the tribune of the French Assembly. Carried away by no passion—not torrent-like, broken, and fragmentary, as Mirabeau—but like a deep and majestic stream, he moved steadily onward, pouring forth his rich and harmonious sentences in strains of impassioned eloquence. At the trial of Louis his speech thrilled both Jacobins and Conservatives with electric power. On the occasion of the failure of the first conspiracy of the Jacobins against the Girondists, he addressed the Convention and in his speech occurred the following remarkable words: “We march from crimes to amnesties, and from amnesties to crimes. The great body of citizens are so blinded by their frequent occurrence, that they confound these seditious disturbances with the grand national movement in favor of freedom—regard the

violence of brigands as the efforts of energetic minds, and consider robbery itself as indispensable to public safety. You are free, say they; but unless you think like us, we will denounce you as victims to the vengeance of the people. You are free; but unless you join us in persecuting those whose probity or talents we dread, we will abandon you to their fury. *Citizens, there is too much room to dread that the Revolution, like Saturn, will necessarily devour all its progeny, and finally leave only despotism, with all the calamities which it produces.*" A prophecy which soon proved true; and he was among the first of those children which the Revolution, Saturn-like, devoured. Thrown into prison with his compatriots, he finally underwent the farce of a trial, and was sentenced to the guillotine. His friends had secretly provided him with poison, by which he could escape the ignominy of the scaffold, and die a sudden and easy death. But he nobly refused to take it, preferring to suffer with his friends. On the last night of his life he addressed his fellow-prisoners on the sad fate of the French Republic. He spoke of its expiring liberty, of the bright hopes soon to be extinguished in blood, of the terrible scenes before their beloved country, in terms that made the doomed victims forget their approaching fate. Never before did those gloomy walls ring to such thrilling words. Carried away by the enthusiasm of his feelings, and the picture that rose before his excited imagination, he poured forth such strains of impassioned eloquence, that they all fell in tears in each other's arms.

Louvet was bold and energetic, harling his accusations against Marat and Robespierre with equal daring and power. When the latter, wincing under the im-

plied charges conveyed by Roland in a speech before the Convention, mounted the Tribune and exclaimed: "No one will dare accuse me to my face," Louvet rose to his feet, and fixing on him a steady eye, said, in a firm voice: "*I am he who accuses you; yes, Robespierre, I accuse you.*" He then went on in a strain of fervid eloquence, following Robespierre, as Cicero did Cataline, in all his devious ways—to the Jacobin club, to the municipal authorities and the Assembly ever vaunting of his services, exciting the people to massacre, and spreading terror and death on every side—and closed up with "the glory of the revolt of the 10th of August is common to all, but the glory of the massacres of September 2nd to *you; on you and your associates may they rest forever.*"

After the revolution which overthrew the Girondists, he fled to the mountains of Jura, and wandered for months amid their solitudes and caverns, pondering over the strange scenes through which he had passed.

Guadet was full of spirit—seizing with the intuition of genius the changes of the stormy Convention and moulding it to his purpose. He died with the firmness of an old Roman on the scaffold.

Barbaroux was fiery, prompt and penetrating. Foreseeing clearly the course of the Jacobins, he strove manfully to crush them, and would have succeeded had he been sustained by his friends. On that last terrible day to the Girondists, when eighty thousand armed men stood arrayed in dark columns around the Hall of the Convention, and a hundred and sixty pieces of artillery were slowly advancing with lighted matches trembling above them, and the tocsin was sounding and generale beating, and cannon thundering in the distance, and the Convention tossing like a shattered ves-

sel in a storm, he rose, and sending his fearless voice over the tempest, exclaimed: "*I have sworn to die at my post; I will keep my oath. Bend, if you please, before the municipality—you who refused to arrest their wickedness; or else imitate us whom their fury immediately demands—wait and brave their fury. You may compel me to sink under their daggers—you shall not make me fall at their feet.*"

Roland clear and truthful—Gensonne, firm, resolute, and decided—Lanjuinais, intrepid, and fearless, lifting his voice, even when dragged by violence from the Tribune—Brissot and Buzot helped to complete this galaxy of noble and eloquent men.

On the other hand, Robespierre combatted these bursts of eloquence by his daring plans—insinuating, yet energetic, discourse—his terse, vigorous sentences, and his character as a patriot. Danton was like a roused lion, and his voice of thunder fell with startling power on the Convention. Once when he heard the tocsin sounding and cannon roaring, he said, all that is required is "boldness, boldness, boldness!" and this, with his relentless severity, was the secret of his strength. Marat, with the face of a monster and the heart of a fiend, had that art, or rather ferocity, which appeals to hate, murder and revenge. With such energetic, powerful minds locked in mortal combat, no wonder there were bursts of unsurpassed eloquence—thrilling appeals, noble devotion, such as never before shook a parliament. The fact that the Legislative Assembly constituted one body, thus keeping the exciting topics of this most exciting time ever revolving in its midst, conspired to give greater intensity to the feelings, and preserve that close and fierce collision from which fire is always struck. In halls of legislation the eloquence

of feeling—the spontaneous outbursts of passion constituting the highest kind of impassioned oratory are seldom witnessed. But here the impulses were not restrained—each uttered what he felt, and that lofty daring which will of itself create genius, characterized the leaders.

But when the Jacobins through their appeals to the passions, triumphed, and the Girondists were dispersed or executed, the eloquence of the Convention departed forever. In the Reign of Terror, Danton was the chief orator, but *action, action* was wanted more than speeches. To awe, to terrify, to crush, was now the task of the Convention, and it went on destroying with a blind fury until at last it began to destroy itself. At length it turned fiercely on Danton its head, and that voice, after uttering its last challenge, hurling its last curse and scorn, was hushed by the guillotine. Robespierre soon followed, and the yell of terror he gave on the scaffold, as the bandage was torn from his maimed jaw, letting it fall on his breast, was the last time his tongue froze the hearts of the people with fear.

The Revolution now began to retrograde, and the French mind, which had been so terribly excited, for awhile stood paralyzed, and the tongue was dumb. Nothing shows the difference between the two nations, France and England, more clearly than the contrast this Revolution presented to that of the English under Cromwell. In both the commons of the people came in collision with the throne, and conquered. In both the king perished on the scaffold, and the Parliament seized supreme power. Yet in the one case no atrocity marked the progress of freedom—even civil law remained in full force amid the tumult and violence before which the royal dynasty disappeared. The minds of the two nations are as different as the

progress and results of the two Revolutions. The French excitable and imaginative, no sooner seize a theory than they push it to the extremest limit. Enthusiasm and hope guide the movement, while reason and conscience control the passions of the English people. One dreams, the other thinks; hence to the former, eloquence which appeals to the imagination and feelings is the truest and the best. The *Tiers-Etat*, now assembled in Berlin, will not move on to freedom as did that of France. The Germans are more sober, reflecting and cautious. This fact should be kept in mind in reading the speeches of French orators. Those things which would be extravagancies to an English or Dutch, are not to a French parliament. Bursts of sentiment which would draw tears from the latter, would provoke a smile of incredulity or derision in the former. The mathematician and the poet are to be moved by different appeals.

Under the Directory there was but little display of eloquence, and scarcely none at all under the Empire. When Bonaparte mounted to supreme power, he wished to be the only speaker, as he was the only actor, in France. He established the strictest censorship both over the press and the tongue, and men dared not speak, except to echo him. If France was amazed at the disappearance of the throne and aristocracy, and sudden rising of a republic, with all its blinding, dazzling light, in their place, she was no less so at the vast empire that sprung up so rapidly at the touch of Napoleon. Men spoke no more of Greece or of Rome, except to hint at Cæsar and his legions. "Rights of the people," "freedom of the press and speech," and all those spell-words by which the revolutionary leaders had gained power were forgotten, and the "glory of France" absorbed every other thought. To this

boundless enthusiasm, Napoleon knew how to address himself, and became at once the greatest military orator of the world. In any other time, and to any other army, his speeches would have been mere declamation, but taking both into consideration they are models of oratory. He could speak with power, for his actions were eloquent, and stirred the heart of France to its core.

The Restoration brought a great change over the parliament of France. From a constitutional monarchy she had passed into a free republic, thence into the rudest anarchy that ever shook the world, thence into a vast and glorious empire, and now, fallen, exhausted, and bewildered, sunk back into the arms of a Bourbon. And when the representatives of the people again assembled, there were delegates from all these great epochs,—royalist emigrants, filled more than ever with the idea of the divine right of kings—old soldiers from Napoleon's victorious armies, still dreaming of glory—and ardent republicans, who would not, for all that had passed, abandon their liberal principles.

The new Parliament at length settled down into three political parties—the Legitimists, who revered kingship, and prated constantly of the throne and its prerogatives, and the aristocracy and its privileges—the Constitutionals, or those who wished to establish the supremacy of the parliament balanced by royal authority and other powers, as in England—and the Liberals. These discordant elements brought to the surface a group of statesmen and orators as different in their views and opinions, as if they had been men of different ages of the world. The Liberalists constituted the opposition, and numbered among its leaders, Manuel, General Foy, Benjamin Constant, Lafitte

Bignon, Casimir-Perier, and others. Under Charles X it was a struggle of reason against blind devotion to old rules and forms. At length the last gave way—Charles X. was compelled to abdicate, and the Revolution of 1830 introduced a new order of things, which still continues.

It is useless to speak of the present Parliament of France. Like the American Congress, or the British Parliament, it is governed by the spirit of the politician, rather than the elevated views of the statesman, or the devotion of the patriot. Between the different parties it is a struggle of tactics rather than of intellect—votes are carried, and changes wrought, more by the power of machinery than the power of truth or eloquence. The Chamber of Peers is almost a nullity, while over that of the deputies the politic Louis Philippe holds a strong and steady hand. Guizot and Thiers have occupied the most prominent place in the public eye, under the present dynasty. But the *strategy* of parliaments is now of more consequence and interest than their speeches, for management is found to secure votes better than they. This is natural—in unexciting times everything assumes a business form and is conducted on business principles—and commerce, and finance, and tariff, and trade, are not calculated to develop the powers of the orator, or call forth the highest kind of eloquence.

# ORATORS OF FRANCE.

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## CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

### MIRABEAU.

As Christopher Columbus, after having traversed a vast extent of ocean, was advancing tranquilly towards the continent of America, all of a sudden the wind blows, the lightning flashes, the thunder mutters, the cordage is rent, the pilot alarmed, and the vessel is on the verge of being lost, of being engulfed in the waves. But Columbus himself, while his soldiers and sailors gave themselves up to prayer and to despair, confiding in his high destinies, seized the helm, steered through the roarings of the tempest and the horrors of the deep night, and feeling the prow of his vessel ground upon the shores of the New World, he cried with a loud voice: "Land! land!" So, when the Revolution was losing its course with started anchors and torn sails, upon a rocky and tempestuous sea, Mirabeau taking his stand on the fore-deck, bade defiance to the flashing of the thunderbolt, and cheering the trembling passengers, raised in the midst of them his prophetic voice, and pointed them out the promised land of liberty.

All things concurred to make Mirabeau the grand potentate of the tribune, his peculiar organization, his life, his studies, his domestic broils, the extraordinary times in which he appeared, the spirit and manner of deliberation of the Constituent Assembly, and the combination truly marvellous of his oratorical faculties. It is requisite, in an assembly of twelve hundred legislators, that the orator should be discernible from a distance, and Mirabeau was discernible from a distance. It is requisite that he be audible from a

distance, and Mirabeau was thus audible. It is requisite that the details of his physiognomy should disappear in the general expression, that the internal man be revealed in the features, and that the grandeur of the soul be transfused into the countenance and the discourse. But Mirabeau had this general expression, those features, that soul. Mirabeau in the tribune was the most imposing of orators: an orator so consummate, that it is harder to say what he wanted than what he possessed.

Mirabeau had a massive and square obesity of figure, thick lips, a forehead broad, bony, prominent; arched eyebrows, an eagle eye, cheeks flat and somewhat flabby, features full of pock-holes and blotches, a voice of thunder, an enormous mass of hair, and the face of a lion.

Born with a frame of iron and a temperament of flame, he transcended the virtues and the vices of his race. The passions took him up almost in his cradle, and devoured him throughout his life. His exuberant faculties, unable to work out their development in the exterior world, concentrated inwardly upon themselves. There passed within him an agglomeration, a laboring, a fermentation of all sorts of ingredients, like the volcano which condenses, amalgamates, fuses and brays its lava torrents before hurling them into the air through its flaming mouth. Greek and Latin literature, foreign languages, mathematics, philosophy, music, he learned all, retained all, was master of all. Fencing, swimming, horsemanship, dancing, running, wrestling, all exercises were familiar to him. The vicissitudes which the fortunate philosophers of the age had merely depicted, he had experienced. He had proudly looked despotism, paternal and ministerial, in the face, without fear and without submission. Poor, a fugitive, an exile, an outlaw, the inmate of a prison, every day, every hour of his youth was a fault, a passion, a study, a strife. Behind the bars of dungeons and bastilles, with pen in hand and brow inclined over his books, he stowed the vast repositories of his memory with the richest and most varied treasures. His soul was tempered and re-

tempered in his indignant attacks upon tyranny, like those steel weapons that are plunged in water, while still red from the furnace.

While the rest of the aristocratic youth were dissipating their days in stupid and frivolous debauchery, he was courageously struggling against man and against fortune. His soul, fortified rather than revolted by injustice and arbitrary wrong, grew resolute in presence of obstacles; his intellect, sharpened by misfortune, abounded in expedients and contrivances. What variety of stratagems! what fertility of resources! what height of daring! what depth of sagacity! How escape from his father; from the police; from his enemies?—how fly, and by what means?—how live alone?—how above all support a companion?—how obtain an appeal from his capital sentence?—how touch his father to compassion, without the preliminary of separating from his mistress?—how avoid separating from her, if he would return to his wife?—how execute this separation without degrading her, without driving her to despair?—how meet such a succession of ever-springing wants?—how parry so many perplexities of situation, so many exigencies, so many delicacies, so many dangers?—how plead positions the contrary of one another without flaw of logic and without breach of morality? He doubles, he multiplies himself; he defends himself and he attacks by turns; he supplicates, threatens; he writes and speaks, speaks in his own cause like a lawyer, without being a lawyer, better than a lawyer, in short as Mirabeau alone could speak. Immoral defense, no doubt! situation false and sophistical; days without repose, nights without sleep; tempestuous life bestrewn with shoals and wrecks; efforts ever strained, sometimes succeeding, commonly failing! But in a single heart, what lessons of the human heart! and in that head, what elaboration of mind! what fecundation! what fruits! How well he could adapt himself, insinuate himself, rise to haughtiness, stoop to humility, take every tone of composition, whether he paints to Sophie, in lines of fire, the passionate torments of

his soul, or, at a later period, writes the people of Marseilles a letter on the high price of corn, which is a little masterpiece of popular good sense, precise calculation and expository simplicity!

Every where, in every thing, already Mirabeau reveals himself;—in his letters, in his pleadings, in his memorials, in his treatises on arbitrary imprisonments, on the liberty of the press, on the privileges of the nobility, on the inequality of distinctions, on the financial affairs and the situation of Europe: enemy of every abuse, vehement, polemic, bold reformer; more remarkable, it is true, for elevation, hardihood, and originality of thought, for sagacity of observation, and vigor of reasoning, than for the graces of form; verbose, even loose, incorrect, unequal, but rapid and picturesque in style,—a spoken, not a written style, as is that of most orators. With what masculine eloquence he objurgates the King of Prussia! “Do but what the son of your slave will have done ten times a day, ten times better than you, the courtiers will tell you you have performed an extraordinary action. Give full reign to your passions, they will tell you you do well. Squander the sweat and the blood of your subjects like the water of the rivers, they will say you do well. If you descend to avenge yourself,—you so powerful,—they will say you do well. They have said so, when Alexander, in his drunkenness, tore open with his piognard the bosom of his friend. They have said so, when Nerc assassinated his mother.”

Is not this in the oratorical style?

The orator is equally discovered in his letter of thanks to the Tiers-état of Marseilles. “O Marseilles! ancient, august city, asylum of liberty, may the regeneration which now awaits the kingdom, shed upon thee and thine all the choicest of its blessings! Language fails me to tell thee either what I feel or what I think; but a heart remains to me,—that heart is inexhaustible, and you have ardently and enduringly its best wishes!”

On the other hand, is it not a marvel to find him, in times

so backward, present already, in the name of the Commons, to the Assembly (*Etats*) of Provence, the basis of universal suffrage and representative government? "When a nation is too numerous to come together in a single assembly, it forms several bodies, and the individuals of each particular body delegate to one of their number the right of voting in their behalf.—Every representative is, by consequence, the result of election. The collection of representatives is the nation, and all those who are not representatives, must have been so, by the fact alone that they are represented.—There should not be an individual in the nation who is not either elector or electee, representing or represented." Would it not be said that Mirabeau had already discovered, or rather created, by an effort of his precursory genius, the form, the definitions, and the terms of political language? Let us recapitulate, for his life has several phases; let us recapitulate Mirabeau at this stage of his career.

He had lived a life of suffering and study in the *bastilles*, experienced the rigors and privations of exile, written politics, framed codes, pleaded his own causes, prepared memorials, espoused the cause of the multitude, broken with his cast, frequented the ministers, visited England, studied Switzerland, resided in Holland, observed in Prussia. At once a man of study and a man of pleasure, a soldier, a prisoner of state, a victim of tyranny, a man of letters, a statesman, a diplomatist, a courtier, a demagogue; he had meditated, suffered, compared, judged, legislated, published books, pronounced orations. His parliamentary education had been completed, before the Parliament itself was in existence. He at the outset spoke fluently the political dialect, which his colleagues only lisped. He spoke it better than the advocates of the bar,—better than the preachers of the pulpit. He was an orator before any one suspected it, perhaps before even he knew it himself. He was destined to become speedily the leader, no less than the orator of the Constituent Assembly, the prince of the modern tribune, the very god of eloquence, and, to say all

in a word, the grand impersonation of the Revolution of 1789.

The Revolution of 1789 has been the great even of modern times. The philosophers by their writings, the Parliaments by their resistances, the court by its insane prodigalities, the clergy by its excessive wealth, the people by its misery, the financial establishment by its bankruptcies, legislation by its abuses, civilization by its progress, England and the United States by their example,—all portended the approach of a catastrophe.

The old social structure of our fathers had run to decay from top to bottom. As portions of the edifice were stripped to be repaired, it was found to be all gnawn by worms and undermined by time. Accordingly, as soon as the hammer of the demolisher had detached a few stones, the walls shook throughout, and the fabric fell to pieces. All was confusion amid the ruins, when the States-General were convoked. A general cry arose to demand, that there should no more be divers stories superposed one upon another, neither spacious apartments for one or a few persons, nor small ones for a multitude of men; that thenceforth the edifice should not belong to a single proprietor, but to all the inhabitants of the States, and that their delegates should be charged to provide for the re-construction, insurance, and furnishing of the new social mansion. Mirabeau stepped forth upon the course like a giant, and the ground trembled beneath his footsteps. A noble, he leads to battle the Tiers-état against the nobility, who had imprudently driven him from their ranks. He compares himself to Gracchus, proscribed by the Roman senate. "Thus," said he, "perished the last of the Gracchi by the hands of the patricians. But, having received the mortal blow, he flung a handful of dust towards heaven, attesting the avenging gods, and from this dust arose Marius—Marius less great in having exterminated the Cimbri, than in having quelled in Rome the aristocracy of the nobility!" There is not in antiquity a passage more oratorical. Furthermore, all this

discourse is of a high order of eloquence, and it terminates with this beautiful prophecy :

“Privileges must have an end, but the people is eternal.”

This lofty reply made his adversaries quake, and Mirabeau threw himself without more reserve into the paths of democracy. Once upon this ground he tempered it, he solidified it under his feet, he took his position, and wrestled as the popular champion, against the Orders of Clergy and Nobility, with all the power of his logic, and all the energy of his indomitable will.

It is vulgarly imagined that the force of Mirabeau consisted in the dewlaps of his bullish neck, in the thick masses of his lion-like hair ; that he swept down his adversaries by a swing of his tail ; that he rolled down upon them with the roarings and fury of a torrent ; that he dismayed them by a look ; that he overwhelmed them with the bursts of his thunder-like voice : this is to praise him for the exterior qualities of port, voice, and gesture, as we would praise a gladiator or a dramatic actor ; it is not to praise as he ought to be praised this great orator. Doubtless Mirabeau owed a great deal, at the outset of his oratorical career, to the *prestige* of his name. For he was already master of the Assembly by the reputation of his eloquence, before he became so by his eloquence itself.

Doubtless Mirabeau owed much to that penetrating, flexible, and sonorous voice which used to fill with ease the ears of twelve hundred persons, to those haughty accents which infused life and passion into his cause, to those impetuous gestures, which flung to his affrighted adversaries defiances that dared them to reply. Doubtless he owed much to the inferiority of his rivals ; for in his presence the other celebrities were effaced, or rather they were grouped as satellites about this magnificent luminary only to render it, by the contrast, of a more vivid effulgence. The able Maury was but an elegant rhetorician ; Cazalès, a fluent speaker ; Sieyès, a taciturn metaphysician ; Thouret, a

jurist; Barnave, a hope. But what established its unrivalled dominion over the Assembly was, in the first place, the enthusiastical predisposition of the Assembly itself; it was the multitude and the concurrence of his astonishing faculties, his productive facility, the immensity of his studies and his knowledge; it was the grandeur and breadth of his political views, the solidity of his reasoning, the elaborateness and profundity of his discourses, the vehemence of his improvisations, and the pungency of his repartees.

How different those times from ours! The whole population of Paris used to mingle breathlessly in the discussions of the legislature. One hundred thousand citizens filled the Tuileries, the Place Vendôme, the streets adjacent, and copied bulletins were passed from hand to hand, circulated, thrown among the crowd, containing the occurrences of each moment of the debate. There was then some public life and spirit. The nation, the citizens, the Assembly, were all in expectation of some great events, all full of that electric and vague excitement so favorable to the exhibitions of the tribune and the triumphs of eloquence. We, who live in an epoch without faith or principles, devoured as we are from head to foot with the leprosy of political materialism—we, Assemblies of manikins who inflate ourselves like the mountain in labor, to bring forth but a mouse—we, seekers of jobs, of ministerial office, of ribbons, epaulettes, collectorships and judgeships—we, a race of brokers and stockjobbers, of Haytian or Neapolitan three or five per cent—we, men of court, of police, of coteries, of all sorts of times, of all sorts of governments, of all sorts of journalism, of all sorts of opinion—we, deputies of a parish or of a fraternity; deputies of a harbor, of a railroad, of a canal, of a vineyard; deputies of sugar-cane or beet-root; deputies of oil or of bitumen; deputies of charcoal, of salt, of iron, of flax; deputies of bovine, equine, asinine interests; deputies, in short, of all things except of France, we shall never be able to comprehend all that there was in that famous Constituent Assembly of deep conviction and

thorough sincerity, of simplicity of heart, of singleness of purpose, of virtue, of disinterestedness, and of veritable grandeur.

No, one would have said there existed then in this Assembly and this nation of our fathers, no men of mature years who had experienced the evil days of despotism, none of old age who remembered the past. All was generous self-sacrifice, patriotic enthusiasm, raptures of liberty, boundless aspirations after a happier future. It was as a beautiful sun which dissolves the clouds of spring, warms the frozen limbs, and gilds every object with its pure and genial light. The nation, youthful and dreamy, had imaginings of distant voices inviting it to the loftiest destinies. It had fits of trembling, of tears, of smiles, like a mother in the delivery of her first-born child. It was the Revolution in the cradle.

Our present Chambers are so many little chapels, where each one places his own image upon the altar, chants magnificates, and pays adoration to himself. Our present orators are generally but officers without soldiers. They represent but obsolete opinions, decayed and dying parties, fractions of fractions, if not of units. They are never heard of beyond the range of their voice. They have no influence upon the public.

On the contrary, Mirabeau represented and conducted an era. We seem to see him still in the stormy night of the past, standing on the mountain, like another Moses, amid thunder and lightning, bearing the tables of the law in his hands, and his brow encircled with a halo of flame, until he disappears into the depths of the shade which rises and wraps him.

It is at the voice of Mirabeau that the States-General assemble. It is by the light of his torch they begin their march. The Order of the Nobility separate violently and revolt. Mirabeau moderates, by his forbearance, the hot-headedness of the *Tiers-Etat*. He flatters, he courts, he honors the minority of the Clergy, for the purpose of win

ning it to his side ; he ascribes to the King his own thoughts, to intimidate the Nobles. Then, after he has by little and little infused confidence into the timid burgesses (*bourgeois*) of the Commons—at first astonished at the temerity of their undertaking—he dazzles them of a sudden with the title of Representative of the people. They are no longer a fraction of the Assembly—not even the largest—but the whole Assembly. The orders of the Clergy and of the Nobles are about to fade and be absorbed, like feeble rays in the blaze of the national majesty.

“What! need I,” says he, “demonstrate that the division of Orders, that debate and deliberation by Order, would be a contrivance truly sublime for the purpose of establishing constitutionally selfishness in the priesthood, pride in the aristocracy, baseness in the people, confusion among all interests, corruption in all classes, cupidity in every soul, the insignificance of the nation, the impotence of the prince, the despotism of the ministry?”

It was not enough for Mirabeau to have, by an able manœuvre, separated the forces and sundered the union of the two dissenting orders, to have sanctioned the permanence of insurrection by the personal inviolability of the insurgents, in fine, to have obtained a decreal of the unity, indivisibility, and sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly—it was further necessary to find for this sovereignty occupation and authority.

The Court, by its insane, arbitrary and prodigal creation of imposts, and the Nobles and Clergy, by their refusal to contribute, had piled up the public debt and precipitated the ruin of the finances. The evil bore within itself the remedy, remedy still more of a political than a financial nature, remedy which could cure the nation only in as far as it should be applied by its own hands. This remedy was the previous voting of all taxation by the people. But the Constituent Assembly represented the people. Therefore, by refusing the supplies, it could arrest the government, as we dismount the spring of a clock, as the axle-tree is de-

tached from the whirling chariot. With the refusal of the impost proposed by Mirabeau, the Revolution was already accomplished.

Our fathers cast their works in brass, we scrape ours upon glass. They wisely looked for resemblances, we foolishly amalgamate contraries. They invented, we copy. They were architects, we are but masons. Since Mirabeau, we have scarce done anything but retrograde in political science; and if they doubt this, let them read the Declaration of the Rights of Man, by Mirabeau. It contained:

The equality and the liberty of all men by right of birth. —The establishment, modification and periodic revision of the Constitution by the people; the Law, the expression of the general will; the delegation of the legislative power to representatives frequently renewed, legally and freely elected, always existing, annually assembled, and inviolable.

The infallibility of the King, and the responsibility of the ministers.

The liberty of others, the limit of the liberty of each.

The liberty of the person, and by way of guarantee, the publicity of the charge, the proceedings and the judgment, the priority and gradation of penalties.

The liberty of thought, by speech, writing, or printing, subject to the repression of abuse.

The liberty of worship, subject to the police.

The liberty of political association, subject to municipal surveillance.

The liberty of locomotion from the interior to other countries.

The liberty of property, commerce, and labor.

The expropriation of private property for public use, providing a just indemnity.

The previous voting, the proportional equality, the morality, justice, and moderation of taxation.

The establishment of a regular accountability, economy in expenditures, moderate salaries, and the abolition of perquisites and sinecures.

The admissibility of every citizen to the offices civil, ecclesiastical, military.

The subordination of the military to the civil authorities.

Resistance to oppression.

The Declaration of Rights was a magnificent prologue to the Constitution, like those porches with which the ancients adorned the temples of their gods. It was a political declaration full of grandeur and majesty, a synopsis of the doctrines of the philosophers and publicists of the eighteenth century, an imitation of the American constitution. The French genius loves to generalize, and in the fluctuating disorder of opinions, it was necessary to have a rallying point, a basis of discussion. The preamble of the Constitution of 1793, and the charters of 1814 and 1830 are, in many respects, but the reproduction, democratized or aristocratized, of Mirabeau's "Declaration of the Rights of Man."

The speeches of Mirabeau are commonly but the eloquent commentary of his Declaration of Rights. He was not content, this bold innovator, with discovering new coasts and erecting upon them a few landmarks. He built walls and cities, and beneath the rubbish and ruins of so many constitutions which have since crumbled upon one another, we find still this day the granite foundations whereupon they were raised.

He sowed profusely in his comprehensive course, all the just and sacred maxims of representative government—the sovereignty of the people; the delegation of powers; the veto, the independence, responsibility, and countersignature of the ministers; the grand jury; the equality of taxation. He advocates the liberty of the press, of religious worship, of the individual, of locomotion; amotion from office; the constitution of municipalities and courts of justice; the establishment of the National Guard and of the Jury; the variability of the civil list, and its reduction to a million of income; exemption from taxes of the necessitous classes; uniformity of the currency and the decimal calculation;

the liberty of peaceful and unarmed associations; the secrecy of letters; the frequent and periodical renewal of the legislature; the annual vote of the army estimates; the pecuniary responsibility of the collectors, and the penal responsibility of the communes; the passports to deputies; the sale of national property; the verification of parliamentary powers by the Parliament; the employment of armed force at the requisition, and in presence of the municipal officers elected by the people; houses of paternal correction; martial law; equality of successions; the legal presence, and the right of interrogating the ministers in the bosom of the Assembly; the denomination of the departments; a civic education. He opposed the peremptory mandates, the duality of the Chambers; the immutability of the church property; the initiative direct and personal of the King; the lottery system; the permanence of the districts.

One is surprised, recoils affrighted, before the gigantic works accomplished by Mirabeau during the two years of his parliamentary life. Elaborate discourses, apostrophes, replies, motions, addresses, letters to constituents, newspaper controversy, reports, morning sessions, evening sessions, committee business, he participates in all, superintends all. Nothing for him was too great, nothing too little; nothing too complex, and nothing too simple. He bears upon his shoulders a world of labors, and seems, in that Herculean career, to experience neither fatigue or distaste. He unravelled with perfect ease the most complicated difficulties, and his restless activity exhausted the whole circle of subjects, without being able to satisfy itself. He kept occupied all at the same time his numerous friends, his constituents, his agents, his secretaries. He conversed, debated, listened, dictated, read, compiled, wrote, declaimed, maintained a correspondence with all France. He digested the labors of others, assimilating them so as that they became his own. He used to receive notes as he ascended the tribune, in the tribune even, and pass them, without pausing, into the texture of

his discourse. He retouched the harangues and reports of which he had given the frame, the plan, the idea. He chastened them with his practised judgment, colored them with his vivid expressions, strengthened them with his vigorous thought. This sublime plagiarist, this grand master, employed his aids and his pupils to extract the marble from the quarry and chip off the grosser parts, like the statuary who, when the block is rough-hewn, approaches, takes his chisel, gives it respiration and life, and makes it a hero or a god.

Mirabeau had a perfect understanding of the mechanism and the rights of a deliberative body. He knew how far it may go and where it should stop. His disciplinary formulas have passed into our rules, his maxims into our laws, his counsels into our policy. His words were law. He presided as he spoke, with a grave dignity, and used to reply to the several deputations with such fertility of eloquence and felicity of language, that it may be truly said the Constituent Assembly has never been better represented than by Mirabeau, whether in the chair of the president or in the tribune of the orator. What a grand conception he formed of the national representation when saying: "Every deputation from the people astounds my courage." It was with these holy emotions he approached the tribune.

Mirabeau used to premeditate most of his discourses.—His comparison of the Gracchi, his allusion to the Tarpeian rock, his apostrophe to Sieyès, his famous speeches on the constitution, on the right of war and peace, the royal veto, the property of the Clergy, the lottery, the mines, bankruptcy, the assignats, slavery, national education, the law of successions, where he displays such treasures of science and profound elaboration of thought—all these are written pieces.

His manner as an orator is that of the great masters of antiquity, with an admirable energy of gesture and a vehemence of diction which perhaps they had never reached. He is strong, because he does not diffuse himself; he is

natural, because he uses no ornaments; he is eloquent, because he is simple; he does not imitate others, because he needs but to be himself; he does not surcharge his discourse with a baggage of epithets, because they would retard it; he does not run into digressions, for fear of wandering from the question. His exordiums are sometimes abrupt, sometimes majestic, as it comports with the subject. His narration of facts is clear. His statement of the question is precise and positive. His ample and sonorous phraseology much resembles the spoken phraseology of Cicero. He unrolls, with a solemn slowness, the folds of his discourse. He does not accumulate his enumerations as ornaments, but as proofs. He seeks not the harmony of words, but the concatenation of ideas. He does not exhaust a subject to the dregs, he takes but the flower. Would he dazzle, the most brilliant images spring up beneath his steps; would he touch, he abounds in raptures of emotion, in tender persuasions, in oratorical transports which do not conflict with, but sustain, which are never confounded with, but follow, each other, which seem to produce one another successively and flow with a happy disorder from that fine and prolific nature.

But when he comes to the point in debate, when he enters the heart of the question, he is substantial, nervous, logical as Demosthenes. He advances in a serried and impenetrable order. He reviews his proofs, disposes the plan of attack, and arrays them in order of battle. Mailed in the armor of dialectics, he sounds the charge, rushes upon the adversaries, seizes and prostrates them, nor does he loose his hold till he compels them, knee on neck, to avow themselves vanquished. If they retreat, he pursues, attacks them front and rear, presses upon them, drives them, and brings them inevitably within the imperial circle which he had designated for their destruction; like those who, upon the deck of a narrow vessel, captured by boarding her, place a hopeless enemy between their sword and the ocean.

How his language must have surprised by its novelty and thrilled the popular heart, when he drew this picture of a legal constitution :—

“ Too often are bayonets the only remedy applied to the convulsions of oppression and want. But bayonets never re-establish but the peace of terror, the silence of despotism. Ah! the people are not a furious herd which must be kept in chains! Always quiet and moderate, when they are truly free, they are violent and unruly but under those governments where they are systematically debased in order to have a pretext to despise them. When we consider what must result to the happiness of twenty-five millions of men, from a legal constitution in place of ministerial caprices,—from the consent of all the wills and the co-operation of all the lights of the nation in the improvement of our laws, from the reform of abuses, from the reduction of taxes, from economy in the finances, from the mitigation of the penal laws, from regularity of procedure in the tribunals, from the abolition of a multitude of servitudes which shackle industry and mutilate the human faculties, in a word, from that grand system of liberty, which, planted on the firm basis of freely-elected municipalities, rises gradually to the provincial administrations, and receives its completion from the annual recurrence of the States-General—when we weigh all that must result from the restoration of this vast empire, who does not feel that the greatest of crimes, the darkest outrage against humanity, would be to offer opposition to the rising destiny of our country and thrust her back into the depths of the abyss, there to hold her oppressed beneath the burthen of all her chains.”

With what accuracy, with what nicety of observation he enumerates the difficulties of the civil and military administration of Bailly and Lafayette when he proposes to vote them the thanks of the Assembly :—

“ What an administration! what an epoch, where all is to be feared and all to be braved! when tumult begets tumult, when an affray is produced by the very means taken

to prevent it:—when moderation is unceasingly necessary, and moderation appears pusillanimity, timidity, treason—when you are beset with a thousand counsels, and yet must take your own—when all persons are to be dreaded, even citizens whose intentions are pure, but whom distrust, excitement, exaggeration, render almost as formidable as conspirators—when one is obliged, even in critical circumstances, to yield up his wisdom, to lead anarchy in order to repress it, to assume an employment glorious, it is true, but environed with the most harassing alarms—when it is necessary besides, in the midst of such and so many difficulties, to show a serene countenance, to be always calm, to enforce order even in the smallest details, to offend no one, to heal all jealousies, to serve incessantly and seek to please, but without the appearance of being a servant!”

When M. Neckar, minister of finance, asked the Assembly for a vote of confidence, Mirabeau, in order to carry it by storm, displayed all the irony of his eloquence and all the might of his logic; and when he saw the auditory shaken, he hurled against bankruptcy the following fulminations:—

“ Oh! if declarations less solemn did not guarantee our respect for the public faith, our horror of the infamous word Bankruptcy, I should say to those who familiarize themselves perhaps with the idea of repudiating the public engagements, through fear of excessive sacrifices, through terror of taxation:—‘ What, then, is bankruptcy, if it is not the cruelest, the most iniquitous, the most disastrous of imposts? My friends, listen to me, a word, a single word!

“ ‘ Two centuries of depredation and robbery have excavated the abyss wherein the kingdom is on the verge of being engulfed. This frightful gulf it is indispensable to fill up. Well, here is a list of the proprietors. Choose from among the richest, so as to sacrifice the smallest number of the citizens. But choose! for is it not expedient that a small number perish to save the mass of the people? Come—these two thousand notables possess wherewith to supply

the deficit. Restore order to our finances, peace and prosperity to the kingdom. Strike, and immolate pitilessly these melancholy victims, precipitate them into the abyss; it is about to close . . . . . What, you recoil with horror! . . . . . Inconsistent, pusillanimous men! And do you not see that in decreeing bankruptcy—or, what is more odious still, in rendering it inevitable without decreeing—you disgrace yourselves with an act a thousand times more criminal; for, in fact, that horrible sacrifice would remove the deficiency. But do you imagine, that because you refuse to pay, you shall cease to owe? Do you think the thousands, the millions of men who will lose in an instant, by the dreadful explosion or its revulsions, all that constituted the comfort of their lives, and perhaps their sole means of subsistence, will leave you in the peaceable enjoyment of your crime? Stoical contemplators of the incalculable woes which this catastrophe will scatter over France; unfeeling egotists, who think these convulsions of despair and wretchedness will pass away like so many others, and pass the more rapidly as they will be the more violent, are you quite sure that so many men without bread will leave you tranquilly to luxuriate amid the viands which you will have been unwilling to curtail in either variety or delicacy? . . . . . No, you will perish; and in the universal conflagration, which you do not tremble to kindle, the loss of your honor will not save you a single one of your detestable luxuries! Vote, then, this extraordinary subsidy, and may it prove sufficient! Vote it, because the class most interested in the sacrifice which the government demands, is you yourselves! Vote it, because the public exigencies allow of no evasion, and that you will be responsible for every delay! Beware of asking time; misfortune never grants it. What! gentlemen, in reference to a ridiculous movement of the Palais-Royal, a ludicrous insurrection which had never any consequence except in the weak imaginations or the wicked purposes of a few designing men, you have heard not long since these insane cries: *Cataline is at the gates of Rome, and you de-*

*liberate*: And assuredly, there was around you neither Cataline, nor danger, nor factions, nor Rome. . . . But to-day, bankruptcy, hideous bankruptcy, is there before you. It threatens to consume you, your country, your property, your honor! . . . . And you deliberate!"

This is as beautiful as it is antique.

Mirabeau in his premeditated discourses was admirable. But what was he not in his extemporaneous effusions! His natural vehemence, of which he repressed the flights in his prepared speeches, broke down all barriers in his improvisations. A sort of nervous irritability gave then to his whole frame an almost preternatural animation and life. His breast dilated with an impetuous breathing. His low face became wrinkled and contorted. His eyes shot forth flame. He roared, he stamped, he shook the fierce mass of his hair, all whitened with foam; he trod the tribune with the supreme authority of a master, and the imperial air of a king. What an interesting spectacle to behold him, momentarily, erect and exalt himself under the pressure of obstacle! To see him display the pride of his commanding brow! To see him, like the ancient orator, when, with all the powers of his unchained eloquence, he was wont to sway to and fro in the Forum the agitated waves of the Roman multitude! Then would he throw by the measured notes of his declamation, habitually grave and solemn. Then would escape him broken exclamations, tones of thunder, and accents of heart-rending and terrible pathos. He concealed with the flesh and color of his rhetoric the sinewy arguments of his dialectics. He transported the Assembly, because he was himself transported. And yet—so extraordinary was his force—he abandoned himself to the torrent of his eloquence, without wandering from his course; he mastered others by its sovereign sway, without losing for an instant his own self-control.

His improvisations, whether from rapid exhaustion, or rather instinct of his art, were brief. He knew that strong emotions lose their effect by duration—that it is unwise to

leave the enthusiasm of friends the time to cool, or the objections of adversaries time for preparation—that people soon come to laugh at the thunder which rumbles in the air without producing a bolt, and that an antagonist should be struck down promptly, like the cannon ball which kills at a blow.

It was contended the Assembly ought not to have the initiative in the impeachment of the ministers. Mirabeau replied on the spot :

“ You forget that the people to whom you oppose the limitation of the three powers, is the source of all the powers, and that it alone can delegate them ! You forget that it is to the sovereign you would deny the control of his own administrators ! You forget, in short, that we, the representatives of the sovereign,—in presence of whom stand suspended all the powers of the State, those even of the chief of the nation in case of conflict,—you forget that we by no means pretend to place or displace ministers by virtue of our decrees, but solely to manifest the opinion of our constituents respecting such or such a minister ! What ! you would refuse us the simple right of declaration—you who accord us that of accusing, of prosecuting, and of creating a tribunal to punish these fabrications of iniquity, the machinations of which, by a palpable contradiction, you would have us to contemplate in a respectful silence ! Do you not see then how much a better lot I would ensure our governors than you, how much I exceed you in moderation ? You allow no interval between a boding silence and a sanguinary denunciation. To say nothing or to punish, to obey or to strike—such is your system ! And for me, I would notify before denouncing, I would remonstrate before casting reproach ! ”

He frequently used, by inspiration, those vivid figures which transport of a sudden, men, objects, and places on the stage, and make them hear, speak, and act, as if they were really present. The Assembly was about to plunge imprudently into religious quarrels. Mirabeau, to cut the matter short, rose and said : “ Recollect that from this place, from the very tribune where I now speak, I can see the window

of the palace through which factious miscreants, uniting temporal interests with the most sacred interests of religion, had fired by the hand of a king of the French the fatal gun which was to be the signal of the massacre of the Huguenots!"

A deputation of the Assembly was preparing to wait upon the King to request the dismissal of the troops, already three times refused. The indignant Mirabeau, unable to contain himself, addresses the Committee:—

"Say to the King—say to him, that the hordes of foreigners by whom we are invested, have received yesterday the visit of the princes, of the princesses, of the favorites, male and female, also their caresses, and their exhortations, and their presents! Say to him that the whole night, these foreign satellites, gorged with gold and wine, have been predicting in their impious songs the enslavement of France, and invoking with their brutal vows the destruction of the National Assembly! Say to him that in his very palace, the courtiers have led their dances to the sound of this barbarous music, and that such was the prelude of the Saint-Bartholomew!"

In his fine discourse on the "right of peace and war," Mirabeau had arrived after some confusion of ideas, at a precise solution of the difficulty, by means of ministerial responsibility, and the refusal of the supplies on the part of the legislative power. But as soon as he had uttered these closing words: "Fear not that a rebel King, abdicating of himself his sceptre, will expose himself to the peril of running from victory to the scaffold," he was interrupted with violent murmurs. D'Espremenil moved that he be called to order, for having attacked the inviolability of the King! "You have all," replied Mirabeau at the instant, "heard my supposition of a despotic and revolted King, who should come, with an army of Frenchmen, to conquer the position of tyrants. But a King in this position, is no longer a King."—General applause:—Mirabeau proceeds: "It is the tocsin of necessity alone which can give the signal, when the moment is come for fulfilling the imprescriptable

duty of resistance—a duty always imperative whenever the Constitution is violated, always triumphant when the resistance is just and truly national.”

Are not these words the prophetic and living picture of the Revolution of July.

In the same effusion and a little after, Mirabeau, in a celebrated adjuration, introduces on the stage the Abbe Sieyès.—“I will not conceal,” said he, “my deep regret that the man who has laid the foundations of the Constitution, that the man who has revealed to the world the true principles of representative government, who condemns himself to a silence which I deplore, which I think culpable, that the Abbe Sieyès—I ask his pardon for naming him—does not come forward to insert, himself, in his constitution, one of the most important springs of the social order. This occasions me the more pain, that crushed beneath a weight of labor beyond my intellectual forces, unceasingly hurried off from self-collection and meditation, which are the principal sources of mental power, I had not myself turned attention to this question of the completion of my work, accustomed as I was to repose upon that great thinker. I have pressed him, conjured, implored in the name of the friendship with which he honors me, in the name of Patriotism—that sentiment far more energetic and holy—to endow us with the treasure of his ideas, not to leave a blank in the Constitution. He has refused me, I denounce him to you! I conjure you, in my turn, to obtain his opinion which ought not to be a secret, to rescue in fine from discouragement a man whose silence and seclusion I regard as a public calamity.”

I have remarked that what has raised Mirabeau incomparably beyond other orators, is the profundity and breadth of his thoughts, the solidity of his reasoning, the vehemence of his improvisations; but it is especially the unexampled felicity of his repartees. In fact, the auditors and principally the rival orators hold themselves on their guard against premeditated speeches. As they know that the orator has

spread in advance his toils to surprise them, they prepare accordingly in advance to elude him. They search for, they divine, they discover, they dispose for themselves, with more or less of ability, the arguments which he must employ, his facts, his proofs, his insinuations, and sometimes even his figures and happiest movements. They have thus, all ready to meet him, their objections. They shut the air-and-eye holes of their helmet, they cover the weak points of their cuirass where his lance might penetrate; and when the orator crosses the barrier, and rushes impetuous to the conflict, he encounters before him an enemy armed cap-a-pie, who bars his way and disputes valiantly the victory.—But a happy oratorical retort astonishes and delights even your adversaries; it produces the effect of things unexpected. It is a startling counterplot, which cuts the gordian knots of the play and precipitates the catastrophe. It is the lightning flash amid the darkness of night. It is the arm which strikes in the buckler of the enemy, who draws it instantly and returns it to pierce the bosom of him who had launched it.—The repartee shakes the irresolute and floating masses of an assembly. It comes upon you, as the eagle, concealed in the hollow of a rock, makes a stoop at its prey and carries it off all palpitating in its talons, before it even has emitted a cry. It arouses, by the stimulant of its novelty, the thick-skulled, phlegmatic, and drowsy deputies who were falling asleep. It sends a sudden and softening thrill to the soul. It fires the audience to cry, To arms! to arms! It wrings from the bosom exclamations of wrath. It provokes laughter inextinguishable. It compels the adversary—officer or soldier—to go hide his shame in the ranks of his company, who open them to receive him but with pity and derision. It resolves with a word the question in a debate. It signifies an event. It reveals a character. It paints a situation. It absolves, it condemns, a party. It makes a reputation, or it unmakes it. It glorifies, it stigmatizes, it dejects, it cheers, it unbinds, it reattaches, it saves, it slays. It attracts, it suspends magically, as by a golden chain, an entire assem-

bly from the lips of a single man. It concentrates at the same time its whole attention upon a single point, for a moment produces unanimity, and may decide of a sudden the loss or the gain of a parliamentary battle.

Never did Mirabeau shrink from an objection or an adversary. He drew himself up to his full height under the menace of his enemies, and burst by sledge-blows the nail which it was intended he should draw.—In the tribune he braved the prejudices, the dumb objurgations and muttering impatience of the Assembly. Immovable as a rock, he crossed his arms and awaited silence.—He retorted instantly, blow after blow, upon all opponents and on all subjects, with a rapidity of action and a nicety of pertinence really surprising. He painted men and things with a manner and words entirely his own.—How energetically did he describe France, “an unconstituted aggregation of disunited people.”—He used to say in his monarchical language: “The monarch is the perpetual representative of the people, and the deputies are the temporary representatives.”—Member of the directory of Paris, he expressed himself thus before the King: “A tall tree covers with its shade a large surface. Its roots shoot wide and deep through the soil and entwine themselves around eternal rocks. To pull it down the earth itself must be uptorn. Such, Sire, is the image of constitutional monarchy.”—Assailed impertinently by M. de Faucigny, he words the reprimand in these terms: “The Assembly, satisfied with the repentance you testify, remits you, sir, the penalty which you have incurred.”

What vivacity, what actuality, what nobleness in all these repartees! what keen and chivalrous irony! what vigor!

The pretensions of the republic of Genoa to the island of Corsica were occupying the deliberation of the house at unnecessary length.

Mirabeau:—“I do not think that a league between Ragusa, Lucca, Saint-Marco, and some other powers equally formidable, ought to give you great inquietude; nor do I regard as very dangerous the republic of Genoa, whose armies

have been put to flight by twelve men and twelve women on the sea-coast in Corsica. I move an extremely indefinite adjournment."

Cazalès proposed, as a remedy for the public evils, the investment of the King during three months with unlimited executive power.—Mirabeau said: "M. de Cazalès is beside the question, for he discusses whether or not the King is to be accorded a dictatorship."—And as the Abbe Maury insisted upon the right of Cazalès to make this motion, Mirabeau replied: "I have pretended not that the preceding speaker had transgressed his right; I have said only that he was beside the question. He has demanded the dictatorship; the dictatorship over a nation of twenty-five millions of souls! The dictatorship to one man! in a country actually occupied in forming its Constitution, in a country whose representatives are assembled in council, the dictatorship to a single individual!"

To the optimists who slumbered in presence of the menacing state of affairs:—"We sleep; but do not people sleep at the foot of Vesuvius?"

To the Abbe Maury, who taunted him with invoking the aid of the populace:—"I will not stoop to repel the charge just made upon me, unless the Assembly dignify it to my level, by ordering me to reply. In that case, I would deem it sufficient for my vindication and my glory to *name my accuser and to name myself.*"

To a verbal dispute respecting the wording of a clause in the Constitution:—"I will observe that it would not be amiss that the National Assembly of France should speak French, and even indite in French the laws which it proposes."

To those who claimed the inalienability of the ancient foundations of the Clergy:—"If all the men who have lived upon the earth had each had a separate tomb, it would have been indispensable, in order to find lands for cultivation, to pull down these monuments, and to plough the ashes of the dead for the sustenance of the living."

To a deputy who moved the adjournment of a motion

relative to some unfortunates under capital sentence :—  
 “ Were you going to be hung, sir, would you propose the adjournment of an investigation which might result in saving your life ? ”

To those who pretended that the demand upon the king to dismiss the ministry must prove the ruin of England :—  
 “ England is lost ! Ah ! great God ! what unfortunate news ! But in what latitude has she been lost, or what earthquake, what convulsion of nature has engulfed that famous island, that inexhaustible abode of great examples, that classic land of the friends of freedom ? . . . . But you give us heart, you give us hope . . . . England is repairing, in a glorious silence, the wounds she inflicted upon herself in the delirium of a burning fever. England flourishes still for the eternal instruction of the world ! ”

To another who grew indignant at the proposition of a single Chamber :—“ I have always dreaded to provoke reason, but never individuals. ”

To the address of the town of Rennes, declaring as traitors and enemies of the country, the supporters of the Royal Veto :—“ If the Assembly bestow much time upon such a subject, it will have the air of a giant who stands on tip-toe in order to appear tall. Melun, Chaillot, Virafly, have the right of uttering the same absurdities as Rennes : like Rennes they qualify as scoundrels and traitors to the country, those who do not share their opinions. The national Assembly has not time to institute itself professor to the municipalities that may advance false maxims. ”

To the Committee upon the constitution who opposed a motion of amendment :—“ The Committees are beyond all doubt the elect of the universe. But the national Assembly has not yet said that it meant to decree them the exclusive privilege of investigating and debating the subjects of its deliberations. ”

To a member who would preserve in the royal proclamations these words : *To all present and future, greeting !* Mirabeau remarked : “ If the mode of salutation should

pass away!" And to another who wished the expressions: *King of France and Navarre*: "Would it not be proper to add: *And other places!*"

To a member who maintained that the deputies ought to enjoy the privilege of inviolability accorded to ambassadors, since they too were representatives of *nations*:—"I will reply that I was not aware there had been in this Assembly ambassadors from Dourdan, ambassadors from the land of Gex. I prefer to think that we are here but the representatives of the French nation, and not of *the nations of France.*"

To those who disapproved the title of *French people*:—"I adopt it, I defend it, I proclaim it, for the very reason which makes it obnoxious. Yes, it is because the name of people is not sufficiently respected in France—because it is obscured, covered with the rust of prejudice—because it presents us an idea at which pride takes alarm and vanity revolts—because it is mentioned with contempt in the drawing-rooms of the aristocrats—It is for this very reason, gentlemen, that I would wish,—it is for this very reason that we ought to make it a duty, not only to elevate it, but to ennoble it and render it henceforth respectable to ministers and dear to every heart."

To a pamphlet against him, distributed on the benches, and of which he read only the title as he mounted the tribune:—"I know enough of it, and I will be borne from this place triumphant or a corpse."

To a libel of Marat, wherein he was called a designing knave and a scoundrel fit for the gallows:—"This pamphlet of a drunken man speaks of designing knaves. Well, it is not the Chatelet of Paris, but the mad-house of Senegal, that befits this extravagance. I alone am named in it. Pass to the order of the day."

To an informer reading a letter found upon a pretended agent of Mirabeau, and where it was said: Riquetti the elder is a scoundrel:—"Mr. Informer, do you not flatter me? you have had the goodness to furnish me a copy, and I

think I read : Riquetti the elder is an infamous scoundrel. It is well to exhibit in its true colors the faithful portrait which my agent has drawn of me. Read all."

And on another occasion :—" I have seen fifty-four *lettres-de-cachet* in my family. Yes, gentlemen, fifty-four, and I have had seventeen for my part. So, you see, I have had my share as elder brother of Normandy."

To those who interrupted his exclamations against a law of vengeance :—" The popularity which I have aspired to and which I have enjoyed, is not a feeble reed. It is deep in the earth that I mean to infix its roots, upon the enduring basis of reason and liberty. If you make this law, I swear never to obey it."

To those who denied the Assembly the legitimate powers of a national Convention :—" Our national Convention is above all imitation, as above all authority ; it is accountable but to itself, and can be judged but by posterity. Gentlemen, you all remember the remark of that Roman, who, to save his country from a dreadful conspiracy, had overstepped the powers conferred on him by the laws :—Swear, said a captious demagogue of that day, that you have observed the laws.—I swear, replied this great man, that I have saved the republic !—Gentlemen, I swear that you have saved the commonwealth."

Both the opposite parties accused him at the same time of conspiracy :—" One moment a factious conspirator," replied he, " the next a counter-revolutionary conspirator ! permit me, gentlemen, to ask a division."

Mirabeau was obstinate in defending the royal veto ; instantly the wind of his popularity changed. He is denounced in an infamous libel, which accused him of high treason :—" And me, too," he exclaimed, in an oratorical movement which electrified the Assembly, " and me, too, they would, some days since, have borne in triumph, and now they cry through the streets :—*The great conspiracy of Count Mirabeau*. I needed not this lesson to know that there is but a step from the Capitol to the Tarpeian rock."

In fine, what is there in the history of ancient eloquence more spirited, more haughty, more heroic, more insolent, more unexpected, more victorious, more stunning, more overwhelming, more crushing, than the repartee of Mirabeau to the grand master of ceremonies of the Court?—"The Commons of France have resolved to deliberate: and you, sir, who could not be the organ of the king to the national Assembly; you, who have here neither seat, nor vote, nor right of speaking, go tell your master that we are here by the will of the people, and that we will not be torn from it save by the force of bayonets."

M. de Baizè, as if thunderstruck, walked backwards in leaving the hall. It was the Monarchy retreating before the Revolution.

I will not descend into the private life of Mirabeau, which has been to him rather an obstacle than an aid, a blemish than a foil. I am not a retailer of anecdotes, nor a biographer of scandals. I am a painter, and have to represent, in each of my personages, but the politician, and especially the orator.

For the rest, public opinion treats with less severity the men of the Opposition, such as Mirabeau, Sheridan, and others of our day, for they were but orators. It is more severe towards the men in authority, and justly so, for they owe example, they govern. What has been said of Marazin? He is a profligate. What used to be said of Turgot? He is a conscientious minister. And of Robespierre? He is incorruptible. And of Louis XVI.? He is an honest man. The people must esteem those who govern them. The sentiment does honor to the morality of the human species.

Mirabeau has often regretted the debaucheries of imagination and of temperament which deflowered his youth. He has nobly repaired them in avowing them, even in the tribune. He bore his heart as high as his head.

Add that his discourses, motions, addresses, amendments, breathe, in his public capacity, the purest morality.—He

used to say : " It is more important to give men morals and habits than laws and tribunals."

Singular circumstance ! it was he who, through a religious sentiment, caused to be retained the title : *Louis, by the grace of God, King of the French.*

Just escaped from the dungeons of Vincennes, he loved liberty fanatically, idolatrously. For the rights and the wants of the people he had a profound, elevated, and delicate respect. He was of opinion that there ought to be established in society such an order of things that, every where, the aged would have a place of refuge, and the poor, employment and food.

More vicious in temperament than in heart—extreme in his passions, haughty in his repentance—impatient of all restraint—careless about the morrow, like all men of letters—forgetful of injuries, like all great souls—poor, harassed by low wants, pining for glory, proud of his birth, and playing at the same time the noble and the tribune—insinuating to the fascination of even his enemies ; his soul was an inexhaustible furnace of sensibility, whence issued those sudden illuminations of his eloquence. Impetuous, daring, natural, cheerful, humane, generous to excess ; expansive, open-hearted, even to familiarity, and familiar to indiscretion ;—prompt and powerful in intellect, sparkling with imagination and wit, with an immenseness of memory, taste, talent, and knowledge, and a prodigious facility of composition.—such was Mirabeau.

Mirabeau had long meditated upon the art of military strategy. Brave himself and born of heroic blood, his iron constitution, his comprehensive glance, his vast faculties, his presence of mind and unshaken firmness amid danger, would have raised him at once to the first honors of war. He would have been as good a general as he was an orator.

A man almost complete and the only one of his sort, Mirabeau was the greatest orator and the greatest politician of his time. He would have made its greatest minister also ; for he had the genius of business, the unity and certitude

which result from system, patience for details, knowledge of men, foresight into the future, fertility of expedients, affability of manners, energy of will, the instinct of command, the confidence of the country, and a universal renown.

Mirabeau and Napoleon have both—each in reference to the time wherein he appeared and the special nature of his labors—contributed the most to organize modern France; for the one constituted the Revolution, the other the Empire. Mirabeau in fine was the man of those times to whom it would have been given, had he lived, the most to destroy and the most to re-edify; equally fit for both these courses, by the power of his genius and the perseverance of his will. Not that he wished to re-erect what he had demolished. He knew well that new edifices are not to be rebuilt with the ruins of the old. “A gangrened body,” he used to say, “is not to be healed by applying sore to sore, ulcer to ulcer. There must be a transfusion of new blood.” But with this new blood, it is not the renovation of the old man, it is the creation of a new man, it is another.

Despite of this, he indulged the dream of the alliance since so much and so vainly sought, of liberty with monarchy. He desired this monarchy with all its conditions of strength and durability, and by a strange inconsequence, his maxims were republican and his measures revolutionary.—Whether it was that he did not perceive this contradiction, or that he flattered himself with being able to surmount it, he designed and attempted the amalgamation, the fusion, the chimera, both in Parliament and out of it. He urged, in the Constituent Assembly, after his picturesque manner:—“We are not savages come stark naked from the banks of the Oronoko, to form a society. We are an old nation—too old. We have a pre-existing government, a pre-existing king, pre-existing prejudices. We must therefore, as far as possible, assort all these things to the Revolution, and parry the abruptness of the transition.”

He tried to repair, by means of his veto, the foundering

vessel of royalty. He did not see that with the reality of the veto power, under a hereditary king, the sovereignty of the people is but a name and a shadow, and that with the fiction of the veto under a popular constitution, the sovereignty of the monarch is in like manner but a name and a dream. The reason is, that, necessarily, the sovereignty must reside somewhere, and being, in its nature, one and indivisible, it cannot repose at the same time upon two different heads. We must then choose. For the co-existence of two wills equal and independent is not a state of harmony but of hostility; and hostility is conflict, and conflict is the death of one of the combatants.

The absolute veto of the prince implies that the prince governs. For it is to govern to the fullest extent, to do what one wishes and not to do what he does not wish. The suspensive veto of the prince implies that the prince reigns, but does not govern. For it is not to govern when one is, ultimately, obliged to do that which he does not wish. The veto of the prince is, in a parliamentary monarchy, but the veto of the ministry. But, responsible ministers are the servants of the parliament; from it they are taken, to it they return, by it they execute, for it they govern. How should not they and their successors come at last to yield to it?

This whole thesis is reduced at the present day to a few points, very precise, and which are these: The refusal to tax effectually places all the power in the hands of the refuser. The suspensive veto is, if you will, equivalent to a second Chamber, and nothing more. The dissolution of the Legislative body is the appeal of the ministry to the people. The counter-force of a persisting veto is a revolution. This is, in our day, the position of things.

Mirabeau had some presentiments of this species of monarchy, whether by political prescience or an inspiration of his ambition. Without doubt, the enviers of his fame desired to preclude him from the ministry. But independently of this particular cause, the Constituent Assembly, by the necessity, by the law of its position, by the instinctive

desunity of its object, by the irresistible logic of its principles, by the blind opposition of the courtiers, must desire for itself and for it alone, permanence, unity and omnipotence. The providential reason of a revolution is not the same as the reason of a normal state of society.

Mirabeau, defeated on the Veto question by the Assembly's distrust of the royal authority, returned to the charge on the question of the admission of Ministers to a seat ; but in spite of the unheard-of efforts of intellect, eloquence, and logic, he succumbed beneath the violence of the same prejudice. He then determined to seek, outside of the Parliament, for support and forces against it. But why—and here returns that embarrassing question—why did Mirabeau stop all of a sudden on the declivity of the revolution ? Was he affrighted himself by the noise and violence of its course ? Did he mean only to save liberty from its own aberrations, by passing into its mouth a curb and bridle ? His prejudices of education, of family, of birth, did they resist him unconsciously ? Was he bought over by the Court ? Did he desire a limited monarchy, purged of federalism and favoritism, a king and two Chambers, a constitutional trinity ? Or rather, weary, cloyed with the emotions of the orator, this man of boundless passions, did he wish to taste the different emotions offered by the ministerial office ? Had he the ambition, under the guise of a powerless and merely nominal royalty, to govern the Assembly and France ? Posterity alone will furnish—or, perhaps, will not be able to furnish—the solution of this problem, to us insoluble.

What is less doubtful is, that Mirabeau meant to push his colleagues to excesses, perhaps to crimes, in order to punish them afterwards for having committed them. A mode of perdition quite satanic and worthy of Machiavel ; a political immorality which honest men cannot brand with too much indignation, and which leaves a dark, a very dark stain upon the glory of this great man.

Mirabeau, with his back like another Hercules opposed to the breaches of the revolutionary torrent, strove to check

the consequences which, at all points, broke out impetuously from their principle. He had in his star the faith somewhat superstitious of great men. He imagined that the flying arrow may stop short in the air before reaching its object. He wished himself to serve alone intrepidly for object to the continual firing of his enemies. He was already preparing, with a paroxysm of energy, to renew the giant struggle, when all of a sudden, his strength gave way, and he sunk like the monarchy of which he wore the mourning.\*

At this astounding intelligence, Paris is agitated, the people run to his residence, and gather around, with lamentations and tears, the couch of Mirabeau dying, of Mirabeau dead. They contemplate with pensive eye the corpse of their tribune. They touch it, they seek still there some remnant of vital heat; they ask, in the wildness of their despair, that their veins be opened, and that, to revive his vitality, he be given a part of theirs; they press and chafe those icy hands which hurled so often the popular thunderbolts. They harness themselves to his hearse and draw his

\* As soon as it was known that Mirabeau was in danger of death, the legislature adjourned, the festivals ceased, the streets were filled with people, Paris was one scene of consternation. Some of the populace entreated to have their veins opened to perform operations of transfusion with their blood upon Mirabeau; others wrung their hands with despair, such was the wild enthusiasm of the public mind!

For him, taken suddenly as if with an unknown malady, he viewed the approaching death with great severity. "What epitaph," said he, "is to be inscribed upon my tomb?"

The Constituent Assembly, followed by an immense multitude, bore triumphantly his body to the Pantheon, by the light of a thousand torches. Subsequently, a decree of 1793 ordained that the statue of Mirabeau be veiled until his memory should be reestablished. There, one night, two Police waiters threw the body into a sack and proceeded to bury it in the cemetery of Clamart, which is at present the burial ground only for persons who have been executed among whom the undistinguishable remains of this great orator lie mixed and confounded.

remains to the Pantheon, with the pomp and the apotheosis of a king.\*

Alas! no more was to be heard that voice of the tribune, of which the reverberation rolled, like successive thunder-claps, from column to column, along the magnificent aisles of the Revolution; that voice of the statesman which proclaimed the principles of the French Constitution; that voice of the orator which, in early antiquity, would have stirred up by its inconceivable influence, the nations, the cities, and the kingdoms. O vicissitudes of popularity! Those statues which had been erected in honor of him, were, in the name of patriotism, to be hung with crape, as they cover with a black veil the face of the parricide! And that enthusiastic and fickle multitude, who would have their blood drawn to transfuse it into the exhausted veins of Mirabeau, and who had carried him between their triumphant arms beneath the dome of the Pantheon, were, by and by, to execrate their tribune and to stone his memory! And this Pantheon, to which his ever-glorious ashes had

\* In the memoirs of Samuel Romilly, a Parisian correspondent, writing to him, says:—

“Mirabeau’s career could not have come to an end at a moment more propitious for his own fame; six months earlier his death would have been considered as a happy event for the public; and only two months ago, it would have been looked upon with general indifference. But, for some weeks past, he had so entirely taken up the right side, and it was so strongly felt that he could not but accomplish what he wished, that all well-disposed people had placed in him their hopes for the restoration of order and peace, and looked upon him as the terror of the factions, and the prop of the Constitution.”

Dumont, also, who was Mirabeau’s intimate friend, writes to Romilly:—

“So, Mirabeau is extinguished in the midst of his career! Is it a misfortune for the Revolution? I think it is. His house was a focus of liberty. If he did not work himself, he made others work: he stimulated men of talent, and was a strong prop to the party whose cause he espoused. He was dangerous, no doubt, from his passions, which exerted absolute dominion over him; but even these might be directed to good ends, and he had a love of glory. I felt, from the grief that I experienced at his loss, that he had acquired a stronger

been committed for eternity, under the guardianship of a grateful nation, was to spue them from its bosom as a mass of contamination and horror!—And he, he who, on the edge of his burning couch, raved about glory and prosperity, and who asked all his weeping friends around him for epitaphs for his tomb, how would he not have shuddered had he known that his remains were to be disintombed in the secrecy of night, and carried, by the lurid torch-light, to be thrown into the vulgar ditch appropriated to criminals? Where are now those magnificent epitaphs which he had promised himself? Where is to be found and how to be recognized the head of that great Riquetti amid those heaps of gory trunks and skulls all mutilated by the axe of the executioner! O vanity of our aspirations! O nothingness of human greatness!

hold on my affections than I had been myself aware of. It was impossible to know him, and not be fascinated by his talents and his engaging manners. How often have I lamented that his powers should have wanted the influence of an unsullied reputation! His passions have consumed him; if he had known how to control them, he might have lived for a hundred years.—Our aristocrats tore him to pieces, and they regret him; the death of a man who sustained public credit is a real loss to them.”

# THE CONVENTION.

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DANTON.

THE Convention opened under the gloomy auspices of death, having the guillotine at its side, and the Revolutionary tribunal in the prospect.

The members of the Constituent Assembly had been men of theory ; those of the Convention were men of action.

The Mountain and the Gironde advanced against each other like hostile armies on a field of battle, surveying each other's strength, and mutually exchanging unmeasured defiances, while the Plain, tossed to and fro by conflicting winds, bore, like a drifting body, now towards one side, now to the other, and gave itself up to the currents of its fear.

It seemed as if a sword, suspended by some invisible thread, depended over the head of the president, of each speaker, of each deputy. Paleness sat upon every countenance ; vengeance boiled in every bosom. The imagination was filled with corpses and funeral processions ; a death shudder ran through every discourse. The sole topics of the broken, convulsive, and as if involuntarily uttered speeches, were crimes, conspiracies, treasons, complicities, scaffolds.

Marat was seen to draw from his bosom a pistol, and resting it upon his forehead : " Another word," he exclaimed, " and I blow out my brains." Not one around him fell back, or took the slightest alarm. So much to kill one's self, or to be killed, appeared at that time natural !

David, mounting his seat, vociferated: "I demand that you assassinate me!"

Men rushed to the tribune, with eye on fire, the fist clenched, the breast palpitating, to incriminate, or to defend themselves. In testimony of their innocence they staked their head. They demanded that of others. For all crimes, without distinction, no other penalty was invoked than death. The Assembly wanted but the executioner—who was not far off.

Victory seemed a moment to declare for the Gironde. Then it is impossible to form an idea of the vehemence of insult, contempt, gesture, and look which assailed Marat. His person was shrunk from with horror, as if he had nothing of humanity, neither shape, nor speech, nor even the name.

As Robespierre ascended the tribune, cries were raised of "Down with the Dictator!" Robespierre winced, but quickly retrieved himself, and day by day he went on gathering that leaden cloud which was soon to burst in the death of Louis XVI.—the punishment of the Girondists—the insurrection of La Vendée—the establishment of the revolutionary tribunal—the permanence of the guillotine—the demagoguism of the clubs—the carnage of the prisons—the denunciations—the reign of terror.

Vergniaud guillotined, Danton guillotined, the Convention fell into deep gloom and a sort of stupor. To the crisis and the fever had succeeded the chill, the cold perspirations, the dejection of spirits, the muscular debility. There was some speaking still, but no discussion. Robespierre, Saint-Just, Couthon, Collot-d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, attended to read their reports, amid the horrors of silence. No one dared breathe, nor look at another significantly, nor especially utter a word in contradiction. The timid sought refuge in a feigned enthusiasm; the bold muttered the excuses of fear. The initiative in all measures had passed to the Jacobin Club, the armed force to the Commune, and the supreme direction of the Police to Robespierre. The

triumviral minority opposed the majority of the cabinet in the Committee of Public Safety. The Convention, now mutilated by the executions of the Revolutionary tribunal, moved neither hands nor lips, as if the current of life had been stopped, and the blood had been of a sudden congealed in its veins. It had now but the automatical movements of a decree-making machine.

Robespierre, ordinarily so sagacious, ruined himself by his disdain of it. He remained for forty days—and forty days in those times was an age—without honoring it with his presence. He failed to comprehend that with a nation like the French, a legislative assembly, whatever it may be, will always command an enormous power, even while it would seem to be buried in slumber; that the multitude attaches itself, whether from duty, or interest, or weakness, or habit, to the external signs and the unity of authority; that the government can preserve itself in a revolution only by vigilant activity and making itself constantly seen and felt in the hands that hold it; that it must never stop, never retire, never rest secure, never repose, never sleep. Robespierre slept. He imagined he could always maintain his ascendancy over the Convention and the Committees. He accused them without supporting himself by insurrection. He discovered his design before he was ready. He set his foot upon a shifting ground which was changing every day, and with which he was no longer acquainted; he stumbled, and his accomplices, for fear of falling themselves, only pushed him into the abyss.

But the vulgar, struck with the magnitude of events, always suppose men of action to have vast schemes and deep-laid contrivances. They will have something marvellous in the causes, because there is such in the effects. They forget that in France, especially, it is the unforeseen that governs. Revolutions spring from the successive generation of facts, sometimes from accident, scarce ever from the pre-meditated will of a man, a party, or a system.

Another common error is that of imagining an admirable

force and unity in the organization of the Convention. There was no such thing. Repeatedly it owed its safety but to mere chance. In the first place, it had been well nigh subverted on the 31st May, by the Girondists. At a later period, Danton would have triumphed over it, were it not for a ruse of Saint-Just. The cowardice and imbecility of Henriot alone prevented Robespierre, proscribed the 8th Thermidor but rescued immediately, from becoming again its master. Were it not for an opportune charge of cavalry, the populace, drunk with carnage and blood, had gone on to deliberate, the 1st Prairial, in the sanctuary of the legislature, headed by some insurgent deputies, after having broken open the doors of the hall, massacred Ferrand, and dispersed the Convention. Lastly, were it not for the hero of the 13th Vendemiaire, the sections of Paris would have slain on the spot the whole national representation.

The Mountainists, like the rest, suffered from the anarchy of action and opinion. There were several Mountains; the Mountain of Marat, who stood all alone since he was repudiated by both Danton and Robespierre; the Mountain of Danton and his friends Camille Desmoulins, Legendre, and Lacroix; the Mountain of Robespierre, Couthon, and Saint-Just; the Mountain of Billaud-Varennes, Tallim, Barrere, Collot-d'Herbois; the Mountain of Bourbotte and Gougon. They befouled each other by turns with mire and blood. Such, unfortunately, is the history of all parties in almost all assemblies. In times of peace, abuse; in times of revolution, death.

Let it then no more be said that the Convention was a body perfectly free, orderly, consistent, controlling, arbiter of fact as well as law, and absolute and spontaneous mistress of its own movements. The Convention, from its opening down to the destruction of the Girondists, was but an arena of death between the two parties. After the Girondists, obedience unquestioning. Under Robespierre, terror and silence. After Robespierre, counter-terror, with rare intermissions.

To decree unanimously the arrest of the Girondists, unanimously that of Danton, unanimously Saint-Just; to vote unanimously, the 8th Thermidor, the printing of Robespierre's speech, and the next day his death; was that reason, consistency, liberty? Strange situation! the Convention proved itself the most sovereign and the most subject of all our assemblies, the most speech-making and most mute, the most gesticulating and most serious, the most independent at intervals and most continuously domineered; and it is precisely because it was at the disposal of the Revolutionary Government, an instrument, powerful, dependent, passive, undivided, that this government was able to mow down its enemies all around it, and impose upon them the silence of victory or of terror.

Strictly, the Convention was but the chief secretary of the Revolution. The Committees of public safety and of general security governed alone. To this dictatorship of the Committees, much rather than to the Convention, it is that we are to attribute all the evil that was then committed, and also all that was achieved of great and victorious. What men of iron were all those members of the Committees of public safety and general security! what obstinacy of will! what precision of direction! what promptitude of execution! War, marine, finance, provisioning, police, internal affairs, foreign relations, legislation, they were adequate to, and at home in all! They made speeches at the Jacobin clubs, deliberated in the Committees, made reports to the Convention, worked fifteen hours a day, drew up plans of attack and defence, corresponded with fourteen armies, and organized victory.

At the same time kings, deputies and ministers, regulators and reporters, chiefs and agents, they sustained the weight of the government in its whole and its details. Power overflowed, so to speak, in their hands. It was co-extensive with their will, and limited but by the scaffold. If they dared too far, they were called dictators; if not enough,

conspirators. Omnipotent over all, but responsible for all—responsible by death for success as for defeat.

The office of representative was not in those times a place of leisure or of profit. Files of cannon, with the matches lighted, were to be passed through in going to the Assembly. The way was lined with hedges of pikes and muskets. You entered the hall a king, you knew not if you should not come out an outlaw. The president, Boissyd'Anglais put on his hat, without blinking, before the severed head of the deputy Ferrand, which some women, with torn hair and covered with blood, were hoisting on the top of a pike. Laujuinais coolly continued his speech, while the pistol of the assassin was resting upon his ear. Robespierre, with his jaw all shattered, lay on the floor in a room adjoining the Convention. Some other deputies stabbed themselves not two paces distant, in the court-room of the Revolutionary tribunal. Others drank poison, to escape the executioner. These were spectacles quite ordinary.

Between political parties who decimate and immolate one another, pity and hope find no place. Mountainists against Girondists, Mountainists against Mountainists, it was necessary to combat: combating, it was necessary to vanquish; vanquished, it was inevitable to die.

Was Vergniaud a federalist? Was Danton conspiring against the republic? Was Robespierre aspiring to the dictatorship? This is what sudden arrests and turbulent proceedings, without documents, without proofs, without witnesses, without defence, without confrontation, without forms or rules of trial, without free accusers, without an impartial tribunal, without a serious jury, have not as yet sufficiently shown, in my eyes at least. They were denounced, stigmatized, and decimated by each other; they have not been impartially judged.

History will say that these men had been by turns proscribers and proscribed, judges and victims; that they had been fanatical rather than ambitious,—rather enthusiastic than cruel. It will say that the vices of these times are to

be imputed rather to the nature of revolutionary institutions, than to the men who served as their instruments. . . . . The accounts given of the Convention, even those written still in our own day, contain more romance than history. We invest the men of 1793 with our own opinions, our ideas, our systems of the moment, our prejudices, our utopias, and with a certain cast of mind which they never had, and which, let us own, we had not ourselves ten years ago. Confusion of opinions reigns here as in all else. Thus, for example, some will have it that Robespierre was but the stipendiary agent of the Bourbons and England; others that he aspired openly to be dictator;—these, that he contemplated the establishment of absolute equality; those, that his sole pleasure was to steep himself in blood, like a hyena. Many will tell you, with an air of profundity, knitting the brows and shaking the head, that Robespierre has not been understood, and they thus give loose to all sorts of hypotheses. After this, I too may be permitted to form one in my turn; and if, after having read and re-read his latest speeches in the Convention, I have penetrated their meaning, I should say that Robespierre seems to me to have been on the point of arresting the car of terror on the steep of the Revolution.

But I might well be mistaken in launching into the indefiniteness of supposition. I am no publicist of imagination. I do not wish to imitate those commentators, who, in their blind worship of antiquity, ascribe to Virgil and Homer certain artifices of style and imitative melodies, which Homer and Virgil had never dreamt of. In this way our publicists of imagination have discovered, after the event, that Robespierre and Saint-Just had ready organized certain plans of democratic reform and levelling, of which their discourses do not give even the slightest intimation. People are unwilling to see all leaders of revolutions possess themselves, by storm, of the existing government; after which, if their adversaries resist, and as long as they resist, they tumble them from off the walls into the trench. These men are but the instru-

men's of a Providence, of whom they think themselves movers. They are chained down to a certain career by the succession of facts and by the logic of principles, which hurry them on unconsciously, and conduct them often whither they do not wish to go, and especially whither they do not know that they are going. For the rest a thing incredible! Robespierre and Saint-Just viewed nature, as she is seen on the stage and amid the decorations of the opera, in pastoral perspective, with singing choirs of venerable old men and bands of rose-crowned village girls. They moralized speculatively on liberty and equality, with less eloquence than Rousseau, but also with less pedagoguism. As organizers, they were neither more nor less advanced than the rest of the Mountainists. They lived from day to day, like all party leaders, in times of open revolution: too engrossed with the care of getting rid of their enemies and defending themselves, to think of aught else. In them, action left no time for thought, and the present absorbed the future.

The Revolution swept them off,—overwhelmed them in its waves. But an edifice is not built in the current, but on the shore.

Be that as it may, what remains incontestable,—and this is all we are concerned with,—is the prodigious impulse impressed upon the world by the colossal might of France, when, bursting from around it the chains of absolute monarchy, it arose and walked forth erect in its strength and liberty. Every village from the Pyrenees to the Rhine, from the Alps to the ocean, received and nourished the seeds of liberty. The contempt of death, the tragic grandeur of the events, the enthusiasm of glory, attempered those souls of steel,—those hardy generations of our fathers. The France of that day was but one vast camp, a manufactory of muskets and cannons, an arsenal of war. Mothers made offering of their sons to the country; young husbands tore themselves from the arms of their wives; legions of soldiers sprung up as if out of the earth. Barefooted, without

clothes, without bread, often without ammunition, they carried, at the point of the bayonet, the intrenchments and the batteries of the enemy. What captains! Foubert, buried with the banner of Novi for his winding-sheet; Hoche, the pacificator of La Vendée; Marceau, the hero of Wissemburg; Pichegru, that rapid conqueror of Holland; and Moreau, who since . . . . . but then he triumphed at Nerwind! These generals of the Republic were after to become the glorious marshals of the Empire. Ney, Soult, Murat, Massena, Lannes, Lefevre, Davoust, Augereau, and above them all Bonaparte, greater perhaps than Napoleon. This young general of the Convention, who bombarded St. Roche, was destined one day to shake all Europe with his tread, and to sit, crowned by the Pope, upon the throne of the Cæsars. Those ragged soldiers were to make with him the circuit of the globe, encamp at the foot of the Pyramids, conquer Italy, and, wreathed with the laurels of Arcole, of Aboukir, of Marengo, of Austerlitz, and of Jena, to plant their triumphant eagles on the towers of Vienna, Lisbon, Rome, Amsterdam, Madrid, Berlin, and Moscow. Around the Revolution, as if to form it a magnificent retinue, moved a host of men of genius: some already illustrious; others on the eve of becoming so:—in the sciences, Laplace, Lagrange, Biot, Carnot, Monge, Cuvier, Chaptal, Berthollet, Larrey, Pinel, Cabanis, Bichat, Dupuytren; in the fine arts, David, Gros, Girodet; in literature, Lebrun, Fontaines, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Chenier, Chateaubriand; in politics, Talleyrand, and Sieyès; in legislation, Cambaceres, Treilhard, Berlier, Zangiacomi, Daunon, Merlin; in administration, Portalis, Defermon, Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely, Allent, Regnier, Thibeaudeau, Fouché, Real, Pastoret, Simeon, Boulay de la Meurthe.

The Convention reigned then over a period of no vulgar order, or a generation without virtue, genius and glory. It had its warriors, its savants, its artists, its jurists, its statesmen. It had also its orators.

Parliamentary eloquence always breathes the passions

and takes the hue of the times. The eloquence of the Convention, it must be owned, was often rather the eloquence of a club, or a court of sessions, than the lofty and learned eloquence of the tribune, than the eloquence of Mirabeau.

In respect of art, of style, of science, of arrangement, of proof, of method, there is no Mountainist or Girondist orator who can compare with the princes of the modern tribune. In respect of oratorical effect, on the contrary, I am not aware that any one of these princes has ever, notwithstanding the most wonderful efforts of speech, wrested a solitary vote from the trafficking and narrow-minded tenacity of our burghers Chambers, while Robespierre, Barrere, and especially Danton have several times carried off decrees of the Convention by main force.

These men were powers, and we are very excellent organ-players,—the finest sounds in the world, but nothing beside.

The eloquence of those times was uncouth, inflated, strong, gigantic, like the Revolution it was defending;—ours is sometimes debased to the proportions of those Don Quixotes, with lame legs and long arms, which are seen on the sign-boards of our village taverns;—theirs smelled of cannon powder;—ours sometimes savors of molasses and beet-root;—theirs exalted the intellectual interests of society;—ours the material interests;—theirs was vehement to denunciation, coarse to outrage;—ours is sneering, intricate, loquacious, hypocritical;—theirs led its orators to poverty, to persecution, to ostracism, the prison, the scaffold;—ours elevates its heroes by flowery ascents to the purple and fine linen of opulence and the honors of the ministry.

Whether from difficulty of invention, from custom, or from a classical education, the republicans of 1793 endeavored to revive, in their costumes, their attitudes, and their harangues, Sparta, Athens, and Rome. Strange! these most savage of demagogues had a sincere admiration for the laws, the

manners, the apparel, the usages, the character, the speeches, the life and the death of the proudest and most insolent aristocrats of antiquity.

The Greek bonnet was assumed, the plaited head-dress, and the long military cloak. Letters, the sole consolation of sensitive and delicate minds, were proscribed. The dearest friends were condemned to death, in affectation of the *dis-natured* paternity of the first Brutus. Kings were detested with the frenzied hatred of Horatius Cocles. Some devoted themselves, some opened their veins, some tore out their vitals, some plunged desperately into the doom that awaited them, after the manner of Decius, of Regulus, of the senators of Tiberius and of Nero in Rome enslaved. Oath was made to die on their legislative seats, like the old Romans in their curule chairs. The dictatorship of the Committees and of the Convention was threatened with the dagger of Harmodius, and with the Tarpeian rock. People affected the frugality of Cincinnatus and of the Spartans. The name of their enemies was written in red ink, on the proscription lists, in commemoration of Sylla. The immortality of the soul was decreed, in view of the dying Cato. To dispense from wearing any, it was observed, that the democrat, Jesus Christ, had never worn breeches. You were outlawed, without trial, as the proscribed were by the Romans interdicted fire and water. Nature was stifled, justice was violated, liberty was abused, virtue itself was exaggerated, in order the nearer to resemble them.

So much for the exterior part of oratory, which is conversant about forms, movements, and images. As for their political philosophy, financial economy and definitions of rights and duties, it was the philosophy, economy and the definitions of Rousseau and of the Encyclopedists.

At the Commune of Paris, at the Club of the Jacobins, in the popular societies, in the government Committees, in the bulletins of the army, at the bar of the Assembly, in the public places, at the foot of the scaffold, everywhere and on all occasions, it was substantially the same ideas, the same

vehemence, the same grandeur, the same figures, the same exclamations, the same imitations, the same apologies, the same vocabulary, the same language.

In this revolutionary drama, in this oratorical exhibition, so vivid, so excited, so stirring, so terrible, all is disorder, all is agitation, all is confusion—the clubs, the debates, the petitioners, the populace; all places are common, the bar of the house, the president's chair, and the tribunes.

From the ceiling of the hall to the doors, in the lobbies both inside and outside, all played their parts, all was action, combat, crisis, applause, disapprobation. The sections armed, impelled, guided by unknown, invisible leaders, stormed the Convention, threw down all before them, pointed out the suspected deputies, and demanded that, before the house adjourn, they should fall beneath the sword of the law. "The people has risen, it is standing, it is waiting!"

Extraordinary times! singular contrast! That Assembly which boldly flung its challenges of war to all the kings of Europe, quailed itself before the threats and insults of a few foaming demagogues, and pushed its forbearance or rather its pusillanimity so far as to accord them the honors of the sitting.

Sometimes, the Sections came to stimulate the tardiness of Robespierre himself, and did not consider his constitution to be all sufficiently democratic.

"You who occupy the Mountain, worthy sans-culottes, will you remain forever slumbering on the summit of that immortal rock? How long will you suffer the forestallers to drink from their golden cups the purest blood of the people? Mountainists, arise in your might, nor close your career in ignominy."

The Mountain was indignant, but swallowed the insult. The Revolutionary Commune of Paris, the mayor at its head, admitted to the bar, spoke as follows:

"Mountain forever celebrated in the annals of history, be the Sinai of Frenchmen! Hurl forth amid thy thunders the eternal decrees of justice and of the popular will! quake

and tremble at its voice! Holy Mount! be the crater whose burning lava shall consume the wicked!"

And pursuing this metaphor, Gaston replied: "Paris, like *Ætna*, will vomit from her bosom the calcined aristocracy."

The general mind, elevated gradually by the excitement of speaking, was transported into a state of frenzy. Legendre used to exclaim, "Should a tyrant arise, he will die by my hand. I swear it by Brutus!" And Drouet: "Be ye brigands for the public weal, I say, be brigands!"

Those are, for the rest, but accidents of situation and of character, and it must not be imagined that all the actors of the revolutionary drama grinned and gambled like maniacs and idiots. How many of them, born in or near the lowest ranks of the people, have evinced an unconquerable love of equality, a becoming originality of bearing and language, a strong and colored eloquence, a vehement diction, a promptness of attack, an intrepidity of defence, a disinterestedness, a noble poverty, a respect for the sovereignty of the people, a filial affection for the country, a renouncement of all personal and local interests, a generous and powerful instinct of glory, of grandeur, and of union, which is found no more scarcely since their departure.

There—for it was a field of battle—there was encamped in the ranks of the Girondists, Gaudet, whose eloquence came from the heart, but who shed its light only at rare intervals. It was he, who, looking Robespierre in the face, said to him: "As long as a drop of blood shall flow in my veins, I have a heart too high, I have a soul too proud, to acknowledge any other earthly sovereign than the people."

—Louvet, a witty and vigorous writer, an animated and brilliant orator, who opened the attack against the Mountain with more courage than prudence.

—Languinai, a headstrong Breton, inflexible in his opinions, a learned publicist. He shrunk from no danger. He compounded with no sophism. Feeble in body, intrepid in spirit, he fought word for word, gesture for gesture. He would hold by, he would rivet himself to, the tribune. When

his resignation as deputy was clamorously called for, with threats and abuses, he let fall with majesty the following beautiful words: "Remember that the victim ornamented with flowers and led to the altar, was not insulted by the priest who was about to immolate it."

—Bazire, who uttered a sublime apothegm: the draft of a Constitution being under discussion, he said: "The French people do not make peace with an enemy who occupies its territory."

Mercier: "Provisions of this nature are written or erased with the point of the sword; have you then made a treaty with victory?"

Bazire: "*We have made it with death.*"

—Camille Desmoulins, endowed with an imagination too ardent, and a heart too susceptible. He loved liberty to idolatry, and his friends better than himself. With giddy temerity, he attempted to thwart the career of the Revolution. He would drive it backwards, after having launched it on its impetuous course, and he was crushed beneath the wheels of the car that bore the fortunes of Robespierre.

Camille had an impressive countenance, and his gestures were oratorical. But an impediment of speech forbade him the tribune, and his hot-headedness did not allow him to connect, to arrange his ideas in a skilful and temperate discourse. A pamphleteer rather than orator, a pamphleteer ingenious, but somewhat coarse. Passionate, simple, picturesque in style, but too often destitute of logic and of taste, his pamphlets are at times gloomy, and at other times brilliant, always incoherent, like a sick man's dreams, sometimes, and at intervals, full of happy raillery, naturalness, and grace. He began to fear at length for those who were afraid. He suffered for those who were suffering. He borrowed the vigorous pencil of Tacitus to paint the tyrants of the people. He turned round and round in their wounds the dagger of sarcasm. He tried remorse, he tried pity, but it was all too late. Vainly did he precipitate himself, head foremost, from the bank into the torrent for the purpose of

restraining and guiding it; the wave rolled on and the torrent swept him away. He was cast into the dungeons of the Revolutionary tribunals, and it is thence that, first, as he was about to ascend the scaffold, he addressed to his young wife, to his Lucile, that touching letter of which the close cannot be read without tears: "Adieu, Lucile, my dearest Lucile, I feel the shore of life receding before me. I still behold my Lucile! my longing eyes still see thee! my loving arms entwine thee! my fettered hands embrace thee! and my severed head reposes on thy bosom. I die."

—Vergniaud, a man of great flexibility and compass of intellect, a sincere patriot, an orator, elegant, unctuous, metaphorical—too metaphorical, perhaps—of whom this apothegm has been retained: "The Revolution is like Saturn, it devours its own children."

And this comparison, at the time so much applauded: "If our principles are propagated but slowly in foreign nations, it is that their splendor is obscured by anarchical sophistries, by disorderly movements, and above all by a blood-stained crape. When the peoples of the earth fell prostrate for the first time before the sun, was it, think you, while he was veiled with those destructive vapors which engender the tempests? No, doubtless, it was when, in the full effulgence of his glory, he was advancing through the immensity of space, and shedding on the universe fertility, life, and light."

And his reply to Robespierre: "If we are guilty, and that you do not send us before the Revolutionary tribunal, you are untrue to the people. If we are calumniated and you do not declare it, you are untrue to justice."

And this apostrophe: "Take care that, in the midst of your triumphs, France do not resemble those Egyptian monuments which have withstood the ravages of time. The stranger, as he passes, is astonished at their grandeur. But if he would enter them, what does he find? heaps of inanimate ashes, and the silence of the grave!"

Search well, and examine all the celebrated passages of

oratory. It is always imagery that strikes the multitude in the legislative Assemblies as elsewhere.

For the rest, he was an orator without substance, without solidity, without argumentative force, ill-adapted to sway those stormy assemblies wherein petulance of gesture and familiar insolence of phrase and expression are the necessary accompaniments of the discourse.

Vergniaud committed, like the other Girondists, the unpardonable fault of attacking persons rather than things, and irritating and augmenting the Mountain by his violence. Posterity will blame equally both the parties, who turned, at the very outset, the legislative hall into an arena of gladiators.

In front of the Girondists and on the opposite benches of the amphitheatre, were seated the Mountainists, their mortal enemies.

—Barrère, an elegant reporter of the victories which Carnot organized. He extemporized the motions, the decrees, the addresses, as Danton did his speeches. Less hyperbolic in his imagery, more chastened, more literate, more observant of the rules of grammar and the proprieties of language; bold at once and discreet; impetuous upon occasion, but always provident; sagacious of the direction of the wind and of the destination of the storm; a keen diplomatist, a keener deputy.

—Marat, a man of ferocious instincts and of a base and degraded figure, whom Danton repudiated and Robespierre would never approach; a universal denouncer, who used to invoke *Saint* Guillotine, excite the populace to assassination, and, for mere pastime, call for two hundred thousand victims, the King's head, and a dictator! A man of whom you could not say whether he was more cruel than insane; a buffoon and a trifler, without dignity, without decency, without moderation. He would toss about on his seat like a demoniac, leap up, clap his hands, burst into loud laughter, besiege the tribune, frown at the speaker, and let the mob place ridiculously on his head, in presence of the Convention, a crown of oaken leaves. Addressing the Assembly,

ne was in the habit of repeating with emphasis: "I call you to a sense of decency, if you have any left."

Of his adversaries he used to say: "What a vile clique! O the hags! O the prison-birds!" He would cry to one of the speakers: "Silence, foul fellow!" or, "Thou art a scoundrel! thou art a driveller! thou art an imbecile!"

He was abundantly repaid, for from all sides issued indignant exclamations of, "Hold your tongue, execrable wretch!" He was abhorred by the Gironde especially, and by most of his colleagues, who showered upon him expressions of detestation and contempt, all received, it is fair to say, with a tranquillity and even an effrontery grotesquely good-humored. Marat was no orator. He was not even a vulgar spouter. But no more was he a polemic without some talent; and he sometimes had the perspicacity to divine the ambitious among the leaders under their disguises, and the courage to tear off their mask.

—Billaud-Varenes, harsh, morose, atrabilious, inexorable; a martyr himself to the republican creed, and who believed that, in Robespierre, he was immolating a tyrant.

—Couthon, the counsellor of Robespierre, of whom Saint-Just was the executive; a paralytic in both legs, and alone unable to stir among all those active spirits: Couthon, who, sentenced to death, on pretext of having designed to crawl up to the rank of sovereignty, contented himself with replying ironically: "I aspire to become a king!"

—Saint-Just, a republican by conviction, austere by temperament, disinterested by character, a leveller upon system, a tribune in the Committees, a hero on the battle-field. His youth, which verged upon manhood, was ripe for great designs. His capacity was not beneath his situation. A gloomy fire beamed in his looks. He had a melancholy expression of countenance, a certain inclination for solitude, a delivery slow and solemn, a soul of iron intrepidity, a determined will, an object ever fixed and distinct before his eyes. He elaborated his reports with a studied dogmatism. He seasoned them with scraps of metaphysics taken from Hobbes

and Rousseau, and, to the violent and expeditious realities of his revolutionary practice, he joined a social philosophy compounded of humanitarian imaginations and flowery reveries.

Here are some of his sayings: "The fire of liberty has refined us, as the boiling of metals throws off from the crucible the impure scum." And this word: "Dare!" And this other: "The traces of liberty and of genius cannot be effaced in the universe. The world is void of them since the days of the Romans, and their memory still fills it."

His report against Danton is contrived, arranged and conducted in all its parts with infinite—I had almost said infernal—art. He begins by incriminating Bazire, Chabot, Camille Desmoulins and the others. He reserves Danton for the last. There he pauses—he takes a survey of his task, and collects all his force to encounter the giant. He reiterates his proofs, he accumulates them, he groups them like a battle-axe; and, to fire the auditory, he apostrophizes Danton as if he had been present, as would a criminal prosecutor in a court of assize. He unrolls the pretended list of his treasons, conspiracies and crimes. He unveils his private life, and discloses his conversations, even confidential. He denounces, he stigmatizes him; he refuses to hear him in defence, he does not hear him; he judges him, condemns him, drags him upon the scaffold and beheads him with his discourse, more effectually than he would have done with the knife of the guillotine.

—Robespierre, an orator of considerable fluency, practised in the harangues of the clubs and the contests of the tribune; patient, taciturn, dissembling, envious of the superiority of others, and constitutionally vain; a master of the subject of discussion and of himself; giving vent to his passions only by muttered exclamations; neither so mediocre as his enemies have made him, nor so great as his friends have extolled him; thinking far too favorably and speaking much too lengthily of himself, his services, his disinterestedness, his patriotism, his virtue, his justice; bringing himself incessantly upon the stage after laborious windings and

circumlocutions, and surcharging all his discourses with the tiresome topic of his personality.

Robespierre wrote his reports, recited his harangues, and scarce ever extemporized but in his replies.

He could sketch with ability the external condition of the political world. He had, perhaps, in a higher degree than his colleagues, the views of the statesman; and whether vague instinct of ambition, or system, or ultimate disgust of anarchy, he was for unity and strength in the executive power.

His oratorical manner was full of allusions to Greece and Rome, and the college truants who thronged the Assembly used to listen valiantly, with gaping mouths, to those stories of antiquity. Who, at the present day, would speak in the tribune, without smiling irrepressibly, of the Cretans, of Lacedemon, of the god Minos, of the general Epimenandos, of the long-gowned Roman senators, of the good Numa and the nymph Egeria?

Interrupted by Vergniaud, who cried to him: "Conclude! . . . ." "Yes, I am going to conclude, and against you! against you who . . . ." And unrolling the long series of his charges, Robespierre becoming animated rose on this occasion to real eloquence. But, ordinarily, his phraseology was false and declamatory.

Thus, he used to say: "The Girondists instigated in all quarters the *serpents* of calumny, the *demon* of civil war, the *hydra* of federalism, the *monster* of aristocracy." These four figures accumulated in one sentence are ridiculous and in bad taste.

He would stop suddenly in the middle of his discourse to interrogate the people, as if the people were before him; thus making a gross abuse of rhetoric. He was in the habit of also dealing out tedious philosophical tirades about virtue, which were palpable reminiscences of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

He proceeded regularly by prosopopeias and other figures which escape in the heat of oratorical action, and depict

more vividly the thought, but which are entirely out of place in a dissertation. Sometimes his images were clothed with much eloquence of form: "Do we calumniate the luminary which gives life to nature, because of the light clouds that glide over its effulgent face?"

This other idea is beautiful: "Man's reason still resembles the globe he inhabits. One half of it is plunged in darkness, when the other is illuminated."

But what more misplaced in a report than the following accumulation of allusions to the men and things of antiquity? "The cowards! they dare denounce the founders of the Republic! the modern Tarquins have the assurance to call the senate of Rome an assembly of brigands! Even so did the valets of Porsenna regard Scevola as a madman. According to the manifestoes of Xerxes, Aristides has pillaged the treasury of Greece. With hands full of the plunder and stained with the blood of the Roman people, Octavius and Anthony ordained throughout the earth that they alone should be deemed clement, alone just, alone virtuous. Tiberius and Sejanus see in Brutus and Cassius but blood-thirsty assassins and even cheats."

For the rest, the Mountainists were unqualified, except perhaps Barrere and Saint-Just, to range their ideas in a logical and skilful order, to make for the end and conclude. The reports of Robespierre will not bear analysis. They are vitiated by redundancy, confusion and bombast.

Robespierre scarce ever attacked his enemies directly and in front; he took them underneath and by insinuation; he hurled against them those indirect threats, those expressions of sinister significance, such as Tiberius was wont to throw out, in the Roman Senate, against his appointed victims.

Robespierre was a deist, as was also Saint-Just. But, to be a deist and own it publicly, was to be quite religious for those times.

The day preceding his death, in the meridian of his power, when he came to denounce to the Convention, the Committees of public safety and of general security, he expatiated

with an affected complacency, upon the part of pontiff which he performed on the festival of the Supreme Being. The apostrophe which terminates that episode is not without animation and coloring :

“Citizens, you have attached to the cause of the Revolution every pure and generous heart. You have exhibited it to the world in all the splendor of its celestial beauty. O day forever to be blessed, when the entire French people arose to render unto the author of nature, an homage worthy of his acceptance ! What a touching assemblage of all the objects which can delight the eyes and the hearts of men ! O honored old age ! O generous ardor of the sons of the land ! O pure and simple joy of our young citizens ! O delicious tears of doating mothers ! O divine charm of blended innocence and beauty ! O majesty of a great people, happy in the sentiment of its might, its glory and its virtue ! Being of beings ! beamed the universe, fresh from thy omnipotent hands, with a light more agreeable to thine eyes than did this nation, the day when, breaking the yoke of crime and of error, it appeared before thee in an attitude worthy of thy regard and of its own destinies ?”

There is composition and art in this scrap. But was it suitably placed between a denunciation to death and a meditated insurrection ? The orators of the Revolution are full of such contrasts.

Robespierre was quite serious in his festival and restoration of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul. He could not bear the irreligious banter of the other members of the government. He revolted at two things in them, their materialism, and having thought themselves capable, during forty days, of doing without himself.

When, at the outset, Robespierre was a butt to the terrible assaults of Vergniaud and of Louvet, he bowed the head and let pass the storm. But as soon as he saw that the decimated Convention was yielding, he assumed the tone of master. He insisted that the Convention discuss or rather decree on the spot, laws the most critical and ferocious, pro-

posed at the very instant by the Committee of public safety. The tyrannized majority turned pale with anger, and vengeance brooded in every breast. Merlin and Tallien were confounded: Bourdon, swallowing the insult, muttered with trembling lips: "I esteem Couthon, I esteem the Committee of public safety, I esteem the unswerving Mountain that has saved Liberty."—This Mountain, sapped in its foundations, was speedily to sink upon itself.

What an oratorical drama, what a discourse in action, was that famous sitting of 9th Thermidor!—Robespierre hurls his terrible impeachment against his enemies, and descends from the tribune. All is silence, all is hesitation; then a lengthening murmur runs from bench to bench. The members accost each other, and groups are formed. They look scrutinizingly at each other—they count their numbers—they consult—they kindle into indignation—they break into passion. Robespierre is convulsed—he is ruined. Saint-Just flies to his aid, and denounces Tallien. That name is scarce passed his lips, than Tallien pale, dismayed, half alive, half dead, demands that the veil which covers Robespierre be entirely torn away.

Billaud-Varennes exclaims: "The Convention is between two abysses; it will perish if it falters—" [*No! No! it must not perish!*—All the members are standing; they wave hats, and vow to save the republic.]

Billaud-Varennes: "Is there here a single citizen who would consent to live under a tyrant?" [*No! No! perish the tyrants!*]

Robespierre rushed to the tribune. [A great number of voices: *Down with the tyrant! down! down!*]

Then Tallien: "I have witnessed yesterday the proceedings of the Jacobins, I have trembled for the country! I have seen in training the army of the new Cromwell, and I have armed myself with a dagger to pierce him to the heart!" [*Vehement acclamations.*]

Robespierre, his back against the railing of the tribune, repeats his demand to be heard, he begins to speak. [His

voice is lost amid reiterated cries of, *Down with the tyrant! down! down with him!*]

Robespierre persists: Tallien pushes him back and proceeds with his accusation.—Then Robespierre casts an interrogating look towards the most ardent of the Mountainists: some turn aside the head, the others remain motionless. He invokes the Centre: “It is to you, men of purity and patriotism, that I address myself, and not to those brigands—” [*Violent interruptions.*] “For the last time, president of assassins, I demand the floor.” [*No! No!*—The uproar continues; Robespierre is exhausted from his efforts; his voice is become hoarse.]

Garnier: “The blood of Danton stifles thee!”

This Danton, whose blood mounted into the throat of Robespierre and was suffocating him, this Danton whom I am now about to portray, this Danton, the inferior of Mirabeau and of him alone, was taller by the head than all the other members of the Convention.—He had, like Mirabeau, viewed near, a sallow complexion, sunken features, a wrinkled forehead, a repulsive ugliness in the details of the countenance. But, like Mirabeau, seen at a distance, and in an assembly, he could not fail to draw attention and interest by his striking physiognomy and by that manly beauty which is the beauty of the orator.—The one had something of the lion and the other of the bull-dog—both emblematic of strength.

Born for the highest eloquence, Danton might, in antiquity, with his thundering voice, his impetuous gestures, and the colossal imagery of his discourses, have swayed from the height of the popular tribune the tempestuous waves of the multitude.—An orator from the ranks of the people, Danton had their passions, understood their character, and spoke their language. He was enthusiastic, but sincere—without malice, but without virtue—suspected of rapacity, though he died poor—coarse in his manners and his conversation—sanguinary from system rather than temperament, he cut off heads, but without hatred, like the executioner, and

his Machiavelian hands trickled with the carnage of September. Abominable as well as false policy! he excused the cruelty of the means by the greatness of the end.

Two men have by turns ruled the Revolution—both at the same time similar and different—Danton and Robespierre.—Both party chiefs and masters of the Convention—both pushing on to the extremest measures—both intelligent in the state of affairs at home and abroad—both men of counsel and of combat—both accused of treason, of tyranny, and of dictatorship—both refused a hearing in their personal defence, for having refused to hear others—both decreed to prosecution by the unanimous vote of their own accomplices—both found guilty by the Revolutionary Tribunal they had themselves erected—both outlawed—both immolated, almost in the bloom of life, Danton by Robespierre, and Robespierre on account of Danton—both, in fine, dragged to the same punishment in the same cart and upon the same scaffold.

Danton was intemperate, abandoned in his pleasures, and greedy of money, less to hoard than to spend it; Robespierre, sombre, austere, economical, incorruptible.—Danton, indolent by nature and by habit: Robespierre, diligent in labor, even to the sacrifice of sleep.—Danton disdained Robespierre, and Robespierre contemned Danton.—Danton was careless to a degree of inconsistency; Robespierre, bilious, concentrated, distrustful, even to proscription.—Danton, boastful of his real vices, and of the evil which he did, and a pretender even to crimes which he had never committed: Robespierre, varnishing his animosity and vengeance with the color of the public weal.

Robespierre, a spiritualist; Danton, a materialist, little concerned to know what, after death, should become of his soul, provided his name was inscribed, as he expressed it, "in the Pantheon of history."

Danton displayed, in his furrowed forehead and in his burning eyes, the vehemence and the tumultuous passions of his soul; Robespierre dissembled his wrath under the imperturbability of his features.—Danton awed you by his ath-

letic stature and the broken peals of his thundering voice ; Robespierre froze the accused by his speech, and terrified them by his oblique glance.—Danton, like a tiger, sprung upon his prey : Robespierre, like a serpent, coiled himself around it.—Danton retired, after the battle, to his tent, and went to sleep ; Robespierre never thought he had demolished enemies enough as long as there remained any still to be demolished.—Danton forgot himself in the dangers of his country, and compromised himself for his friends ; Robespierre, in serving the cause of liberty, was never unmindful of himself. He used to trumpet his own praise, and was fond of gazing at himself in the mirror of his pride.—Robespierre had more talent ; Danton, more genius.

Danton gave himself up to the inspiration of the moment, kindled as he went by his voice and gesture, and scattered hyperboles by handfuls through his speeches ; Robespierre, impassive, collected, advanced cautiously in the debate, and calculated every step of his elaborate movements.

Danton proceeded by bounds and gambols, going direct to the subject, fiery and petulant in his exordiums, presumptuous to excess, accustomed to the triumphs of popular haranguing, and too confident of that success, without adverting to the accidents of popularity and absence.—Robespierre spun out artfully the web of toils wherein his enemies were to be ensnared, held his threat suspended over several at the same time, and let it fall, like the thunderbolt, but at the close of his discourse.

Danton ended with some rhetorical flourishes, but without coming to any conclusion. Robespierre, less brilliant, but more precise, less impetuous, but more adroit, did not vainly beat the air, did not talk for the sake of talking, never lost sight of his object, and closed but by a decree of accusation drawn up in due form, and submitted for the immediate acceptance of the Convention.

Danton imagined that he had but to present himself to commence the combat, and but to combat single-handed to secure a triumph ; Robespierre sought in the effervescence

of the Jacobins and in the armed force of the Commune, a bugbear against the Committees and the Convention itself.—There was in the case of Danton less of treachery than of remissness, less of forgetfulness of the Revolution than of himself, and in that of Robespierre more wounded vanity than aspiration to the dictatorship, more of rancorous spleen than of premeditated tyranny.—Danton perished through excessive confidence in himself; Robespierre, through excessive suspicion of his accomplices.—Danton passed like a meteor over the horizon of the Convention; Robespierre held the Assembly, the Committees, and the Clubs in dependence upon him, and governed without being minister, reigned without being king, and gave his terrible name to the epoch.

Parliamentary eloquence, in our monopoly Chambers and complicated governments, is, generally, but mere sound, empty phrases and nothing beside. But in those days a popular dictator, a tribune, a Danton, by the power, the energy, and the action of his oratory could put in motion an army of six hundred thousand men, repel a foreign invasion beyond the frontiers, demolish whole categories of outlawed persons, stir up provinces to the inmost recesses, and create, as by magic, armies, tribunals, laws, and constitutions.—Eloquence legislated, governed, triumphed in the Convention, in the Clubs, in the public squares. In the present day, the place of deputy is made a ladder to the ministry. At that time, we see Danton quit the ministry to remain representative of the people. The reason is, that a representative of the people was superior to a minister, was in fact every thing.

Danton shut himself up in the Convention, as in a fortress bristling with cannon, of which one half was turned against its defenders, and the other against the enemy. There, he fired through every breach, and none disputed his exercise of the chief command. But when the Convention was split into two rival camps, Danton hesitated. Had he sided with the Gironde, he would have crushed Robespierre. But im-

prudently repulsed and pressed by the Girondists against the foot of the Mountain, he ascended it and surrendered himself desperately to his destiny. "Ah! you accuse me," said he, to Gaudet, drawing himself up to his full height, "you accuse me! you do not know my power!"—It was great, that power! for he held in his hand, to move the Convention, two of the mightiest levers—terror and enthusiasm.—It was great, that power of terror, when he elevated upon its gigantic pillars the Revolutionary Tribunal.—It was great, that power of enthusiasm, when, kindling with his breath the invincible martial ardor of the French, which is apt to flag if not kept up unceasingly, he said: "What we need, in order to conquer, is audacity, again audacity, always audacity!"—And elsewhere: "The people have nothing to give but blood; they give it profusely. Come then, mercenary wretches, give you as freely of your wealth. What! you have a whole nation for lever, reason for a fulcrum, and you have not yet overturned the world! Throw aside your miserable quarrels, I know but the enemy. Let us crush the enemy. What, though they call me blood-thirsty? What care I for my reputation? Let France be free, and let my name be given to infamy!"—This was a monstrous, but original, energetic, startling eloquence, which welled forth by gushes from the breast of the orator who enraptured the Assembly and wrung from it prolonged peals of unanimous acclamation.

Here are a few more of the figures of this style of eloquence:

"A nation in a state of revolution is like the brass which simmers and sublimates itself in the crucible. The statue of liberty is not yet cast, but the metal is boiling!"

And this: "Marseilles has declared itself the Mountain of the republic. That Mountain will expand its proportions; it will roll down the loosened rocks of liberty, and crush beneath them the enemies of freedom."—And this apothegm so just: "When a people passes from a monarchical to a republican form of government, it is carried beyond the end

by the projectile force which it has given itself."—And this lofty menace: "It is by cannon-balls that the Convention must be made known to our enemies."

Danton too used to pay tribute to the bad taste of the times. For instance, one of his celebrated speeches closes thus: "I have intrenched myself in the *citadel of reason*, I will open my way out with the *cannon of truth*, and I will pulverize my accusers."

Inexhaustible subject for historical meditation! Oh! on the one hand, what an immense and glorious career had not Liberty opened to us, if so many confiscations, so many proscriptions, so many incarcerations, so many massacres and torturings, so many torrents of blood, so many decapitations, so many executioners and victims, had not led us back forcibly by the road of anarchy to despotism! Oh! on the other hand, what perils of death, when the Convention itself appeared to hesitate, had not our beloved France incurred, our France, one and indivisible, menaced as she was with dismemberment and partition, if, in that fatal moment which saves or surrenders the life of empires, Danton had despaired of her cause!—What proved his ruin, and what must have ruined Robespierre too, was much less having aspired to govern, than not having governed enough.

One must not get out of humor with revolutions. He is not to stand surveying them as they pass, from the heights of the beach. It is necessary to embark with them in the same bottom, traverse the same tempests, watch the conspiracies day and night, and not quit for an instant the helm.

Danton went to sleep, confiding in the deceitful breeze of his popularity. The rudder slipped from his hands. He dropped into the deep, and the gulf closed over him.—Neither the favor of the Cordeliers, nor the celebrity of his name, nor the memory of his services, nor the ill-suppressed mutterings of the Convention, nor the secret sympathies of the Revolutionary Tribunal, nor the devotedness of his friends, nor the unimportance of the charge, nor his

ove for liberty, nor his daring, nor his eloquence—nothing could avail to save him.—The knife was raised, and Robespierre awaited his victim.

Danton, on his way to execution, passed by the residence of Robespierre. He turned about, and with his voice of thunder, “Robespierre!” he exclaimed, “Robespierre! I summon thee to appear within three months upon the scaffold!” He ascends the fatal steps—he embraces for the last time his friend, Camille Desmoulins. The executioner separates them: “Wretch,” said he to him, “thou canst not hinder our heads to kiss each other presently in the basket”

# THE EMPIRE

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## MILITARY ORATORY.

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

PARLIAMENTARY eloquence made no great figure under the Directory. Under the Consulate and the Empire, it lost its freedom and its voice. The Press itself was decapitated by the fatal shears of the Censorship. To the agents of revolution had succeeded the agents of organization; to the theoretical politicians, the men of practical business; to the orators, the jurists. In the Legislative Body, the Senate, the Council of State, the Pulpit, the Bar, true eloquence had become unknown. Eloquence—that great art of impassionating and swaying the masses by means of emotional and figurative expression—passed to the military men, or rather to one alone of them, to Napoleon Bonaparte.

The military eloquence, attributed to the ancients, is no better than a fiction of their historians and their poets. To harangue soldiers, not in the circus and from the elevation of the tribune, but in the presence of the enemy, as is reported of their generals, would have been admirable, I am far from denying it; but it was plainly impossible.

These expressions: "Come and take them," of Leonidas to Xerxes; of Epimenondas dying: "I leave two immortal daughters, Leuctra and Mantinea;" of Cæsar: "I came, I saw, I conquered:" these apothegms may well have been spoken, precisely because they are but apothegms. But from a sentence of some syllables to a harangue of



Napoleon

some pages, there is a wide distance. There is all the distance from truth to falsehood.

If, in fact, in the Chamber of Deputies, in a hall where the repercussion of sounds is favored by its acoustical construction, there are a hundred members at least, out of four hundred, who never hear very distinctly the loudest and most practised speakers, how could the generals of antiquity have made themselves heard, upon the ground which they may chance to occupy on the battle-field, before the extended line of a hundred thousand warriors, amid wind and rain, which scatter and drown his words at four paces from the orator? The greater part of these monstrous armies were but a horde of barbarians of all countries, chained together under the rod of a master, knowing neither to read or write, or make themselves intelligible to one another, and understanding each other perfectly but for the purposes of theft, murder and pillage. But the illusion favors the predilections for antiquity. We unhesitatingly believe those historians who make Alexander, Scipio, Hannibal, speak as if Alexander, Scipio, Hannibal were elaborators of standard phrases, and who in the thick of the *melee*, had been specially careful not to derange by a comma the grammatical symmetry, or the cadence and measure of a *gerund* or a *supine*.

Moreover, all these fictions of discourse go back but a little way. The Greeks were fine speakers, and the heroes of old Homer harangue almost as well as they fight. Virgil and he have even not been satisfied with making speeches for mortal men. In their superabundance, they furnish them to the gods of Olympus. In imitation of them, Tasso puts subtle and labored orations in the mouth of Rinaldo, of Solyman and of Godfrey, who, in their quality of warriors, prided themselves upon not knowing how to spell a solitary letter of the Turkish or the French alphabet. Milton goes farther: he ascribes speeches, very beautiful assuredly, to the winged seraphim of heaven and to the angels of the bottomless pit, to excite the divine and the infernal militia

to fight bravely—with the condition, however, of never killing each other, since bodiless souls are unsusceptible of death.

The lengthy harangues of Quinctius Curtius are but rhetorical essays, which this historian puts in the mouth of his Alexander, who is a mere swaggerer. Polybius, Thucydides, Sallust, Plutarch clothe the Greek and Roman heroes in the livery of their own style. It is not Germanicus we read in the "Annals," it is Tacitus unadulterated. Livy makes no end of his harangues, and this harmonious phrase-maker of the drawing-rooms of Mæcenas, does not reflect that he would not have been understood even by the generals of ancient Rome. It would be pleasant to see him introduce the Chamberlains of Tarquin lisping the *patois* of the Etrurian dialect, amid inextinguishable laughter, in the polished court of Augustus. It would be very much as if Madame de Sévigné would try to make herself understood by the kitchen-maids of King Childebart.

The most elegant of our men of letters, M. Villemain, would not polish, would not round or point his period with more finish in his carefully closed cabinet, than does the rude Coriolanus under the walls of infant Rome, or the ferocious Arminius in the swamps of Germany.

Galgacus, for example, was a sort of savage, bristled, hairy and bearded from head to foot. He emitted from a shrill gullet certain inarticulate cries, brandishing his sword meanwhile. He was not well versed in prosodial elisions or ablatives absolute, and it is more than probable that he had not had time to finish his philosophy at the University of Oxford. Very well! Tacitus makes him a rhetorician, a species of perpetual secretary of the French Academy. His whole speech is varnished and brushed. Nothing is wanting—exordium, plan, proofs, peroration, and besides, logic, vehemence, color. Add to which, an admirable painting of manners and the style of the great masters. He might have been envied by Cicero.

These historians had all spent their youth sweating mind

and body in scholastic disputation. Their elaborate harangues smell of the lamp. Moreover, portraits and speeches were, as there is ground to conjecture, very much in fashion at that time, and to please the public of that day, the historians made them portraits and speeches.

In fine, the Romans and Greeks, folk of large imagination, have always been lovers of fictions in religion, in government, in poetry, in legislation, in every thing. If we are to judge of the truth of the facts related by Sallust, Livy, Quinctius Curtius and Tacitus, according to the genuineness of the harangues they report to us, there is no great reliance to be had upon all those histories.

What adds still to the improbability of these speeches, is their very extemporaneousness. For it is not said that they were dictated to a secretary, nor that he attended the general for the purpose of collecting them. They were not graven upon tablets overlaid with wax. They were not affixed to the palisades of the camp. They were not read during the watches by the fire-light of the bivouac. They were not committed to memory to be recited to others.

At the present day, the military harangues are not extemporized. They would not be heard amidst the clattering of muskets and bayonets, the prancing and neighing of horses, the coughings, sneezings, talkings, whisperings and caperings of men. The general would find it impossible to bring together upon a point sufficiently concentrated, the infantry, the cavalry, and the staff-officers, and the artillery, and the attendants, and the requisite genius. In like manner, he could not conveniently have himself lifted on men's shoulders, upon a shield or in a tribune. That would savor of preparation, that would be ridiculous. The general speaks, therefore, less to the ear of the soldier than to his mind. He encourages him before the engagement, he congratulates him after the victory. The harangues are inserted in the order of the day, and this is posted and read, on the walls, trees, or camp-stakes—is repeated, is conned

at the bivouacs, on the watch, and may be multiplied at will by impression.

There is possibility, truth, a result in the modern military orations. But it is beyond comprehension, I repeat, what was meant by improvisation in the armies of antiquity, and what could have been the effect, the import of those words scattered to the wind, and which must have dropped, unheard, at the very feet of the speaker. Every address of any length ascribed to the ancient generals, is therefore a mere historical ornament, a fiction, an invention, a lie.

Cæsar alone escapes this criticism, because Cæsar was not only an orator, but also one of the most polished of the aristocracy of Rome, in the golden days of her literature. Cæsar was possessed of every talent and every accomplishment: at once elegant and athletic, tender-hearted and courageous, prudent and peremptory, vehement and sly, vast in his plans, bold in execution, proud of his patrician birth and familiar with his soldiers, by whom he was adored. At the same time a great general, a great orator, a great writer; he describes in his Commentaries, written by himself, his battles and his speeches. But as Cæsar, in common with all great minds, was sensible to the vanity of literary glory, it is not very certain—at least I should not be sure—that he did not recast, amplify, color, embellish, and perhaps—were it but for amusement—prepare in the leisure of his tent several of those harangues, pretended to be extemporaneous. After the victory, he bethought him of posterity.

Be that as it may, I, for my part, make no difficulty of admitting Cæsar to have been the first military orator of antiquity. Indeed the opinion will not ever be disputed. Eloquence so well becomes the conquerors and the masters of the world!

In modern times, Saint Louis, Philip Augustus, Francis 1st, Bayard, Duguesclin have spoken some apothegms of military bravery. The addresses of Henry IV. especially are brief, taking, full of soul, sparkling with wit. But all

these kings, all these captains were placed but amid a small circle of nobles. It was to nobles that Francis 1st left for his adieu this celebrated apothegm: "All is lost, gentlemen, except honor." This very word, honor, is a term of chivalry. It is to one of his knights that Louis XII, at Aignadel, replied: "Let those who are afraid take shelter behind me!" It was to a knight, to Crillon, that Henry IV. wrote: "Hang thyself, brave Crillon; we have fought at Arques and thou wast not there." It was to nobles, to the princes of Conde and of Nemours, that he cried: "For God! gentlemen, onward! I will let you see that I am your senior brother." And these noble words which he spoke while running forward: "Follow my plume, you will always find it on the road to victory." But is there not something of feudalism in such sentiments and sayings? Would you not think these chivalric sceptre-wearers more proud of being gentlemen than of being kings? It was the manners and the spirit of the times, and it is but just to say such princes were preferable to institutions.

There was, under the ancient kings of France, a body of brave and well-disciplined troops. There was as yet no national army. The grand military eloquence had its birth with liberty in the wars of the Revolution. But many of the heroes who led our armies had more courage than literature. They knew better how to conquer than to talk. It was not speaking even then, it was singing. The *Marseillaise* gained more battles than the finest orations. There was no need of warlike exhortations to rush, bayonet in hand, upon the Austrian column. Every citizen was a soldier, and every soldier in repulsing the enemy, had the heart of a commander. The orders of the day of the Convention were frequently more eloquent than the allocutions of the generals. They ended, amid the unanimous acclamations of the Assembly, with these simple words: "The army of the Pyrenees, the army of the Rhine, the army of the Sambre-et-Meuse, the army of the West, the army of Italy have merited well of the country."

The manly and stern accents of the republican eloquence expired under the Empire. It seemed as if all moral energy had ceased to exist save in the head of one man, that of Napoleon—and that, in most of his lieutenants, it had taken refuge at the extremity of their arms. No more impulse, no more origination; they obeyed, this was the whole. One of them used to say: “In the name of my august sovereign, His Majesty the Emperor of the French, king of Italy and protector of the confederation of the Rhine, I have to prescribe to you, officers and soldiers, that each of you do his duty. Another general, more servile still, used to write: “By virtue of the orders of His Excellency, the marshal of the Empire, commandant of the fourth regiment, you will have, soldiers, to run to victory.”

What is to be said of the military eloquence of the Russians, the Germans, and the English?

Of Suwarrow we have a grand and beautiful piece of pantomime, when, to arrest the retreat of the Russians, he had his grenadiers dig a trench, wherein, lying down with his decorations, sword, epaulettes, all, he ordered that he should be buried alive. For the rest, the Russian generals treat their soldiers as abject serfs. They recommend them to think, in the battle, of their feudal masters, and adore the image of the great Saint Nicholas, in like manner as the sword of the archangel St. Michael. Their proclamations are pointless, verbose, and fanatical.

The world has never heard much of the eloquence of Austrian archdukes and Swiss princes.

The English generals are temperate of words. Their bulletins of war are almost all simple, brief, and dignified. They are neither laudatory nor passionate. They say the truth, and go strait to the fact. Their soldiers are cool, intelligent, well-disciplined, brave, less sensible to glory than to duty, and to well-turned compliments than to material well-being. Their imagination is not to be transported by figures of rhetoric; their heart, not to be moved by accents of sensibility. But no more would they bear without mur-

muring to be told : " You have neither shoes, nor overcoats, nor wine, nor beer, nor meat, nor bread ; meanwhile, my friends, you may fly to victory ! " The aristocratic Parliament of Great Britain votes her generals and officers, under guise of public testimonials and swords of honor, some magnificent pensions. They are a people with whom, not excepting glory itself, every thing ends in money.

The English bulletin is rather dry, I admit, but I should prefer it a thousand times,—such is my taste,—to the Spanish bulletin, which is still more inflated than our own African bulletin, and calls the slightest skirmish a battle, and the pettiest skirmisher a hero. It is only in that kingdom that one sees Marquises of Fidelity, Princes of Peace, Dukes of Victory, two dukes at once of the latter title in the two adverse camps, so that there could never be defeat on either side, since both must be victorious. It is the Immortal Riego, the Immortal Zumalacarrequi, the Immortal Cabrera, the Immortal Espartero, the Immortal Don Quixote ! Heroism, mummeries, laurels, diamond-headed decorations, illuminated portraits and snuff-boxes, triumphal entries, bombastic harangues ; all this happily leads to nothing, and we are told the army, the municipalities, and the Cortes must be allowed to give rein to their imagination, and that we must be indulgent to this country, because the climate is hot.

But let us, for the rest, dismiss all those haranguers, and proceed to Napoleon, who has been the first military orator of modern times, as he has been the first chief.

When Providence puts its hand into the crowd, there to choose and thence to draw those extraordinary men whom it has predestined to represent their generation upon the earth and to change the face of empires, it imparts and assigns them the intellectual and the physical powers of society, and it brings them, at remote intervals, upon the stage of the world, but in circumstances which it seems to have prepared expressly for their elevation and for their fall. Such were Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon.

Greece was out of all patience with rhetoricians and

poets, with usurpation, with civil wars, and great men, when the Asiatic world was opened, with all its riches, its ridiculous and despised religions, its enervated satraps, its populations rotten before being ripe, its superannuated governments, and its boundless territory, to the ambition of the young Alexander.

The Roman universe, harassed by the disgust of the great body of the people for a stormy liberty, and by the want of unity after the conquests of Asia, Spain, Gaul and England, was awaiting but a master, and gave itself still more to Cæsar than Cæsar desired it. The legions of veterans, accustomed to conquest under his command, knew no longer but the fasces and the name of Cæsar. Rome also aspired but to assign him the sceptre of the world, which her feeble hands could no longer bear.

Napoleon, in his turn, adroitly possessed himself of the active forces of the Revolution, which, tired of boiling up from the bottom of the crater and sinking back upon themselves, sought an outlet whereby to diffuse themselves abroad, and overflowed in the direction of conquest. He was master, because he had the wish, because he had the ability, and because he had the skill to be one. He absorbed, in the unity of his dominion, all conscience, intelligence, and liberty. He had boldness because he had genius, and perhaps he had genius because he had audacity. He despised men, because he understood them. He loved glory, because all beside was insufficient to fill the immense void of his soul. He devoured time, he devoured space; he must needs live quicker, progress quicker than other men; he weighed the world in his hand and deemed it light. He dreamt the eternity of his dynasty and universal monarchy.

But after having thus exalted the conquerors, Providence puts out with a breath the splendor of their diadem, and presents them a spectacle to the universe, to teach it that, despite their glory and the sublimity of their sway, they are but men, and that, like all men, they are subject to the vicissitudes of life and limited by the nothingness of the grave.

Thus Alexander perished in the bloom of his age, satiated with triumphs and debaucheries, amid the intoxication of a royal festival. Cæsar fell at the base of Pompey's statue, smitten by a republican dagger, when he was about to get himself crowned by the Senate, perpetual Emperor of Rome, after having brought under her laws the entire globe. In fine, Napoleon paused not in the career of his ambition until he had been driven upon a solitary rock, surrounded on all sides by the billows of the ocean.

Napoleon was one of those prodigious men who feel themselves born and who are formed for the government and subjugation of nations. Men of this description must die or reign. They are raised scarce a step above the rank of common soldiers, when they give their commands as if they were generals. Though still no more than subjects, they talk with the authoritative tone of masters.

Napoleon was not born, like Alexander, on the steps of a throne, nor like Cæsar, in the folds of the Senatorial purple. But as soon as he put a sword in his hand, he commanded, and when he commanded, he reigned. A simple captain, he besieged and took Toulon. A general of brigade, he organized the defence of the 13th *Vendemiaire* and saved the Convention. A generalissimo of the army of Italy, he treated like a king with the kings, the potentates, and the Pope. Vanquisher of Egypt, he conducts this expedition with the authority of an absolute chief; returns from Africa without letters of recall, lands at Frejus, traverses France in triumph, makes the Directory quake, draws in his train the other generals, expels the two Councils, improvisates a new constitution, and takes into his own hands the reins of the government. Emperor, he holds under his feet, in mute obedience, the Senate, the Legislative body, the administration, the people and the army. So that it may be said Napoleon never served, and that he could never have brought himself to submit to the authority of a parliament or a king, any more than Alexander could have obeyed the

confederation of the Greeks, or Cæsar the orders of the Roman Senate.

To wish that Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon had not been masters, in what place or time soever they might have lived, were to forget, were to misapprehend their nature, their genius and destiny. The son of the Macedonian, the pupil of Aristotle, led captive by his eloquence as well as his triumphs, the imaginations of the Greeks and of the Barbarians. Cæsar swayed the Roman legions by the ascendant of his eloquence. Napoleon won all at once over the old generals of the republic, over his army and the nation, the resistless empire of victory and genius.

We find in the proclamations, bulletins, and orders of the day of Napoleon, the qualities of the soldier, the art of the orator, and the profound and subtle sense of the politician. It is not only the language of a general, nor of a king, nor of a statesman, it is all these at the same time. If Napoleon was a consummate orator, it is that he was a complete man. What splendor has not genius united with power! What authority must not the language of this ravager of nations, this founder of states, have derived from the majesty of supreme command, the eminence and perpetuity of the generalship, the immense number of his troops, their fidelity and attachment, the multiplied splendor of his victories, the novelty, the suddenness, the hardihood, and the extraordinary grandeur of his enterprises. Napoleon combined all the conditions of personal boldness, of sovereign power, and of political and military talents in the highest degree of any commander of modern times, and it is in this that he is with them, in all respects, incomparable.

For the rest, let us not confound the military apothegms with the harangues of which we shall speak afterwards.

Sublime apothegms abound in the warlike annals of all countries and all times. "Return alive with thy shield, or dead upon it," said a Spartan mother to her son. "Our forests of arrows will darken the sun-light." "So much the better," replied Leonidas to Xerxes, "we shall fight in the

shade." Cæsar stumbles in setting foot on the coast of Africa. Instantly, to avert the evil presage, he cries: "Africa, I embrace thee!" Henry IV., at Coutras, slipping out from amidst his guard: "Stand aloof, gentlemen, I pray you, do not hide me, I desire to be seen." Villars, expiring, laments: "This Berwick has just been cut in twain with a ball! and I die in my bed! I always said Berwick would have the better fortune!" Larochejaquelin, the Vendean general, rushes into the thickest of the battle, saying: "I wish to be but a hussar for the pleasure of sharing the fight." And this remark of Kleber to Bonaparte: "General, you are great like the world!" And those beautiful words of Desaix: "Go say to the First Consul that I die with the regret of having done too little for posterity!" And these, of generals, of captains, of soldiers, and of drummers: "The Guard dies, but does not surrender!" "Hither, d'Auvergne, it is the enemy!" "I die, but they fly!" "I have a hand still left to beat the charge!" And a number of others.

Napoleon too gave utterance to a multitude of military apothegms:

To the Commissioner of the National Convention, at Toulon: "Mind your business of representative, and let me mind mine of artillerist." To the troops who were giving ground on the terrible bridge of Arcola: "Onward! follow your general!" To his soldiers in Egypt: "Forty ages look down upon you from the height of yonder pyramids!" To the plenipotentiaries at Leoben: "The French Republic is like the sun. Blind are those who do not see it!" To the army at Marengo: "Soldiers, remember it is my habit to sleep on the field of battle!" To his soldiers of artillery, revolted at Turin: "This flag, which you have deserted, will be hung up in the temple of Mars and enveloped in mourning. Your corps is disbanded." To the fourth regiment of the line: "What have you done with your eagle? A regiment which has lost its eagle, has lost its all!" "Yes, but here are two standards we have taken from the enemy." "Very good," said he, smiling, "I will give you back your

eagle!" To General Moreau, on presenting him a pair of pistols, richly mounted: "I designed to have them engraved with the names of all your victories. But there was not room enough to contain them." To a grenadier, surprised by sleep, and whose guard Napoleon was mounting: "After so much fatigue, it may be well permitted a brave fellow like you to fall asleep." To a soldier who was excusing himself for having, against orders, let General Tourbert enter his tent: "Go, he who forced the Tyrol, may well force a sentinel." To a Court general, who solicited him for a marshal's staff: "It is not I who make the marshals, it is victory." To a Russian commandant of artillery at Austerlitz, who said to him: "Sire, have me shot! I have lost my pieces." "Young man, console yourself! it is possible to be beaten by my army, and have still some titles to glory." To his army on opening the Russian campaign: "Soldiers, Russia is hurried along by fate; let her destinies be accomplished." On beholding, the morning of the battle of Moscow, the sun rise cloudless: "It is the sun of Austerlitz!" To his grenadiers who were alarmed on seeing him point the cannon at Montereir: "Come, my friends, fear nothing, the ball to kill me is not yet cast." At Grenoble, on his return from the Isle of Elba, in presence of a regiment who hesitated, he leaped off his horse, and uncovering his breast: "If there be one amongst you, if there be a single individual who wishes to kill his general, his Emperor, he can do so: here I am!"

But it is in his military harangues especially that we discover Napoleon. He became at once an orator, as he did a general. What astonishes particularly in so young a man, is the fertility, the suppleness, the discernment of his genius. He knows what to say, what to do, what to be to all on every occasion. No one has taught it to him, and yet he knows it all. Towards the Pope he is perfectly respectful, while capturing his cities. Prince Charles he treats with the loftiness of an equal and the courtesy of a knight. He enjoins discipline, he honors artists and learned men, he

protects religion, property, women, and aged persons. He posts sentinels at the gates of the churches. He sends Soult every Sunday to mass, with his staff. In Egypt, he will wear the turban, if necessary, and recite the Koran. He regulates provision markets, re-establishes communications, organizes a system of administrative accountability, institutes civil municipalities and provisional governments. Scarce has he conquered a territory, than he has it under the full operation of a government. It is not in the name of the Directory that he treats with other powers, but in the name of Bonaparte. From the outset, he demeans himself not as general-in-chief of the army, but as master. The old generals tremble in presence of this boyish warrior. They cannot bear those curt expressions which interrogate them, that look that pierces them through, that will that subjugates them. They feel themselves at the same time attracted and repressed. They take the positions assigned them, they admire in silence, they obey, and with them the rest of the army.

There is nothing like his manner of haranguing in modern or in ancient times. He speaks as if he stood, not on a hillock, but on a mountain. One would imagine he was himself a hundred cubits high. He does not confine his attention to the enemies he is going to fight, nor to the places which he traverses at a running pace. He makes a survey of Europe and of the globe. His army is not a simple army, it is the Grand Army. His nation is not a simple nation, it is the Great Nation. He erases empires from the map. He seals the new kingdoms which he institutes, with the pommel of his sword. He pronounces upon dynasties, amid the thunder and lightning of battle, the decrees of fate.

The figurative language of Napoleon would be ill received at this day, and would border upon the ridiculous. We care no more for the pomp of war. We have other wants, other ideas, other prejudices perhaps. But at that time the general imagination was in a state of excitement.

It was immediately after a revolution which had destroyed everything, renewed everything. It was a period of wild adventure and of vague speculation.

This was the time for Napoleon, as Napoleon was the man for this time.—Scarce has he relieved Scherer and taken the command of the army of Italy, than he rushes upon the enemy and at once bears off the victory. What imagination, what vigor, what confidence, what tone of conqueror and master in the following proclamation of a general of twenty-six years old :

“Soldiers, you have, in fifteen days, gained six victories, taken twenty-one stand of colors, fifty pieces of cannon, several fortified places, made fifteen hundred prisoners, and killed or wounded over ten thousand men. You are the equals of the conquerors of Holland and of the Rhine. Destitute of everything, you have supplied yourselves with everything. You have won battles without cannon, crossed rivers without bridges, made forced marches without shoes, bivouacked without spiritous liquor and often without bread. The republican phalanxes, the soldiers of liberty were alone capable of enduring what you have suffered. Thanks to you, soldiers! your country has a right to expect of you great things. You have still battles to fight, cities to take, rivers to pass. Is there one amongst you whose courage flags? One, who would prefer returning to the sterile summits of the Apennines and the Alps, to undergo patiently the insults of that slavish soldiery? No, there is not one such among the victors of Montenotte, of Millesimo, of Diego and of Mondovi!

“Friends, I promise you that glorious conquest: but be the liberators of peoples, be not their scourges!”

The effect of this discourse upon the army was electrical, and Napoleon did but march from triumph to triumph, in his immortal campaign of Italy. He enters Milan, and there, to sustain, to fan still higher the courage of his soldiers, he says to them :

“You have rushed like a torrent from the height of the

Apennines. Piedmont is delivered. Milan is yours. Your banner floats throughout entire Lombardy. You have crossed the Po, the Tessino, the Adda, those much-vaunted bulwarks of Italy. Your fathers, your mothers, your wives, your sisters, your lovers rejoice at your triumphs, and are proud of their connection with you. Yes, soldiers! you have done much, but is there nothing for you still to do? Will posterity have to reproach you with having found a Capua in Lombardy? Let us on! We have yet forced marches to perform, enemies to subdue, laurels to gather, wrongs to avenge!

“To reinstate the Capitol and the statues of its heroes; to awake the Roman people from the lethargy of ages of enslavement—this is what remains for us to accomplish!

“You will then return to your homes, and your fellow-citizens, pointing you out to one another will say: He was of the army of Italy!”

Never before had French soldiers been addressed in such language. They were infatuated with him. He might have led them to the extremities of the earth. This was what he already was dreaming of, and this vision of his imagination he transfused into their souls.

Accordingly, mark how he addresses his companions of Italy, when now out at sea, he was sailing towards Malta, and half disclosed to them the secret of the expedition to Egypt:

“Soldiers, you are a wing of the army of England! You are masters of the modes of warfare appropriate to mountains, to plains, to sieges. Naval war remains to complete your experience. The Roman legions whom you have sometimes imitated, but not as yet equalled, fought Carthage successively upon this sea and upon the plains of Zama. Victory never forsook them, because they were constantly brave, patient of fatigue, well disciplined, resolute. But, soldiers, Europe has her eyes upon you! You have great destinies to fulfil, battles to fight, fatigues to surmount!”

And wher, from the top-mast, the fleet descries the coast of Alexandria, Bonaparte discovering openly his designs :

“ Frenchmen, you are about to undertake a conquest of which the effects upon the civilization and commerce of the world are incalculable. The first city you are to meet was founded by Alexander.”

According as he penetrates with his army the sands of Egypt, he perceives that he has to do with a fanatical people, ignorant and vindictive, who distrust the Christians, but who detest still more the insults, the extortions, the pride and tyranny of the Mamelukes. To flatter these, their animosities and prejudices, he addresses them a proclamation quite in the Turkish style :

“ Cadis, Sheiks, Imans, Chorbadgys, you will be told that I came to destroy your religion ; do not believe it. Let your answer be that I come to re-establish your rights and punish your usurpers, and that I have more respect than the Mamelukes, for your God, his prophet and the Koran.

“ Tell your people that all men are equal before God. Wisdom, talent and virtue make the only difference between them.

“ But, is there a fine country ? it is appropriated by the Mamelukes. Is there a beautiful slave, a fine horse, a fine house ? all this belongs to the Mamelukes. If Egypt be their farm, let them show the lease which God has given them of it ! But God is just and merciful to the people. The Egyptians will be called to fill the public stations. Let the wisest, the most enlightened, the most virtuous govern, and the people will be happy.

“ You had formerly large cities, great canals, a flourishing commerce. What has ruined them all, if not the avarice, the injustice, and the tyranny of the Mamelukes ?

“ Cadis, Sheiks, Imans, Chorbadgys, tell the people that we too are true Mussulmans. Is it not we who demolished the Pope, the great enemy of the Mussulmans ? Are we not the friends of the Grand Seignor ?

“ Thrice happy those who shall be found on our side ! They

will prosper in fortune and rank. Happy those who shall remain neutral! They will have time to know the result, and then will join us.

“But woe, eternal woe to those who take arms in favor of the Mamelukes and fight against us! There will be no hope for them; they will perish!”

After the revolt of Cairo, he avails himself of the consternation and the credulity of the Egyptians, to present himself to them in the character of a supernatural being, an emissary of God, the inevitable man of destiny.

“Sheiks, Ulemans, believers of Mahomet, make known to the people that those who have been enemies to *me*, will find no refuge either in this world or the other. Is there a man so blind as not to see that Destiny itself directs *my* operations?”

“Inform the people, that since the beginning of time it was written that after having overthrown the enemies of Islamism, demolished the Cross, *I* would come from the far West to fulfil the task which has been assigned me. Show the people that in the holy book of the Koran, in more than twenty passages, what now happens has been foretold, and what is to happen is equally explained.

“*I* would bring every one of you to account for the most secret sentiments of his heart. For *I* know them all, even those which you have told to no one. But the day will come when all will see manifestly that *I* am under the conduct of superior guidance, and that all efforts can be of no avail against *me*.”

On the 18th Brumaire, surrounded by his brilliant staff, Napoleon apostrophized the Directory with the haughty authority of a master demanding the accounts of his stewards, and as if he had been already the sovereign of France:

“What have you done with that France which *I* had left you so flourishing? I had left you peace, I find war. I had left you the millions of Italy, I find everywhere plundering laws and destitution. . . . What has become of

a hundred thousand Frenchmen, whom I knew my companions in glory and labor? They are dead!"

The morning of the famous battle of Austerlitz, he vividly initiates his army into the inspirations of his strategy:

"The Russians mean to turn my right, and will present me their flank.

"Soldiers, I will direct myself all your battalions. I will keep away from the firing, if, with your wonted bravery, you carry disorder and confusion into the enemy's ranks. But, if the victory should be for a moment doubtful, you will see me rush to fall in the front of the conflict. Then is all over with the honor of the French infantry, the first in the world. This victory will end your campaign. Then the peace which I will make will be worthy of France, of you, and of me!"

What grandeur in these last words!

His discourse after the battle is a master-piece of military eloquence. He is pleased with his soldiers. He goes among them. He reminds them what they have overcome, what they have achieved, what will be said of them. Not a word of the chiefs. The Emperor and the soldiers, France in the perspective, peace for their recompense, glory for their reminiscence. What an opening, and what an ending!

"Soldiers, I am pleased with you; you have decorated your eagles with immortal glory. An army a hundred thousand strong, commanded by the Emperors of Russia and of Austria, has been, in less than four hours, either cut to pieces or dispersed; such as have escaped your sword are drowned in the marshes.

"Forty stand of colors the banners of the imperial guard of Russia, one hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, twenty generals, over thirty thousand prisoners, are the result of this day, for ever memorable. That infantry, so much vaunted and superior in numbers, has not been able to withstand your shock, and henceforth you have no rivals to tread.





“Soldiers, when the French people placed upon my head the imperial crown, I relied upon you to maintain it ever in that eminence of glory which alone could give it value in my eyes. Soldiers, I will soon lead you back to France. There, you will be the object of my tenderest solicitude; and it will suffice to say: *I fought at Austerlitz*, when the reply will be, ‘There goes a hero!’”

On the anniversary of this battle, he recapitulates complacently the accumulated spoils which fell into the hands of the French, and inflames their ardor against the Russians by the remembrance of the victory. “They and we, are we not the soldiers of Austerlitz?”—This is the stroke of a master hand.

“Soldiers, it is this day a year ago, at this very hour, that we were upon the memorable plain of Austerlitz. The Russian battalions fled appalled. Their allies are no more. Their fortresses, their capitals, their magazines, their arsenals, two hundred and eighty stand of colors, seven hundred field-pieces, five grand strongholds are in our power. The Oder, the Wasta, the Polish deserts, the inclement weather, nothing has been able to arrest your course,—all have fled before you. The French eagle hovers over the Vistula. The brave and unfortunate Poles imagine they behold again the legions of Sobieski.

“Soldiers, we shall not lay down our arms until a general peace has restored to our commerce its freedom and its colonies. We have conquered on the Elba and the Oder, Pondicherry, our Indian establishments, the Cape of Good Hope, and the Spanish colonies. Who should give the Russians the hope of balancing the destinies? Are not they and we the soldiers of Austerlitz?”

He opens the Prussian campaign by these words, which glow like powder at the instant of explosion:

“Soldiers, I am in the midst of you; you are the vanguard of the great people. You should re-enter France, but under triumphal arches. What! you would then have braved the seasons, the seas, the deserts, vanquished Europe

several times coalesced against you, borne our glory from the east to the west, but to return to-day to your country like deserters, and hear it said that the French eagle fled dismayed at the sight of the Prussian armies ?

“ March we then, since your moderation has failed to disabuse them of that strange infatuation. Let them learn that if it be easy to obtain an increase of power by the friendship of the great people, its enmity is more terrible than the tempests of the ocean !”

In 1809, about to punish Austria for her repeated perfidies, Napoleon confides to the army his great designs ; he mixes it, he associates it, with his own vengeance. He does not separate himself from it ; the cause is its own, which he goes to defend. What a flight of military eloquence in this address !

“ Soldiers, I was surrounded by you when the sovereign of Austria came to my tent in Moravia. You heard him implore my clemency, and vow to me an eternal friendship. Victors of three wars, Austria owes everything to your generosity. Three times has she been guilty of perjury ! Our past successes are assurances to you of the victory which awaits us. Let us march then, and at sight of us let the enemy recognize his conquerors !”

With the same ardor, he animates against the English the expedition to Naples. His words seem winged.

“ Soldiers, march, hurl into the waves—should they wait for you—the impotent battalions of those tyrants of the seas ! Let me quickly hear that the sanctity of treaties is avenged, and that the manes of my brave soldiers—butchered in the ports of Sicily, on their return from Egypt, after having escaped all the perils of shipwrecks, of deserts, and of a hundred battles—are appeased.”

It is still to beat down the power of his implacable, of his eternal foe, that he harangues the army of Germany, on his return, and opens before its view the conquest of Iberia :

“ Soldiers, after having triumphed on the banks of the Danube and the Vistula, you have traversed Germany by

forced marches. You are now to cross France, without getting a moment's repose. Soldiers, I need your aid. The hideous presence of the leopard infests the continents of Spain and Portugal. Let him, at sight of you, fly in affright. Let us waft our victorious eagles as far as the Columns of Hercules: there too have we outrages to revenge! Soldiers, you have surpassed the renown of modern armies; but have you equalled the glory of the armies of Rome, who, in the same campaign, triumphed on the Rhine and the Euphrates, in Illyria and on the Tagus?"

The morning of the battle of Moscow, he displays to the eyes of his soldiers the new harvest of laurels to be gathered, and places them, with himself, in presence of their reminiscences and of posterity:

"Here is the battle which you have so much desired! Henceforth, victory depends upon yourselves; it is become a necessity to you. It will give you plenty, good winter-quarters, and an early return home. Conduct yourselves as at Austerlitz, at Friedland, at Witepsk, at Smolensk, and let the latest posterity cite with pride what you shall have performed this day. Be it said of you, he was at the great battle under the walls of Moscow!"

We have reached, with the sun, the summit of the mountain. We must descend into the shade: let us pause a moment.

Glory goes out after its day is spent: liberty alone repairs itself by its very exhaustion. The more it is diffused, the more is it prolific. But Napoleon was unwilling to throw himself into the arms of liberty. Perhaps—I say perhaps—by putting himself at the head of the European democracy, he would have subverted, more effectually than with his armies, the thrones of Europe. This he would not do. How could he,—he, equally, nay, more a despot than the other potentates? Too upstart for the kings, too aristocratic already for the people, Napoleon had soon against him both the people and the kings. He had stricken terror into the dynasties. The dynasties excited the nationalities to revolt. But, an army may be triumphed over; there is no triumph.

ing over a nation, over several nations. Genius and victory cannot avail in the end against the independence of a people, against the conjunction of right and number. It is the law of humanity, a just and moral, a providential law. Napoleon was then to perish, and his fall was marked almost to a fixed hour.

It is sad to see that empire of gold and purple torn to pieces, that vast monarchy cracking in its ill-jointed planks, from Rome to Texel, from Hamburg to the Alps; those negotiations twenty times resumed, and as often abandoned; those desperate resistances of the hero, those tempests of his struggling soul, those gleams of victory shining through the night, those unspeakable treacheries, that defection of courage in his friends, those secret bargains of sated avarice and vanity, those invincible inclinations to repose, that universal lassitude of France, now broken down and disheartened.

Pass we, pass we quickly to the court of Fontainebleau, to listen to the farewell of Napoleon to the faithful remnant of his army; to those soldiers who could not tear themselves from their general, and who wept around him. There is not, in all antiquity, a scene at once more heart-rending and sublime.

“Soldiers, I bid you farewell. For twenty years that we have been together, your conduct has left me nothing to desire. I have always found you on the road to glory. All the powers of Europe have combined in arms against *me*. A few of my generals have proved untrue to their duty and to France. France herself has desired other destinies; with you and the brave men who still are faithful, I might have carried on a civil war; but France would be unhappy. Be faithful, then, to your new king; be obedient to your new commanders, and desert not our beloved country. Do not lament my lot; I will be happy when I shall know that you are so. I might have died; if I consent to live, it is still to promote your glory. I will write the great things that we have achieved. . . . I cannot embrace you all, but I embrace your general. Come, General Petit, that I may press you

to my heart! Bring me the eagle! that I may embrace it also! Ah! dear eagle, may this kiss which I give thee find an echo to the latest posterity! Adieu, my children; the best wishes of my heart shall be always with you: do not forget me!"

He departs, and from the recesses of the Isle of Elba he organizes his fabulous expedition. Before he has landed, while still upon that frail skiff which bears Cæsar and his good fortune, he commits to the waves, he scatters upon the winds his proclamation. He wakes before his soldiers' eyes the shades of a hundred, and sends his eagles before him to herald his triumphant return.

"Soldiers, in my exile I have heard your voice. . . . We have not been vanquished . . . but betrayed; we ought to forget that we were the masters of nations, but we ought not to suffer that any of them should intermeddle in our affairs. Who dare pretend to be master over us? Resume those eagles which you bore at Ulm, at Austerlitz, at Jena, at Montmirail! The veterans of the army of Sambre-et-Meuse, of the Rhine, of Italy, of Egypt, of the West, of the Grand Army, are humbled. . . . Come, range yourselves under the banners of your chief. . . . Victory will march at a charging pace. . . . The eagle, with its national colors, will fly from steeple to steeple, till it alights on the towers of Notre-Dame! . . ."

On the next day after his arrival at the Tuilleries, and amid the astonishment of the public mind, which succeeded a night of enthusiasm and intoxication, he rallies the old Guard around his banner. He presents to them his brave companions of Elba. What gradation, what art, what propriety, what oratorical ability in this effusion!

"Soldiers, behold the officers of battalion who have accompanied me in my misfortune: they are all my friends; they are dear to my heart. Every time I saw them, they represented to me the several regiments of the army. Among these six hundred brave men, there are soldiers of every regiment; all brought me back those great days whose

memory is so dear to me ; for all were covered with honorable scars received in those memorable battles. In loving them, it is you all, soldiers of the French army, that I loved. . . . They bring you back these eagles ; let them be your rallying-point ; in giving them to the Guard, I give them to the whole army ; treachery and untoward circumstances had wrapped them in a shroud ; but, thanks to the French people and to you, they reappear resplendent in all their glory. Swear that they shall always be found when and wherever the interest of the country may call them ! Let the traitors and those who would invade our territory, be never able to endure their gaze."

It would be too long to unfold all the beauties of situation of this piece.

Some days after, in the Champ-de-Mars, he speaks no more of the glory of battles and the devotion of his companions ; he flatters, exalts, caresses, before the people and the Legislative Body, the great sentiment of the national sovereignty.

" Emperor, Consul, Soldier, I owe all to the people ! In prosperity, in adversity, on the battle-field, in the council, on the throne in exile, France has been the sole and constant object of my thoughts and actions. Like that King of Athens, I have sacrificed myself for my people, in the hope of seeing realized the promise made to France her natural integrity, her honor and her rights. . . . "

Subsequently, he conjures the Chambers to forget their quarrels in presence of the greatness of the national danger. These words have been retained :

" Let us not follow the example of the Lower Empire, which, pressed on every side by the Barbarians, has made itself the laughing-stock of posterity, by wasting its time upon abstract discussions, at the moment the battering-ram was shattering the gates of the city. . . . It is in times of difficulty that the great nations, like the great men, display all the energy of their character."

When all is over, when he is stricken by the thunderbolt

of Waterloo, how touching are his last words to the army ! How he effaces himself ! how he hides himself from his own eyes ! it is no more to soldiers, but to patriots, to citizens, to brothers, that he addresses himself. He names himself no more their sovereign or their general ; it is no more the Emperor, it is simple Napoleon, it is their comrade in arms who bids them farewell.

“ Soldiers, though absent, I will attend your footsteps ; it was the country above all that you served in obeying me, and if I have had some share in your affection, I owed it to my ardent love for France, our common mother. Soldiers, yet a few efforts, and the coalition is dissolved. Napoleon will recognize you by the blows you strike !”

But his career was at an end : the Bellerophon stood already at anchor in the British Channel. Napoleon went aboard with that confidence, rather naive, of great men in adversity. It is on board this vessel that he wrote the Prince Regent this letter so well known and of so much noble simplicity :

“ Royal Highness,—

“ A butt to the factions who divide my country and to the enmity of the greatest powers of Europe, I have terminated my political career, and come, like Themistocles, to sit by the fireside of the British people. I place myself under the protection of their laws, which I claim from your Royal Highness, as the most powerful, the most consistent, and the most generous of my enemies !”

Such was wont to be the conduct, such the language of the great citizens of antiquity, when struck down by ostracism or beaten by the tempests of their country, they went to seek from foreigners the hospitality of exile.

Yet a few words, reader ! we part but regretfully with great men living or dead, and I would protract your admiration of this one to the end.

In the recesses of that island, his dreary prison, his imagination turned back upon the past, revisited Egypt and the East, and lit up with the brilliant reminiscences of his youth :

"It would have been better," he used to say, striking himself on the forehead, "had I not left Egypt. Arabia awaits a man. With the French in reserve, the Arabs and the Egyptians for auxiliaries, I might have made myself master of India, and I would to-day be Emperor of the whole East."

Then, as if liberty, more attractive than the empire of the universe, had shed upon his eyes a gleam of new light, he would cry :

"The grand and beautiful truths of the French Revolution will endure forever, such is the lustre, the monuments, the wonders which we have woven around them. We have washed away their early stains in the waters of glory. They will be immortal. Emanating from the tribune, cemented by the blood of battles, adorned with the laurels of victory, hailed by the acclamations of the people, sanctioned by treaties, they can never more retrograde. They live in Great Britain, they illuminate America, they are nationalized in France. Here is the tripod whence will issue the light of the world!"

Images of war were ever floating before him in that sickly state of his mind, dreamy and fluctuating, between waking and slumber.

"Go, my friends, return to Europe, go revisit your families; for me, I will again see my brave companions in the Elysian Plains. Yes, Kleber, Desaix, Bessieres, Duroc, Ney, Murat, Massena, Berthier, all will come to meet me; at sight of me, they will be all delirious with enthusiasm and glory. We will talk of our wars with the Scipios, the Hannibals, the Cæsars, the Fredericks; unless in that region," he would say smiling, "it should excite suspicion to see so many warriors together."

In his frenzy, he would imagine himself at the head of the army of Italy. He would hear the drum, and then cry: "Steingel, Desaix, Massena—quick, run, take the charge, they are ours!"

Sometimes he used to talk aloud and all alone, sometimes dictate to his secretaries; at others he wrote upon scattered

leaves the thoughts which burst by bounds, by fragments, from his soul too full to contain them.

“A second Prometheus, I am transfixed upon a rock, where a vulture gnaws my vitals. Yes, I have brought fire from heaven wherewith to endow France. The fire has remounted to its source, and here am I! The love of glory is like that bridge thrown by Satan over chaos, to pass from hell to paradise. Glory joins the past to the future, from which it is separated by an immeasurable abyss. Nothing to my son—nothing save my name!”

In his accessions of melancholy, he believed and used to say, that he was repulsed alive and dead from the land of Europe. “Let me be buried under the willows by yonder spring, whose water is so sweet and limpid.”

But this was not the last wish of his testament, the last look cast back upon the absent country, the last sigh exhaled from that great soul.

“I desire that my ashes repose on the banks of the Seine, in the midst of that people whom I have so much loved!”

This was the inscription, the sole inscription which should have been placed upon the flying streamers of the vessel which conveyed his remains, upon the pedestals of the columns and on the frontispiece of the triumphal arches which lined the way, upon the violet hangings of the funeral car, upon the eighty-six banners of the departments, upon the porch of the Invalides and upon his tombstone.

The more this tomb retreats into the shade of time, the more radiant will it be with glory to the eyes of posterity. Extraordinary men are like mountains, and their image seems to grow in proportion as they recede from our view, and stand out alone in the confines of the horizon.

But let us try to overcome the illusion of that deceitful perspective, and try to see Napoleon as he will be seen by the sages of posterity.

As Statesman, he had at once too much genius and too much ambition to consent to lay down the supreme authority,

and to reign under any master whatever—Parliament, People, or King.

As a Warrior, he lost the throne, not because he did not restore legitimacy, or because he stifled liberty, but because he was beaten in war. He was not, he could not have been a Monk or a Washington, for the very simple reason that he was Napoleon.

He has reigned as reign all the powers of this world, by the force of his principle. He has fallen as fall all the powers of this world, by violence and the abuse of that principle. Greater than Alexander, than Charlemagne, than Peter, and than Frederick, he has, like them, impressed his name upon his age. Like them, he was a law-giver. Like them, he founded an empire. His universal memory lives beneath the tents of the Arab, and traverses, with the canoes of the savage, the distant rivers of the Oceanic Islands. The people of France, so ready to forget, of a revolution which has overturned the world have retained but this name. The soldiers in their bivouac talk of no other captain, and when they pass through the cities their eyes rest upon no other image.

When the people accomplished the Revolution of July, the banner, all trampled in the dust, which was raised anew by the soldier-workingmen, extempore chiefs of the insurrection—this banner was the banner surmounted with the, French eagle; it was the banner of Austerlitz, of Jena and of Wagram, rather than that of Jemappes and of Fleurus, it was the banner which was planted on the towers of Lisbon, of Vienna, of Berlin, of Rome, of Moscow, rather than that which floated above the federacy of the Champ-de-Mars; it was the banner which had been riddled with balls at Waterloo; it was the banner which the emperor held embraced at Fontainebleau while bidding farewell to his old guard; it was the banner which shaded at St. Helena the face of the expiring hero: it was, in one word, to say all, the banner of Napoleon!

But stop: for on the other hand I hear muttering already

a severer voice, and fear that history, in her turn, prepares her indictment against him, and changes :

“ He dethroned the sovereignty of the people. He was Emperor of the French republic, and he became despot. He threw the weight of his sword into the scales of the law. He incarcerated individual liberty in the state prisons. He stifled the freedom of the press under the gag of the censorship. He violated the trial by jury. He held in abasement and servitude the Courts, the Legislative Body, and the Senate. He depopulated the fields and workshops. He grafted upon *militarism* a new nobility, which could not fail to become more insupportable than the ancient, because without the same antiquity, or the same prestiges. He levied arbitrary taxes. He meant there should be throughout the whole empire but one voice, his voice, but one law, his will. Our capitols, our cities, our armies, our fleets, our palaces, our museums, our magistrates, our citizens, became his capitols, his towns, his armies, his fleets, his palaces, his museums, his magistrates, and his subjects. He drew after him the nation over the battle-fields of Europe, where we have left no other remembrance than the insolence of our victories, our carcasses, and our gold. In fine, after having besieged the forts of Cadiz, after having held the keys of Lisbon and of Madrid, of Vienna and of Berlin, of Naples and of Rome ; after having shaken the very pavements of Moscow beneath the thunder of his cannonading, he has rendered France less great than he found her—all bleeding of her wounds, dismantled, exposed, impoverished, and humbled.”

Ah ! if I have too ardently, perhaps, admired this extraordinary man, who has done my country so much good and so much evil, whose memory will be eternally glorified in the workshops and by the cottage fireside, and whose popular name was blended, in my imagination, with all the prosperities and all the hopes of the country ;—if the pride of his conquests has tickled too much my heart,—if the rays of his glory have too much fascinated my youthful gaze,—from

the moment, O Liberty, that I have come to know thee, from the moment thy pure effulgence has shed light upon my soul, it is thee that I have followed, thee from whom my arms, now entwining thee, can never more be dissevered,—thee, Liberty, sole passion of the generous heart, sole treasure worthy of being coveted!—thee, that preferrest, to men who pass away, principles which are eternal, and to the brutalities of force the victories of intellect,—thee, who art the mother of order, though thy calumniators would coil thee in the *bonnet-rouge* of anarchy,—thee, who holdest all citizens to be equals and all men to be brothers,—thee, who dost recognize no legal superiority but that of responsible magistrates, no moral superiority but that of virtue,—thee, who seest pass before thee the stormy flight of absolute empires, like those clouds that dim a moment the purity of a serene heaven,—thee, who gleamest across the bars of the political prisoner,—thee, who art the midnight meditation of the sage,—thee, whom the slave invokes in his chains,—thee, whom the very tombs seem solemnly to sigh for,—thee, who, in the guise of a travelling workman, wilt make the tour of Europe, to stir up the cities and kingdoms by the force and the fascination of thy tongue,—thee, who wilt one day see disappear before thy triumphal march, custom-house barriers, secret tribunals, prisoners of state, capital punishments, aristocracies, close corporations, standing armies, censorships, and monopolies,—thee, who, in a holy alliance, wilt confederate the nations differing in language and manners, in the name of a common interest, in the name of their independence, their dignity, their civilization, their tranquillity and their happiness,—thee, who despisest idle conquests and false greatnesses, and who hast not descended from heaven upon the earth to oppress, but to redeem and embellish it,—thee, who art the life of commerce and the inspiration of the fine arts,—thee, who canst be served but with disinterestedness, who canst be loved but with rapture,

—thee, who art the first aspiration of youth, who art the sublime invocation of old age,—thee, Liberty, who, after having broken their chains, wilt conduct the last slaves, with palm-branches in hand amid hymns of glory, at the latest funeral of *Despotism*.

## THE RESTORATION

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It was by no means without eclat that epoch of our political life, when liberty, so long compressed beneath the hand of a despot, raised aloft her head, when France awoke to accents hitherto unknown, when parliamentary Eloquence unbound her tongue and spoke, when every interest, every passion, every hope seemed to have met around the tribune, there to dispute the possession of the present and the domination of the future.

The Empire, struck down in the person of its chief, had still some life in the remembrances of the old soldiers. France must always have some passion or other. Liberty had succeeded to glory. The emigrants were dreaming of Louis XV., the military men of Napoleon, the young men, of the Revolution. The people thronged around the Forum. It was something to be then a deputy! It was much more than an orator! At the present day, we still hear spoken the same tongue. The president is seated on the same gilded chair. The same cariatides still support the same tribune; but the people crowd no more upon the steps and in the porches of the temple. They no longer put faith in the oracles of representative government. The season is cold, night approaches, the sun goes down the horizon, and its paleing beams cease to illumine the world.

Three political schools disputed the ground of the Restoration: The English school, the Legitimist school, and the Liberal school.

M. de Serre was the orator of the English school, of which Royer-Collard was the philosopher. They had both.

for principle, the sovereignty of reason ; for means, the hierarchy of powers ; for end, the parliamentary monarchy.

Around these, moved Camille-Jordan, who bathed with unction his mellifluent phrase ;—Pasquier, whose quick-silvery argumentation escaped all analysis and refutation ;—Saint-Aulaire, who tossed off his words with the negligent and somewhat impertinent grace of an aristocratic superciliousness ;—Courvoisier, the readiest and most exhaustless of talkers, if Thiers had never existed ;—Simeon, a profound juriconsult ;—de Cazes, a minister of marked elegance and a charming figure, whose phraseology was not without copiousness and flexibility, nor his gesture unimposing ; who pressed, hurried along by the exigencies of the moment, by the phantasies and the fears of the Court, by the flux and reflux of a thousand enemies, gave himself up to the drift of all sorts of currents ; who muzzled the liberty of the press and suspended the reactions of the reign of terror, and who, master of his master and of France, blended real services with great faults, and the prudence of a politician with the weaknesses of a courtier ;—Lainé, a statesman, visionary, melancholy, dreamy, whose voice moaned forth the vague intonations of a harp of Ossian ; a character without decision, a hand tremulous and effeminate, which was unable to hold the reins of power ; but an orator of grave deportment, well-modulated delivery, who had sometimes the eloquence of the heart, and who, in compassion for the proscribed, used to become affected on the subject of their woes, and embrace, in their behalf, with tears and supplications, the altars of mercy and commiseration ;—in fine, Beugnot the keenest man of the kingdom of France and Navarre, next to M. de Lemonville, who himself was inferior to M. de Talleyrand.

The Legitimist school was divided into two parties : One was composed of hot-headed men, who were for pushing all things to the absolute, or of men of milder mood, devoted to God in heaven, and to the King upon earth. The other was composed of men no less true to the faith, but modified

by the exercise of power, and who accommodated themselves to the Charter as to a necessity more potent than them, and than the royalty which had to suffer it.

At the head of the former phalanx shone M. de la Bourdonnaie, who proposed the famous categories and caused the expulsion of Manuel. A counter-revolutionist, of the temper of the ancient Conventionalists ; kept in check by political considerations ; more imperious than able, and whose language was not destitute of either vigor or elevation :

—M. de LALOT, whose fulminating invective overthrew the Richelieu ministry ; full of imagery in his style, and of a vehement and colored copiousness.

—M. DUDON, so profoundly versed in the study of administrative legislation, whose portly head never bowed before an objection, and who received, with the muzzle to his breast, the balls of the Opposition, with all the phlegm of an Englishman.

—M. de CASTELBAJAC, who was in a constant flurry on his bench, striking with foot and fist, clamoring, exclaiming and interrupting the deputies all incredulous of his monarchical faith.

—M. de BONALD, an orator rather misty, a religious philosopher, counterpart to Royer-Collard, a moral philosopher, and unquestionably one of the greatest writers of our times.

—M. de SALABERRY, a warm royalist, a petulant orator, marching pistol in hand to the encounter of the Liberals, and pouring upon them, from the height of the tribune, the boiling imprecations of his wrath.

—M. de MARCELLUS, with whom royalty was not merely a principle, but a divinity, and who prostrated himself before his idol, with the naive fervor of a pilgrim and a knight.

M. DE VILLELE stood out, like a large figure, on the back ground of this picture.

Around M. de Villele were seen to group themselves men of a very different order of merit ; M. Corbière, one of the most learned juriconsults of a province where they are all learned ; a dabbler in second-hand literature ; a dialectician

caustic and cogent, who puts wings to his shaft, that it might fly the quicker to its destination and pierce the deeper his adversaries ;—M. de Berbis, an able explorer of the budget, a man of lucid intellect and upright conscience ;—M. de Peyronet, remarkable for the clarion vibrations of his voice, the ingenious adroitness of his logic and the flowery pomp of his language ;—M. de Martignac, that melodious orator who played upon the vocal instrument, like Tuloa upon the flute ;—M. M. Josse de Beauvoir and Cornet-d'Incourt, light-armed scouts detached from the wings of the ministerial phalanx to commence the engagement and spy the leaders at the head, in the copsewood of the Opposition ;—M. Pardessus, a lucid intellect, an eloquent speaker, a profound juriconsult ;—M. Ravez, the eagle of the Girondist bar, celebrated for the dignity of his bearing and the simple beauty of his voice ; one of those men who command wherever they appear and where they speak, the attention of their auditors ; powerful in his dialectic, learned in his expositions, master of his own passions and of those of others, and who, had he not been President of the Chamber, might, as orator, have swayed the section of the Right.

The Liberal School was a belligerent school. M. de Serre was the first to enter the lists, and after having fired his rounds and emptied his knapsack, he intrenched himself behind the ramparts of power. Manuel commanded the corps of reserve of the Opposition, and General Foy led the van. Benjamin Constant attacked the censorship, Lafitte the budget, Bignot the diplomacy. D'Argenson launched into the air, out of sight, the first rockets of radicalism. Casimir-Perier, carried beyond the ranks by the impetuosity of his martial ardor, challenged the minister to single combat. Corcelles, Stanislas, Girardin and Chauvelin, kept hovering around their benches and sent him, even in retreating, some effective darts ; and as final consequence of this warlike system, it was, after a pitched battle of speeches a mere street fight which defied the monarchy.

## M. DE SERRE.

LOUIS XVIII. had ascended his throne, and the vessel of exile was bearing Napoleon away towards the rock of St. Helena. The armies of Europe had sheathed the sword of war. They were tranquilly encamped upon our soil, for the second time polluted with their presence. But the parties, for a time repressed by the stupor of invasion, were about to renew the strife on the parliamentary arena.

A little ambition, a little hatred and a little revenge compose the basis of all victorious parties. How could it be expected that the Chamber of 1815, rabidly royalist, should not betake itself to the work of reaction? How expect that there would not be a struggle on the part of the Emigration against the wrecks of the imperial army, of the province against the Court, of the ancient interests against the new, of the spirit of locality against the spirit of centralization, of property against industry, of royalism against liberalism, of the altar and the throne against philosophy and the Revolution? This struggle was inevitable, imminent, implacable.

They were men of another age the most of those deputies of 1815. Wealthy burgesses or petty provincial nobles, sequestered in their manors, or in their drawing-rooms, they knew the men of the Empire but by the hatred they bore them, and the acts of that reign but by the exorbitance of taxation and the annual cupping of the conscription. Full at once of the terrors of the Revolution and the prejudices of the Emigration, superstitious, unlettered, obstinate, they would have a state religion, a monarchy without constitution, without peerage and without judiciary; but not without provincial institutions. The government in the hands of the king, the administration of the departments in the hands of the wealthy burgesses and the nobility—such was their

dream. Men, in other respects, of simple and respectable manners, sincere in their legitimist and religious faith, independent by the habits of their life, by position of fortune, by pride of gentleman, and who had nothing in common with the servile and insipid ministerialism of our stockjobbing age.

Kindled by its passions, intoxicated by a triumph as complete as it was unexpected, a Chamber so constituted might be expected to run to great excesses, in the tempestuous and bloody career of political reactions; to far greater than it should, no doubt, have wished itself.

M. de Serre appeared, and it might be said that he came just in the nick, and that it was time. The name of the king ran over in every speech, in every address, in every report. The cry of *Vive le Roi!* broke forth spontaneously, from the agitated Chamber, less however as a cry of love than a cry of war. At this exclamation, the enraptured majority clapped hands and started up with the transports and the dizziness of delirium. Yet another wave, and the torrent of reaction had swept down its embankments, rushed furiously over the plains and buried France beneath its waters. M. de Serre, without hesitation, threw himself intrepidly into the torrent and stopped its course.

At once soldier and chief, now on the defensive, now on the offensive, he multiplied himself and might be said to be himself alone almost an army. How many services never to be forgotten has he not rendered to the cause of liberty! With what bolts of eloquence did he fulminate against the re-establishment of confiscation, against the violences of the directoral committees, against the extortions of taxation, against the tyranny of prevotal courts, against the infernal and secret organization of the spy-system, fraudulent enlistments and governmental assassination! What courage amid what dangers! what elevated reason amid what frantic extravagances!

The provincial nobility, whether from the jealous leaven of that spirit of opposition which, ever since the feudal times,

animated it hereditarily against the Courtiers, or that it desired to concentrate the forces of the aristocracy in the local administrations, demanded urgently, under a popular pretext, the election by two degrees. M. de Serre baffled this stratagem, and carried the direct form of election; and when in 1819, the charge was renewed against this mode of election, de Serre defended it with arguments so convincing and an eloquence so captivating that the enthusiasm of his very adversaries burst forth in acclamations.

The oratorical career of M. de Serre was brief, but how richly filled up! What energy of will! what power of reasoning! what force! what fulness, what variety in his discourses! what a multitude of combats! what a succession of victories! How he pleads with ardor against the bankruptcy orators who, to annul or reduce the mortgage of the public creditors, stigmatized the origin and occasion of their titles! How he puts to shame the denouncers of the illustrious Massena! How he braves the call to order, for having opposed the proposition to render the clergy proprietary, to endow it with a rent-charge in perpetuity of forty-two millions, to restore to it the church property remaining unsold, to commit to it public instruction of all degrees, as also the civil registers, and to recast in the same mould the constitution of Church and State! How he seeks to move, where he cannot convince! How his voice softens, how he turns to invoke pity, when there are no ears for justice!

As minister, M. de Serre continued to march in the path of progress. His code of the press was a measure of great liberality, a work at that time prodigiously difficult in the elaboration of the subject, a production complete in the definition of the offences, in the forms of the procedure and the articulation of the penalties. M. Guizot, without the eloquence and comprehensiveness of de Serre, sustained him, however, honorably in that admirable discussion, and this noble action of his past life merits him the absolution of many a fault. Never, since the establishment of our

representative government, in any debate, has any minister soared to the same elevation as M. de Serre. He showed himself alternately a statesman in the political consideration of the subject, a dialectician in the deduction of the proofs, a juriconsult in the graduation of the penalties, an orator in the refutation of his adversaries. Wiser than the attorney-generals of the day, he maintained the reference of offences of the press to the jury. More liberal than the Opposition itself, he combatted the motion of Manuel to extend the inviolability to written opinions, and not those pronounced in the tribune. How many beautiful and stirring expressions dropped at that period from de Serre: "I do not interdict the deputy the right of being a writer." And this: "Liberty is no less necessary to the moral and religious, than to the political, progression of the people." It was during this discussion that de Serre having said that all majorities had been sound: "And the Convention too?" cried M. de la Bourdonnaie,—"Yes, sir," rejoined de Serre, "and the Convention too, if the Convention had not deliberated with the dagger at its breast."

Oh! what would be the indignation and pity of de Serre, had he the misfortune of living under our regime without liberty because it is without principles, without popularity because without grandeur; could he compare the temperate legislation of the press, under the king of 1819,—king by the grace of God—with the violent legislation of September, under the king of 1841, king by the grace of the People; and if he could see alongside the jury, that liberal judicatory of the country, our poor petty ministerial peerage pronouncing, upon poor paltry proceedings, its poor pitiful decrees.

Confiscation abashed, crime punished, justice reinstated, denunciations stifled, public credit restored, feudalism trampled down, the elections purified, the right of petition vindicated, parties equipoised, legislation enlightened, the tribune free, the press assured: such were the labors and the results of the first and brilliant period of the parliamentary

life of M. de Serre, as deputy, as president of the Chamber, and as minister.

But behold you, all of a sudden, M. de Serre, after having been the most vigorous champion of liberty, constitutes himself fatally the liege-servant of power. He attacks what he had defended. He burns his idol. He announces the approaching tempest; he utters from the topmast a cry of distress, and clings upon the shoals, overhanging the gulf whereinto the election law was drawing the monarchy. His energies are wasted, and, to recruit them, he leaves a moment the parliamentary scene. Meanwhile, his colleague, M. Pasquier, withstood the onset of the Opposition, but in retreating. The heavens were gloomy and the cloud was about to burst. De Serre is recalled in all haste; he returns, he rushes desperately into the strife. He changes the ground of the battle, carries the war with the victory into the camp of the Liberals, and saves the monarchy.

We must be unjust to no man. The Opposition prosecuted its trade of opposition. Why should not M. de Serre prosecute his of minister?

The governments, whose basis is not broad and national are sickly bodies, which a dose, a little too strong of liberty, kills infallibly. M. de Serre was the responsible adviser, the political physician, of an infirm royalty. He could not kill his patient. But there was then more peril, peril of death for the dynasty, in the election laws of 1817, than in universal suffrage itself. If desired, I am ready to prove it.

But we radicals are inclined too often to judge our adversaries from our point of view, and take it ill, not that they do not adopt our principles, but that they act, or that they speak according to their own. It is as if a general should blame the enemy he attacks, for repulsing him. To judge M. de Serre impartially, he must be viewed not from our position, but from his. M. de Serre was emigrant, royalist, aristocrat, and minister. When there was a reaction of royalty against liberty, he defended liberty, through liberalism, not republicanism. When there was a reaction of liberty

against royalty, he defended royalty through loyalty, not servility. In both these cases he was quite consistent. The character of M. de Serre would permit no half-way measures with either his friends or his enemies. Once, with the throne at his back, he began to oppose with a lofty and desperate vigor the coalition of parties, the democracy of elections, and the menaces of the press.

M. Pasquier was of an adroit and polished address. That of M. de Serre was frank and unceremonious. He disdained to disguise himself under the artifices of language. He went right to the adversary, and dealt him a blow of his club. I was present and can imagine I see him still, when turning to the Opposition and looking it fixedly between the eyes, he said: "I have seen through you, I have penetrated your designs, I have unmasked you." The Opposition could scarce restrain its fury. "Whatever you may have done for the new order of interests," said he on another occasion to the deputies of the Extreme Left, "you have not done more than I have!" And this was perfectly true.

The expositions of M. de Serre were at least equal to his speeches. What a master touch in this picture of the liberty of the press in the United States and in England!

"Suppose a population complexionally calm and cold, scattered over a vast territory, surrounded by the ocean and the desert, absorbed in the occupations of agriculture and trade, as yet independent of the wants of the intellect and the torments of ambition. Divide this population into a number of small States more or less democratic, weakly constituted, without distinction or rank, and you will comprehend how the licentiousness of the press may there be tolerable; how it may be even a useful instrument of democratic government, a stimulant to wrest the individual citizens from their domestic concerns, and bring them to the discussion of the great interests of the public."

"Suppose elsewhere a kingdom wherein time has accumulated upon a haughty aristocracy, influence, dignities, riches and possessions almost kingly. It is requisite that

there be a check upon the pride of the great ; they must be reminded constantly what they owe to the throne and to the people ; it must be inculcated upon them day by day that influence can be retained but as it has been acquired, by science and courage, by patriotism and public services. The newspapers and even their abuse are admirable for this purpose. Add that this aristocracy is not an isolated body in the State ; that below it, descending and widening are several successive degrees ; that these degrees are firmly linked, indissolubly welded into one simple hierarchy ; that by this all is moved, government, justice civil and criminal, administration, police ; then be not astonished that a society thus constructed survives the agitation of the periodical press."

M. de Serre had an organizing genius. He was alarmed at the dissolvent progress of individualism. He wished, like Napoleon, to institute classes, corporations, cities, counter-weights, a resisting system of political forces. He was not aristocratic by prejudice or caste, by opposition or by pride ; but he seemed possessed by the necessity of a hierarchical discipline, an ascending and descending classification of Chambers, and of society itself. Happily, societies do not suffer themselves to be thus shaped by the capricious finger of the legislator. France has the manners of equality ; it has a repugnance, quite as much from temperament as wisdom, to the stiff and intolerant hierarchies of social condition and political power.

Educated in the school of German philosophy, M. de Serre brought into the discussion of affairs, the processes of a method profound without being hollow, ingenious without being subtle. He loved to go back to the sources of the subject, and he was admirable in his historical expositions. He commented learnedly the antinomies of legislation. He treated all topics civil, political, military, fiscal, religious, with a singular precision of view and great soundness of doctrine. Customs, Budget, Registry, Press, personal Liberty, Petitions, Chamber rules, Elections, Pensions, Public

Instruction, Council of State, Foreign Affairs, he spoke upon all these questions, nor quitted them without marking his steps with trains of light. By his manner of stating the divisions of his discourse, in the firmness of his progressions, and the catenation substantial and sustained of his reasonings, you at once recognized the march of a superior mind. M. Guizot has a good deal of this manner.

M. de Serre was tall and meagre of body. He had a high and prominent forehead, lank hair, a lively eye, the pendant lips and anxious physiognomy of a man of strong passions. He stammered in beginning to speak, and you saw by the working of his temples that the ideas amassed slowly and elaborated themselves with effort in his brain. But by little and little they became arranged, they made headway, and rolled forth in a compact and marvellous order. He plied, he palpitated beneath their weight and flung them abroad in magnificent images and expressions picturesque and creative. I will mention but a few of these sayings, or rather thoughts which escaped him in such vivid abundance. —“ In proportion as the people unlearn to obey, the minister unlearns to govern.”

—“ A well-ordered society is the fairest temple that can be erected to the Eternal.”

—“ Extraordinary tribunals take badly in France.”

—“ If ministers abused their power, there would then be no difficulty in discovering the laws of responsibility, and the modes of impeachment.”

—“ Young men of the schools, you have to learn science and wisdom, and you affect to guarantee us science and wisdom, and you pretend to judge your masters and the superiors of your masters !”

—“ If stripped of the moss of age, the roots of all rights could be laid bare to the eye, would they be found pure of all usurpation, of all stain ?”

—“ Law is the relation of beings to each other ; jurisprudence is the expression of those relations.”

But if by the flash of thought, by the skill of coloring, by

the nerve and vehemence of discourse, M. de Serre was the most eloquent man of the Restoration; he fell occasionally, like the greatest orators, into the natural extravagancies of a fervid and impetuous delivery. He uttered his famous NEVER, which he has been so much reproached for, and has sufficiently repented.

M. de Serre was, during his later years, the target of the Opposition. It is against this lofty genius, against this powerful head (to speak the language of Benjamin Constant) that the Opposition directed its shafts. It harassed this lion of the ministry. It pulled him by the mane and pierced him with its sharpest javelins. It would have wished to be able to clip off his claws and confine him in an iron cage. Foy, Benjamin Constant, Manuel, Chauvelin, hovered incessantly about this formidable foe, without letting him breathe an instant; and Casimir-Perier, who, become minister, could not suffer that he was handled so mildly, and who cried with a tone of command to his band of servile deputies: "Come, come then! up, gentlemen, up!" permitted himself against de Serre the most extraordinary violence of gesture and language.

Were it allowed me to forget that I here draw but an oratorical portrait, I would say that M. de Serre was a good man, courageous, sincere, upright, adorned with all the domestic virtues, too tender-hearted perhaps! The tribune wastes rapidly those nervous organizations. General Foy was affected in the heart, Casimir-Perier in the liver, and de Serre in the brain. This exquisiteness of sensibility gives perfection no doubt to the orator, but death to the man.

After the Court party had used M. de Serre to beat down the electoral law, and then the press, he was stripped of the seals and the sash and sent into the brilliant exile of an embassy, to meditate upon the nothingness of parliamentary triumphs. This man, who had been president of the Chamber, and was the most eloquent of its orators, had not credit enough to obtain a re-election as deputy. He was thought too royalist by the liberals, and too liberal by the royalists.

Besides, most burgess electors do not like men of intellectual superiority. Genius overshadows, and, by a sort of instinct, mediocrity assimilates itself. To please the multitude, to remain their man, you must make yourself all things to all ; not do too much harm nor too much good ; not swim right in the current, but drift aside like scum, upon the shore of party ; bury your head between your shoulders, squat in a corner so as not to see the setting, but so as to hail the rising sun ; live the animal life of ministerial dinners and Court soirées. Be this, and you will be always deputy !

M. de Serre took violently to heart this his electoral repudiation. He got deranged, and his eyes turned towards that tribune of France still resounding with the echoes of his eloquence so much regretted, he died.

Vanity of reputations ! Who has any remembrance to-day of M. de Serre ? Vanity of his painter ! Who would know but for me, if I had not reproduced his lineaments, his physiognomy, his strong and masculine eloquence, if I had not thrown him upon the canvass and restored him to the light, who would know, in this oblivious age of ours, that M. de Serre lived, crushed a civil war, saved the monarchy, was a great orator—so great that, among the princes of the modern tribune, he could be compared but to Berryer, if Berryer were comparable to any one !

## GENERAL FOY

THE public, at the commencement of the Restoration, were but imperfectly acquainted with the full import of the Charter of 1814, copied after the English constitution, with the metaphysical fiction of its trinity of members, its double Chambers, the vain responsibility of its ministers and the lying balance of its powers. The Doctrinarians were not heard out of the sanctuary of their little chapel. Hatred of the foreigner, whose intolerable yoke weighed upon our territory, hatred of the aristocracy, who were constantly chafing the vanity of the burgess class and menacing the new interests established by the Revolution—these were the most general sentiments then pervading the nation.

General Foy made his entrance into the Chambers with this twofold hatred at heart. When, mounting for the first time the tribune, he dropped this expression: "France has still an echo for the words honor and country," the national pride was excited, and the tears flowed from the eyes of all the old warriors of the Empire. It seemed to them as if they had heard a war-cry raised against the foreigner. The speeches of Foy owed their extraordinary success to the same cause as the songs of Beranger and the pamphlets of Poul-Louis Courier. They were all three possessed of exquisite sense, a lively and rare intelligence, and the wants of their epoch. They had all the gift of speaking to the people its language of the moment; for the people, according to the period, has more than one tongue at its disposal.

It was by labor agricultural, industrial, scientific and mil

itary, that the new generation had elevated itself upon the ruins of aristocratical idleness. Accordingly, when General Foy overwhelmed with his sarcasms the gentlemen of the Court and the Emigration, entire France was unanimous in applause. It is that Foy, like Poul-Louis, and Beranger, had touched the fibre of the national heart which vibrated most sensitively at the time. He was in unison with it.

After so many lawyer orators, all very nearly cast in the same mould, the tribune had at length obtained its military orator. The eclat and picquancy of this novelty, with the influence of military valor upon all Frenchmen, even unconsciously to themselves, made General Foy dear to the Opposition, without being disagreeable to the Emigration, notwithstanding his attacks.

Nothing more was needed to encircle General Foy, from the moment of his first appearance on the parliamentary stage, with that brilliant renown which attended him to the grave. But posterity will not ratify the too precipitate judgment of contemporaries. M. de Serre has been, under the Restoration, the eagle of the tribune. Foy is only second to him. What in fact is an orator who does not extemporize?

The speeches of General Foy do not equal in vigor of thought, in imagery of style, in logical connection, in vehemence, in depth, in point, those of Royer-Collard and Benjamin Constant. They are marred by the tinselry of a false rhetoric, and are really no better than school-boy amplifications in comparison with the famous harangues of Greece and Rome. These discourses are moreover confined to the narrow circle of a bastard constitutionalism. They are just as liberal as the epoch, but do not advance beyond it. They do not look enough into the future. They do not sufficiently take for what they are, for what they are worth, the fictions of that absurd representation, the existence of which posterity will one day call in doubt; which limps and dislocates itself at every step, and is unable to stand the test either of logic or of business. They are stricken with that

incurable impotence which paralyzes all the orators of our monopoly legislatures. They want genius.

But the profundity of thought, the boldness of speculation, the veritude of principles, the beauty of form, the science of composition, are appreciated but by a few connoisseurs. General Foy had that sort of splendor mixed with the false and the true, which was calculated to dazzle the multitude of an assembly. Men of intellect themselves, on seeing the crowd pass, excited by the common enthusiasm, mingled with it and accompanied the triumphal car. But, after the procession comes the critic, who calls gold what is gold, and tinsel what is tinsel, and who restores men and things to their appropriate places.

A certain person whom no one now reads, has had his speeches gilt-edged, printed upon vellum to the number of ten thousand copies, and lauded by his panegyrists as equal to the orations of Cicero and Demosthenes. To a certain other person, or even if you will, to General Foy, a marble cenotaph has by subscription been erected, as to the god of eloquence. Scarcely could the purse of his friends afford to-day to plant over him a wooden cross.

General Foy had the exterior, the attitude and the gestures of the orator, a prodigious memory, a clear voice, eyes beaming with intellect, and a turn of head which might be described as chivalrous. His prominent forehead, tossed backward, lightened with enthusiasm, or writhed with wrath. He shook the tribune, and had something of the sibyl on her tripod. He checked himself, so to say, heroically in the impetuosity of argument, and foamed without contortion, I had well nigh said, with grace. Frequently he was seen to leave all of a sudden his seat, and scale the tribune as if he was marching to victory. Mounted, he launched forth his words with an air of command, like another Condé hurling his constable's-staff over the redoubts of the enemy.

General Foy was not accustomed to improvisate his set discourses. A man over forty years of age does not learn extemporization, any more than swimming, horsemanship,

or music. The tribune has, so to speak, its fingering like the piano. The French speech especially, so correct, so surcharged with incisives, so interrupted with ablatives, so reserved, so prudish, requires to be elaborated and practised early. Accordingly the only speakers commonly unprepared are the lawyers, or the professors, or the drawing-room babblers, those men with woman tongue. To supply the deficiency of his oratorical education, General Foy used to meditate laboriously his harangues. He could formulize and distribute in his capacious memory their whole plan and proportions. He disposed his exordiums, classed his facts, prepared his theses, and sketched his perorations. Then behold him ascend the tribune, and, master of his subject, fecundated by study and inspiration, he gave himself up to the current of his thought. His head butts, his discourse warms, distends, dilates, takes consistence, form, color. He knows what he is going to say, but not how he is going to say it. He sees the end, but not by what route he is to gain it. He has his hands full of arguments, images and flowers, and according as they present themselves, he takes, selects, and assortments them into the garland of his eloquence. It is neither the coldness of reading, nor the monotonous psalmodizing of recitation. It is a mixed procedure, whereby the orator, at once hermit and enthusiast, improvisator and writer, chains his own frenzy without ceasing to be free, forgets and remembers, bursts the thread of his discourse, and knots, but to sunder it again and still recover it without the least disconcertion; blends the sallies, the incidents, the surprises, the picturesque of language, with reflexion, sequence and thought, and draws his resources and his power alike from the premeditated and the unforeseen, from the vigorous precision of art and the simple graces of nature. To be an orator after this fashion is not a thing to be had by a wish; for it requires memory, invention, originality and taste, the ease of the gentleman and the erudition of the scholar—qualities exclusive of each other most commonly.

This method of General Foy, and which became perhaps but him alone, is not without advantage. In the first place, parliamentary assemblies are flattered by the trouble you take to please them. Again, the limits of the discourse being thus demarcated in advance, the orator is not liable to lose himself in the endless space of divagation. He does not present himself in slippers and morning-gown on the hustings, and keep stringing words together until the idea offers, as if the auditors were present for the mere purpose of waiting upon you!

The most brilliant sayings of General Foy were but points kept in reserve, set in framing as it were, for the nonce. With what art he could introduce a preconceived situation, a dramatic incident, a striking figure, a happy allusion! With what pertinence, for example, he brings into a discussion on the budget, the portrait of Marshal Gouvion Saint-Cyr, drawn beforehand, so admirably drawn!

But if the longer discourses of General Foy, despite the perfect exposition of the subject, the perspicuity of the diction and abundance of the arguments, are not without faults; if they may be reproached with betraying somewhat of the compass, being a little too elaborate, with smelling too much of the lamp, I should not say the same of his extemporaneous efforts which flowed with equal facility and brevity. How natural! what vivid and powerful irony! what incredible felicity of retort! and this on all occasions, at each step, at every interruption, and always the exact, the decisive word! To some who reproached him with regretting the tri-colored cockade:

“ Ah! he said, it surely would not be the shades of Philippe-Auguste and of Henry IV. that should feel indignant, in their tombs, to behold the *fleurs-de-lis* of Bouvines and of Ivry on the banner of Austerlitz.’

To those who asked him tauntingly: What then do you call the aristocracy?

“ The aristocracy! I shall tell you. the aristocracy is the league, the coalition of those who would consume with-

out producing, live without laboring, possess themselves of all the public offices without being qualified to fill them, seize upon all the honors of the state without having merited any—this is the aristocracy !”

To those who cried : Adjourn ! adjourn !—“ You naturally wish adjournments, and not truths. The truths swamp you.”

To a fellow who said to him : Send your foreign news to the Bourse :

“ I know nothing of the gamblings of the Bourse ; I only speculate in the rise of the national honor !”

To certain deputies who pretended that the commission of censorship had been placed under half-pay : “ If this be true, I desire that the commission be treated as the half-pay officers are for two years back. I desire it be never recalled into service.”

To ministers who defended the ludicrous extravagance and sinecures of the department of foreign affairs : “ Acquaint us then with those diplomats of yours, who have served neither before, nor after, nor during our heroic revolution ; your pensions to this man for writing a book, to the other, not to write one ; your physicians who have never had a patient to attend ; your historiographers with no history to record ; your sketchers who know of no other landscape to draw than the kitchen-garden of Wagram.”

Speaking of M. de Serre, a renegade to liberalism : “ There are in politics situations so degraded that they cease to go for anything in any division of opinion.”

Directly addressing de Serre, keeper of the seals : “ As sole vengeance, as sole punishment, I condemn you, sir, to cast your eyes, as you leave this hall, upon the statues of d’Hopital and Dagesseau !”

This oratorical apostrophe is of the highest beauty.

They were proud times compared with ours, those times of the Opposition of fifteen years since, times never to return ! The *Carbonari* had not yet quitted their stalls and cellars, to revel in the orgies of power. The deputies of

the Left had not yet forsworn their oaths, had not basely sacrificed democracy to dastardly concessions, to disgraceful honors or womanish fears. People then were in the innocence of early illusions. They put faith in the probity of politicians. You did not see under the garb of a colleague a hand preparing to betray you, a dagger ready to pierce you. The deputies of the Opposition had all but one voice, one soul, one sentiment. They watched, all over each, and each over all. Always booted and spurred, always on the breach, beaten on one side, rallying themselves on the other, and never despairing of their little band, of liberty or the future. Systematically organized, they had their chiefs, their advanced guards, their flank and main armies, their plan of attack and defence, their password. France observed them with eyes and heart, and attended their struggles with applauses and palms. There was, it must be repeated, some honor in being then deputy. It was a great one to be an orator, greater than to have gained victories—for formerly there were victories and heroes by the hundred. But to-day to be a deputy is so small a matter! To be a peer is still less, much less. We have seen so many mountebanks gambol on the trestle of the Representative! In vain do our polichinellos now play their antics; the people turn away disgusted and seek other amusements.

General Foy, for his part, took up his representative duties in earnest, and studied them day and night. He collated assiduously the documents and reports, the ordinances and the laws. He dictated, took notes, analyzed his immense reading, culling thus the flower of each subject wherefrom to compose his honey. He did not disdain to descend into the labyrinth of our financial laws. He coned our voluminous budget, chapter by chapter, article by article, with the dry and minute patience of an office clerk. Nothing escaped his amazing sagacity. Equally attentive to the details of execution and the spirit of the rules, he investigated the occasion of the expenditures, calculated the accounts, verified the figures, and decomposed the entire elements of

each department of service. He saw into all, examined all, discussed all. Ecclesiastical law, civil law, procedure even, he must needs understand. Loans, rents, taxes, civil list, press, public instruction, internal administration, foreign affairs, nothing appertaining to those questions so diverse and so difficult found him unprepared. He was a man of iron, one of those men of the Napoleonic school, who went to the conquest of liberty with the same pace that they marched to the conquest of the world, with erect brow and resolute eye, without fear of obstacles or doubt of victory ; who sacrifice their days, their nights, their fortunes, their health, their existence to duty ; who cling, as if by cramps, to whatever is most difficult in each subject, who never flag, who live, and who die of the energy of their will !

But what evinces especially the superior sense of General Foy, is the bloody struggle, the returning struggle of every day, which he maintained to prevent the alteration of the electoral law. The electoral law ! this in effect is the whole government, the whole State, the whole Constitution. I might even go so far as to say that there is in the country no other political law, or if you will, in other words, that it contains all other laws, since it is the mother law of all. The Constitution is society at rest. The electoral law is society in action. Tell me who are your electors, and I will tell you what is your government. If they be place-holders, you will have a despotism. If the wealthy proprietors, you will have an oligarchy. With the suffrage universal, you will have a democratic government.

General Foy felt instinctively that the electoral law of qualification would infallibly bring the government into the hands of the mercantile and moneyed class. He labored, without intending it, for the ignoble triumph of the every-one-for-himself principle. In history, however, we see but the people and the aristocracy who have accomplished great things. The wealthy burgess class never rise above the altitude of the breeches pocket. A burgess regime,

without liberty and without glory, I much doubt if Foy, while subserving it, would have greatly relished.

To what end, for the rest, so many fine speeches about the simple vote and the double vote! Is it that in the assemblies of a monopoly representation, Eloquence, that daughter of heaven, has ever cured a corrupted heart or rectified a perverted intellect? Is it that it is ever law that governs the world—and not the unforeseen? Who would have said, three days before the 25th of July, that a *coup-d'état* would demolish the Constitution, and three days after, that a popular insurrection should subvert the monarchy? Eloquence produces at most the effect of the drum which beats the charge; but it is the musketry and cannon-shot that decides the victory.

A noble heart was that of General Foy, a heart full of lofty sentiments of patriotism and national independence, a heroic heart, loving glory, not for himself, not for its own sake, but for that of his country, as it was loved at Austerlitz, as it was loved in the days so pure of the dawning republic! Never had the army, that pearl of our national diadem, in the parliamentary lists, a more brilliant knight. They have the weight of authority, those men who talk of war, while exhibiting a breast covered with scars and arms furrowed by the bullets of the enemy!

It is reported that his private life deserved all admiration, the life of a soldier and a citizen, tender and blameless in his family affections, devoted to his friends, simple and studious, upright, guileless, disinterested, and worthy, like the great men of antiquity, to be written by another Plutarch.

There is in the discourses of General Foy I know not what of chaste and attractive, I know not what odor of virtue, what grace of the heart which, in the orator, makes us love the man: you see, you feel that in speaking, his soul is upon his lips.

But they will open no more, those eloquent lips! the flame of eloquence has consumed them. Yes, the tribune is death to the conscientious orator. He has no rest by day

and no sleep by night. He lives but a life of agitation and excitement. The action of the organs is suspended or precipitated. The head turns gray and the hands are tremulous, the heart contracts, dilates and breaks.

Vainly have I postponed, I find myself obliged to meet a question of political physiology which I have proposed myself a hundred times. Had Louis XVIII. on his return from Gand, offered General Foy the governorship of a province, who can say that General Foy would have refused it, and if not, what would have become of all that tempest of eloquence? not even more wind. How many have we not witnessed, in the Chamber of 1816, and out of it, of this kind of liberals, and among the most ardent who were such only for the nonce, the parvenue nobility of Napoleon, because they were stupidly ashamed of being branded on the forehead with the original sin of low birth. The propensity to please the master has always been with the French, the malady of the most respectable people. Nearly all the friends of General Foy, almost all the deputies whose sad and sorrowful faces seem to weep on the bas-reliefs of his mausoleum, have deserted the sacred cause of liberty which constituted their glory and our hope! All those Scævolas, those Cincinnatuses, those Brutuses of the Opposition, except two or three, have plunged body and soul into the new regime. Would General Foy have, like the others, embraced the altars of the 7th August? It is with pain I say that I believe he would. In truth, no orator of the Left made, under the Restoration, so many dynastic professions: he overwhelmed the Bourbon family with so many compliments, so many significant protestations, so many delicate attentions, that some have doubted that he would have passed in 1830 into the popular ranks. But there are other reasons still more decisive.

General Foy was one of the confidants of the Orleans coterie. In the Chamber of 1825 he advocated the appurtenances of the crown. He would gladly have torn up the historic escutcheons of the old nobility, to which he did not

belong. But perhaps he would have been less virulent against that holiday nobility which haunts at present the halls of the Tuileries. He inclined to a hereditary peerage with Casimir Perrier and almost the entire Opposition for fifteen years. A man of action, a man of excitement, he would have gone with the current of 1830. He would have left the people on the shore, and embarked in the golden vessel which bore the fortunes of another dynasty. To resist the temptation, it was not sufficient to have a noble heart, it was not sufficient to have eloquence; it was necessary to have principles: General Foy had none. The best of our monopoly orators are often but poor politicians. They drape themselves theatrically in the purple of constitutional fopperies. They trumpet the words equality, liberty, country, independence, economy, virtue. They know the proper place of every figure of rhetoric, the apostrophe, the metaphor, the prosopopœia. They open wide their mouth to inspire the bald official acclamations which have been squandered turn after turn upon Louis XVI., upon the Convention, the Directory, the Consulate, the Empire, the Restoration and all the rest. They can tell you how to gloss the usurpations of force and fraud upon the rights of the people. But of the origin of those rights, of their sovereignty, their universality, their imprescriptibility, their inviolability, their character, and their guarantees, what do they understand? This is not to be learned in the school of the rhetoricians or the parliaments of privilege. The book of the people has never been open before their eyes.

How many a time has Napoleon regretted having survived a day! Oh! how he envied, upon the rock of Saint-Helena, the destiny of the soldier who fell by the first bullet at Waterloo! Fortune, on the contrary, in entombing him in the midst of his oratorical triumphs, has been unwilling that General Foy should lose anything of his noble name and his spotless renown. Had he lived, he had been a courtier of Louis-Philippe, Minister of war, Marshal of France, Constable perhaps! He has done better, and died.

## BENJAMIN CONSTANT.

BENJAMIN CONSTANT was the orator and the publicist of the English school: a sickly exotic which will never be acclimated in France; an incomprehensible trinity of persons unequal in power, different in origin, opposite in will—a strange constitution wherein people pretend to find elementary principle in accidental amalgamation, harmony in antagonism, truth in fiction, movement in resistance, and life in death—a systematic division into hierarchies, castes, monopolies, privileges, of a society which tends incessantly to agglomeration and unity—a production, in fine, anti-French and anti-natural, which is repulsive to temperament, manners, logic and equality, which loads the feet of the government instead of giving it wings, which imparts to it neither force within nor grandeur without, and seems eternally on the eve of perishing in the tempests of democracy, or under the iron heel of some fortunate soldier.

But perhaps, after the enervating influence of despotism upon the hearts and minds of the public, the nation, infirm and sickly, had strength to bear but a regimen of transition: perhaps remedies too heroical would have proved fatal.

Benjamin Constant was wonderfully well qualified to extract from this mixed regime, all that it might have contained of just and liberal. He even exaggerated the consequences of the Charter of 1814, and had imagination enough to think that he had favored liberty in the particular, where it was clearer than day that he had meant to advance, and had in fact advanced, but the interests of power.

Swayed, against his own will, by the genius of our nation, he explained upon the theory of equality, those English institutions which have been contrived but for an aristocracy. This was what we call to pile fiction upon fiction, with a

vengeance But what matter for the source, provided good be done? Benjamin Constant put the nation in train. He taught, before acting, to think. He educated politically the middle classes, not being able to do so by the masses.

Benjamin Constant had neither the facility of Manuel, nor the profundity of Royer-Collard, nor the vehemence of Casimir-Perrier, nor the brilliancy of Foy, nor the harmony of Laine, nor the graces of Martignac, nor the power of de Serre; but of all the orators of the Left he was the most intellectual, the most ingenious, and the most prolific.

He was of slim make, lank-legged, round-shouldered, long-armed. A profusion of yellow and curling hair fell over his shoulders, and enchased becomingly his expressive countenance. His tongue sometimes stuck between his teeth, and gave him the lisping of a woman, something between a whistle and a stammer. When he recited, he drawled the voice monotonously. When he extemporized, he rested both hands on the front of the tribune, and rolled forth the flood of his words. Nature had denied him all those exterior advantages of person, gesture and voice of which she has been so prodigal towards Berryer. But he supplied these deficiencies by force of intellect and labor.

An unwearied soldier of the press and the tribune, and armed with this, his two-edged sword, Benjamin Constant did not, during a fifteen years' campaign, leave the breach a single moment. When he was not speaking, he wrote; when he was not writing, he spoke. His articles, his letters, his pamphlets and discourses would compose over a dozen volumes.

It was the written discourses of Foy, Bignon, Constant, Lafitte, Dupont, (d l'Eure,) Royer-Collard in particular, that accomplished the education of the liberal party of France. Speeches which produce little effect in the Chambers, on the deputies, may exercise great influence in print, upon the public. If they have less influence on the formation of laws, they have more in the formation of opinion; and ulti-

mately, is it not opinion that gives sanction to the laws? Is it not better to have millions of readers than a few hundreds of auditors? This furnishes, besides, a commodious and quite simple means of deciding that much controverted question about the relative superiority of writing and speaking. No one now reads speeches, no one listens to extemporizers.

Never did orator manage with more dexterity than Benjamin Constant the language of politics. Whence is it that we can read, up to this day, without fatigue, his lengthiest speeches? It is because they contain the principle of perpetuation style, a style full of attraction. Most of them are masterpieces of animated and stringent dialectic, which have had since nothing to equal them, and which are the delight of those capable of appreciating them. What wealth of imagery! what abundance of illustration! what flexibility of tone! what varieties of topic! what suavity of language! what marvellous art in the disposition and the linked deduction of his reasonings! how finely tisued that web! how exquisitely shaded, how harmoniously blended all the colors! Thus we see, beneath a transparent and glossy skin, the blood circulate, the veins turn blue, and the muscles slightly apparent.

Perhaps these discourses are even too highly finished, too elaborate, too ingenious for the tribune. In reading, if one does not comprehend at once, he has the resource of reperusal. If a speaker be not apprehended at once, there is no means of obtaining a repetition. Repetitions are intolerable in reading, they are necessary in the tribune, as in the theatre it is only the recitative sounds that familiarize themselves completely to the ear of the spectators. Orators are like those statues placed in elevated niches, which must be cut somewhat roughly to produce effect from a distance. The Chambers are not like the drawing-rooms of the aristocracy. The flowers of rhetoric are ordinarily in them without fragrance or color. The antitheses escape them, and reasonings too vigorously knotted, fatigue their atten-

tion. To be understood, you must repeat the same thing to them three or four times in succession. To please them, you must have regard rather to the strength of the blow, than the justness of the aim, and speak to their passions rather than to their intelligence.

The Right disliked Benjamin Constant less than Manuel. It is that in French assemblies, of whatever sort, there is always a weak predilection in favor of men of wit. Of the French preeminently it may be said with the poet :

*J'ai ri, me voilà desarmé.*

The prejudice of party is proof against eloquence, against facts, against logic, against enthusiasm even; it yields before a laugh.

Benjamin Constant was always master of his expression as of his thought. If the Right felt hurt by some word a little sharp, he found, without breaking the thread of the discourse, an equivalent to it, and if the equivalent offended still, he substituted a third approximation. This presence of mind, this deep knowledge of the resources of the language, this wonderful graduation of softening synonymes, used to surprise agreeably his adversaries themselves. So, for example, he said : I wish to spare the Crown (murmurs ;) he changes—the Monarch (murmurs still ;) he resumes—the constitutional King, (the murmurs cease.)

Benjamin Constant was much more caustic than Manuel. But he steeped his sting in honey. He said what he pleased because he had the art of saying what he pleased. Moreover, though a liberal and an opponent, Benjamin Constant was a thorough gentleman, and those Chambers of gentlemen had a foible for this quality.

It must be added that he was endowed, in the highest perfection, with that power of adaptation which distinguishes literary men, and is the faculty of penetrating and active imaginations. This description of minds will present you a subject in a variety of modes of resemblance which create an illusion to the common eye. They have but the sem-

blance of science. They have often but the terms, and you would think they are masters of the substance and foundation.

His discourses abounded in lively, ingenious, and keen expressions. He characterized the press as follows :

“ The press is the tribune amplified. Speech is the vehicle of intelligence, and intelligence is the mistress of the material world.”

He defined the censorship : “ A monopoly of calumny exercised by baseness for the profit of power.”

Of the ministry, he used to say : “ It is as impossible, in all that pertains to despotism, to calumniate, as to soften them.”

Speaking of some deputies who made verbose defences of sinecures : “ They are not for economy in either money or words.”

All this is witty, but it savors of the writer rather than of the orator.

Here is a brilliant denunciation of the lottery system, which will give an idea of the excellences and defects of his manner :

“ If there existed, gentlemen, in your public squares, or in some obscure den, a species of game which brought infallible ruin upon the players ; if the director of this illicit and deceitful concern were to avow to you that he played with an absolute certainty of winning, that is to say, in opposition to the rules of the most ordinary probity ; that to insure the success of his dishonest speculation, he lays his snare for the class the most easily deceived and corrupted ; if he were to tell you that he surrounds the poor with allurements ; that he drives the innocent to the most culpable deeds ; that he has recourse, for the purpose of inveigling his prey, to legerdemain and lying ; that his lies and impostures are hawked in open day in every street of the city ; that his absurd and illusory promises are rung in the ears of credulity and ignorance ; that he has organized a system of secrecy and darkness. so that these dupes should

plunge into the gulf before reason could enlighten, fear of blame repress, or the warning of their neighbors preserve them from the temptation—were he to add, that to respond to his perfidious invitations, renewed incessantly, the domestic robs his master, the husband pillages his wife, the father his children, and that he, seated tranquilly in his privileged cavern, at once instigator, and receiver, and accomplice, stretches out his hand to grasp the produce of theft and the miserable pittance torn from the subsistence of families—if he ended by admitting that year after year the disorders which he occasioned brought his victims from want to crime and from crime to the prison, suicide, or the scaffold; what would be your sentiments?"

When Benjamin Constant was worried by interruptions, his eye would flash fire, and he poured forth a volley of natural and cutting repartees. He turned everything to account, a letter, a fact, the slightest circumstance, a historical analogy, an admission, an exclamation, a word. With elbow on the edge of his desk, ear erect, outstretched neck, pen in hand, he seemed to devour the debate, the tribune and the speaker. His attention was so absorbing and his facility of composition so great, that while listening to the discourse of his adversary he wrote *currente calamo* its refutation, which he came forward to read immediately to the tribune. Method, arrangement, argument, style, it was in all complete; such was his power of self isolation and self-abstraction, not only from the noise and throng around him, but even from his own emotions!

But it must be said, these refinements of style, this exquisite elegance, this art of hair-splitting synonymes, takes from parliamentary recitation its vigor, its natural suppleness, and even its grace. The tribune should not smell too much of the Academy, nor the orator be but an artist. To each place the proper kind, to each personage the proper character.

There are two species of dialectic: the one compact and nervous, the other insinuating and acute; the one batter-

ing down by the weight of its reasonings, the other piercing through with the sharp point of its dart ; the one going directly to seek the question in the question, the other twisting itself about it, and penetrating it by the joints and issues. Benjamin Constant had this latter species of dialectic.

There are two sorts of eloquence : the one issuing from the depth of the soul, as from a spring, rolling along its copious floods, sweeping all before it, overwhelming by its very mass, pressing, upsetting, ingulfing its adversaries ; the other weaving its threads around them, drawing them gradually into its web, fascinating them with its gaze, entangling them, liming them, holding them fast, and putting them to death by a thousand bites. Benjamin Constant had this last sort of eloquence. It dazzled rather than warmed. He was more adroit than vehement, more persuasive than convincing, more picturesque than profound, more artful than strong, more subtile than solid. He loved art as a political instrument, he also loved it for its own sake. He delighted in the niceties of style, in the oppositions of words and of thoughts, and he amused himself in glancing the sunbeams from the facets of the antithesis. Parliamentary oratory requires more of nerve, of gravity, of simplicity and amplitude. To be an orator, it is not necessary to strive too much to appear one.

Benjamin Constant was not a mere speech-maker, he was also a great publicist ; and it is in this quality more especially, that he has assumed the mission of protecting political writers. No one has better understood, no one has better defended, than he, the rights of the press—of that power more mighty than armies, religions, legislatures and kings, more rapid than the winds, more boundless than space, as intelligent as thought. But the special character of all the parliaments of the Restoration, was the envious, instinctive and deadly hatred of the press. Had they a latent presentiment that the press would prove their overthrow ? Yes, the press did indeed overthrow them, but they gave it no small aid. Besides this, the tribune has, in all times, been jealous of

the press. The tribune has always sought to humble it by pot-house abuse, and to stifle its voice beneath iniquitous proceedings and outrageous penalties. It is the revolt of property against intellect. The most obscure deputy of the most unknown village of France has the pitiful presumption to think himself far above a journalist. He does not dream that one of those country hinds, who mounts the tribune, there to mouth their *patois*, would not be deemed worthy of admission among the paper-folders, and superscribers of the editor's back office, lest they should bungle the subscriber's name on the wrapper.

Benjamin Constant never forgot, that before being deputy, he was an editor, and that this was the highest feather in his cap. On every occasion, and at every moment, he called with energy for reform of the arbitrary feature of the censorship, the abolition of all exceptional jurisdiction, the trial by jury in offences against the Court and the tribunals, and the liberty of publication. To-day, he would have the same guarantees to ask for; for, to the shame of a government, born of the blood and vitals of the press, the press still writhes and struggles in the same shackles as under the Restoration. Its only alternative is to lie or be silent. It must either abstain from discussing the principle of the government, or receive the kicks and spittings of a gouty Senate. It is bound hand and foot, and placed, thus manacled, between the ruin of confiscation and the burning tombs of Salazie; and as a worse insult, a last torment, the vile tools of all this are heard to bawl themselves hoarse in crying: "A triumph! a triumph! the press is free!"

Benjamin Constant loved to bestow magnificent eulogies upon the studious youth of the schools. Now, this youth is sunk in inertness like the rest of the nation. We surcharge its memory, in place of forming its judgment. Its tender mind is enervated by a superfetation of lectures and courses. It is dipped over and over in the materialities of eclecticism. It is taught neither religion, nor morality, nor logic, nor brotherly love, nor love of country. But it must be owned

the studious and golden youth has never been more expert at dancing the *cachucha*.

Constant's instruction as a legislator was not particularly solid. Like all the publicists of the Restoration, he was little versed in the material interests and the true principles of industrial and rural economy. There was also in his religious notions and his political philosophy, something of vagueness, as of a reflection of the infidelity and scepticism of the 18th century. His faith was that of the intellect, not that of the heart. He did not value religion for its dogmas, but for its soothing influence upon the conscience. He did not give his support to Royalty because it was right, but because it was necessary. He disapproved not the principles of a republic, but its form. "Republican institutions," he used to say, "are impossible in the state of general intelligence, in the condition industrial, mercantile, military and European of France." It was with him a question of opportunity, almost of geography.

He attacked Rousseau for having maintained the divine right, while he himself disallowed the sovereignty of the people, holding but a sort of sovereignty of justice, not unlike the sovereignty of reason of the Doctrinarians, and quite as undefinable, as incomprehensible, as inapplicable. Does not the sovereignty of the people, such as we understand it, imply necessarily the sovereignty of right, of justice, and of reason? I know scarcely a single political or social question that the sovereignty of the people does not solve.

Politically, the sovereignty of the people is the luminary which shines in the darkness of human disputation. It is by its light alone that the logicians can proceed. Beyond it all is arbitrary, is iniquity, contradiction, chaos. For want of this pilot so sure, so infallible, the greatest politician of the Restoration went head-foremost, like a vulgar helmsman, upon the shoals of the Revolution of July. He did not see that no power can either prescribe, or prevail against, the eternal right of nations to govern themselves as they please.

His second error was to imagine that he could hold office

and retain his independence. Instead of staying with the people on the bank, and looking on while the Doctrinarian torrent was passing away, he stopped in the middle of the current and was carried off by the flood. His lofty reason stooped and his imagination became quite reconciled to the situation. Before, a look from Napoleon was enough to fascinate him. He now fell anew under the charm of another power. But he recovered gradually the plenitude of his faculties. He opened his eyes and saw with Lafayette, Salverte, Arago, and all that glorious band of patriots, that the Revolution of July was not a peace, but a truce. He would soon have abandoned the booty to mix in the scramble, and been dismissed or resigned, had he not been slow to sound the signal of opposition.

But already the springs of life were fast giving way. His noble head was drooped, and he sometimes held it between his hands as if to meditate on the vanity of revolutions. His dreams of the future, those beautiful illusions which for fifteen years back he had been cherishing, had vanished before him, one after the other. He felt himself affected with gloomy dejection and invincible melancholy. He crawled with difficulty from his bench to the tribune, and with pallid lips which could smile no more, he bade adieu to dying liberty and descended with it into the tomb.

## ROYER-COLLARD.

ROYER-COLLARD is the venerable patriarch of the constitutional royalists of the Restoration.

We may now speak of Royer-Collard with entire impartiality and unreserve. He has still a seat in the Chamber of Deputies, but he takes no part in the debates. He passes back and forth before us, merely to remind us that such a man has lived; like those majestic caryatides of Osiris and of Isis which the Romans, when masters of Egypt, used to place in front of the new temples, to testify to futurity that there had been on these shores another temple and other divinities, a different creed and different pontiffs.

Seated at the head of the Chamber, M. Royer-Collard no more directs, he observes. He does not speak, he meditates. He now belongs but to the past. We may already pass upon him the judgment of the dead.

The Chambers of the Restoration had divers political schools. General Foy represented the military school; Casimir Perrier, the financial school; de Serre, the grammatical school; Benjamin Constant, the constitutional school; Royer-Collard, the philosophical.

He had less brilliancy than General Foy, less subtlety, dialectic skill and flexibility than Benjamin Constant, less impetuosity and fire than Casimir Perrier, less of legislative science and of originality than de Serre. But he was the first of our parliamentary writers. He had a sort of large and magnificent style, a firm touch, certain erudite and prodigiously elaborate artifices of language, and those felicitous expressions which cling to the memory and which are the lucky chances of the orator. There is a virility in his speeches which reminds one of Mirabeau, and some oratorical movements scarce sooner loosed than checked, as if he feared their vehemence; a lofty reason in matters of relig-

tion and morals ; on every subject, a method ample without stiffness, severe, dogmatical.

A single axiom, a word impregnated by the meditation of that powerful head, germinated, grew up, expanded like the acorn which becomes an oak, all whose ramifications spring from the same trunk, and which, animated by the same vitality, nourished by the same sap, forms but an individual whole, despite the variety of its foliage and the infinite multiplicity of its branches. Such were the discourses of Royer-Collard, admirable for the vigorous shoots of the style and the beauty of the form.

It was philosophy applied to politics, with its abstract and rather obscure formularies. M. Royer-Collard was, if I may be allowed the expression, a deliver of ideas. He was a speaking intellect.

There is sometimes, however, more void than substance in that profundity, and the splendor of the form deludes respecting the hollowness of the principles.

M. Royer-Collard has, more than any other man, by the authority of his name and his eloquence, contributed to the formation of our public manners termed constitutional. He urged the middle classes, without meaning it, to the subversion of the throne. He was one of the most, unintentional no doubt, but one of the most active, demolishers of that regime.

A burgess royalist, an able, ardent and inexorable enemy of aristocratic privileges, he assailed them without respite by means of irony, of argument, of eloquence. But could a conceded charter dispense with the support of an intermediate body in the State? This charter was not a contract, but a gift. A mountain rock with the soil removed from around its base must fall. So fell the throne. To attack the crown and disarm the people, this was the inconsistency of the liberals of those times.

Fifteen years were spent in organizing antagonism between the Chambers and the King. The latter pushed forward to its proper end of despotism, the former to their pro-

per end of omnipotence. The Restoration was but a perpetual struggle between these two powers, to gain one upon the other, a few inches of ground. But the true theory of the matter recognizes but a single power of which no one then made the least account—the nation. King, president, consul, chambers, ministers are but the delegates of the nation. To one class of delegates it intrusts the legislative, to another the executive department. It does not say to them: Divide yourselves into factions and waste the time in partisan conflict; but it says: Cultivate a community of understanding and agreement, and a harmony of policy and procedure. What would a farmer say to his plough-boys, if, instead of tilling the soil and gathering in the harvest, they should fall to beating each other, to the infliction of bloody noses? What would a manufacturer say to his operatives, if, in place of keeping each to his tools and his trade, they were to set to quarrelling with each other? In the working of any machine whatever, be it industrial or political, there must be unity, there must be harmony.

The theories of representative government which seduced M. Royer-Collard, are more metaphysical than political, more speculative than experimental. They are ranged in beautiful order; but hobble, when set a-going. He has varnished them over with the colors of a brilliant style, but they will not bear analysis, they would not withstand the slightest assault of logic.

His subtile and too often misty distinctions between personal qualifications and public interests, as conditions of representative eligibility, between parties and factions, between the sovereignty of the people and the sovereignty of reason, are arguments for the schools, rather than for the tribune. It is almost always a professor of philosophy you hear speak, not a publicist.

The political life of Royer-Collard has been but a continual passing back and forth, from power to liberty, and from liberty to power. He changed from one party to the other, shoving to its fate that which was going down, check-

ing the precipitancy of the victorious side, forgetting but one thing—never to define the limits of either.

The error of General Foy, of Royer-Collard, and others, was, to contend that, “the Charter, being the fundamental law, it was not for theory to discuss it.” I humbly beg your pardon, gentlemen ; but theory, which is but the faculty of free examination, has the supreme right of discussing everything ; and in fact, the theory of national sovereignty, the sole true one, did discuss the Charter of 1814 so effectually as to demolish it.

What a spectacle, what a lesson is this idle and impotent struggle of the greatest intellects, against the principle greater still of the popular sovereignty, which presses and enfolds them, as the bark of the fabled trees did, with their invincible clasp, the heroes and the demi-gods of the poet !

Of this principle, Royer-Collard remarks : “The popular will of to-day retracts that of yesterday, without engaging that of to-morrow.”

To this we might reply, that the absolute monarch too may change his will, from minute to minute. But if, in a society ruled by a single man, these changes at sight do not occur, why should they be made in a country governed by law alone ? Why should that which is done for the interest of one or of few, be less liable to change than what is done for the interest of all ?

Your life too is your own ; none can hinder you to go throw yourself into the river, or shoot yourself : you do not kill yourself however ! you may burn your own house or level it with the ground ; yet you do not do it !

Equally groundless is the objection of M. Royer-Collard, drawn from what he calls right. “There cannot be a particular right which is in contravention of abstract right—that right without which there is nothing upon this earth, but a life without dignity, and a death without hope.”

Perfectly well said. But it remains to define right and designate where it resides ; this M. Royer-Collard has not

done, and it is the whole difficulty. Or rather, if you examine closely, you will find that definitively this abstract right yields to the law of numbers, because definitively it results from numbers. This is so true, that right, as it is embodied in legislation, as it is determined in application, always depends upon a single voice. A hundred and one to a hundred, such is the test of the legal right which commands obedience, and which orders and conducts the whole society.

The fundamental laws of which M. Royer-Collard speaks, neither are nor can be but those which the nation has given itself, and which it may therefore alter. The national rights he speaks of, neither are nor can be other than the rights of the nation. There is no going beyond.

No nation could be governed forever by the laws of its fathers, for it would not be free. Nations, being composed of men who are in their nature restless and changeable, cannot remain stationary and always the same. The dead have not the power to bind, against their will, the living. Each generation belongs to itself, and can no more bind the future than it can have been bound by the past. This is fact and right, and what is there to be said against the fact and the right? Nothing.

"Others," said Royer-Collard himself, "may grieve and rage at it; for my part, I thank Providence that he has called to the benefits of civilization a large number of his creatures."

Very well! that which Royer-Collard demanded for the interest of the middle class, we (of the popular party) ask for the interest of the people. We ask, as he does, that there be called to the benefits of civilization, a still larger number of human creatures. M. Royer-Collard is here, without suspecting, and without wishing it, on the brink of universal suffrage. He was on his way to it; we have arrived.

Yet he persists: "The sovereignty of the people is but the

sovereignty of brute force, and the form the most absolute of absolute power."

But if the power which emanates from the whole constitutes necessarily the most absolute of all powers, how should not the sovereignty of the people, which is the form of that power, be the most absolute of all the forms? It is the inevitable consequence of the principle. The question besides is not whether it forms the most absolute, but whether it be the truest and best.

M. Royer-Collard hastens to add, not without some contradiction: "With a sovereignty of this sort without rules or limits, without duties or conscience, there are neither constitutions nor laws, nor good, nor evil, nor past, nor future."

I fear this is no better than pure declamation. For to reject the authority of the greatest number, or what is the same, of the majority, is to place the government in the hands of the minority. Therefore, either it must be admitted, that the sovereignty of the minority is also without rule or restriction, without duty or conscience, and that with it there can be neither constitution, nor law, nor good, nor evil, nor past nor future, or it must be allowed that the majority or greatest number has duties, rules, limits, conscience, quite as well as the minority or lesser number.

We do not see that the United States, where universal suffrage exists in full opinion and full operation, are not quite as stable, quite as orderly, quite as moral, quite as conscientious as monarchical governments. And in addition, they have the advantage of enjoying the realities of liberty, while the monarchies have but its shadow; they have right on their side, and how many monarchies can with truth say the same?

From the commencement of the Restoration, M. Royer-Collard foresaw the Revolution of July, which was visible already on the lowering confines of the political horizon. He classified and defined after his manner the only two

parties who then had any life, and who contended for supremacy.

“There is a faction born of the Revolution, of its bad doctrines and its bad actions, whose vague perhaps, but whose constant, aim is usurpation, because it has come to be a matter of taste with them still more than of want. There is a faction born of privilege which detests equality and seeks to destroy it at any cost. I know not what these factions do, but I know what they mean, and above all I understand what they say. I recognize the one by its hatred of all legitimate authority, political, moral, religious; the other by its instinctive contempt for all rights public and private, by the arrogant cupidity which leads it to covet all the advantages of public office and of social consideration. The factions I speak of, reduced to their proper force, are weak in numbers; they are odious to the nation and will never strike deep root in its soil: but also they are ardent, and while we are divided, they march towards their object. If, from the persistence of the government in abandoning us and abandoning itself, they should come into collision once more, if our unhappy country is to be again torn and ensanguined by their conflicts, my mind is made up; I declare in advance to the victorious faction, whichever it may be, that I shall detest its victory; I ask from this day forth to be inscribed on the list of its proscriptions.”

What M. Royer-Collard terms, in his Doctrinarian phraseology, the struggle of two factions, is no other than the contest between aristocracy and democracy, of these two indestructible and rival powers, which Providence has hidden in the depths of every society, to give them, to the end of time, the agitation of vitality.

M. Guizot, in imitation of his master, has adopted the famous distinction between *factions* and *parties*; it being understood of course that they are, he and his friends, of the category of *party*, that is to say, men of principle, of virtue and of genius; and that their adversaries belong to

the denomination of faction, that is to say, a compound of profligacy, mischief and ignorance.

In general, M. Guizot has made large use of the discourses of Royer-Collard, and he gives us for new what is only rejuvenated.

The elevated reason of M. Royer-Collard, at strife with itself upon impossible solutions, was continually giving the lie to his borrowed principles. Doubtless, he is separated from the democratic party, by his conservative sentiments, and his political faith; but he belongs to it, in some sort, by his involuntary will, as evinced by expressions that often escape him in his speeches.

Elections, taxation, liberty of the press, military profession, law of sacrilege, judiciary organization, public instruction, responsibility of ministers, municipal institutions—all the great questions of the day have exercised the meditations of this grave and lofty genius. All his discourses are full of beautiful sentiments. Here are several of them:

“The crimes of the Revolution were not necessary. They were the obstacle, not the means.”

—“Representative government is justice organized, reason animated, morality armed.”

—“The beautiful is felt, it is not defined. It is everywhere, within us and without us, in the perfections of our nature and in the wonders of the sensible world; in the independent energy of solitary thought and in the public order of human societies, in virtue and in the passions; in joy and in tears; in life and in death.”

—“The representative governments have been doomed to toil. Like the laborer, they live by the sweat of their brow.”

—“Constitutions are not tents erected for sleep.”

—“Special legislation is a usurious borrowing, which ruins a government, even while it seems to enrich it.”

—“There are all sorts of republics. There is the aristocratic republic, that of England: There is the burges republic, that of France: There is the democratic republic, that of the United States.”

—“ Ministers have two sorts of responsibility, the dramatic and the moral.”

The following on the subject of religion is vigorous in expression and elevated in thought.

“ Human societies are born, live and die upon the earth. But they do not contain the entire man. There remains to him the noblest part of himself—those lofty faculties by which he soars to God, to a future life, to unknown blisses in an invisible world. These are his religious convictions, that true grandeur of man, the consolation and charm of weakness and misfortune, the inviolable refuge against the tyrannies of this world.”

How his eloquence rises with the subject.

“ Religion exists in itself and by itself. It is truth itself over which the laws have no jurisdiction. Religion has of human but its ministers, weak men like ourselves, liable to the same wants, subject to the same passions, mortal and corruptible organs of incorruptible and immortal truth.”

And further on in the same discourse :

“ According to the bill of ministers, religion is to do all. Not only its kingdom is of this world, but this world is its kingdom. The sceptre is passed into its hands, and the priest is sovereign. Thus, as in politics, we are straitened between absolute power and revolutionary sedition ; so in religion, we are pressed between theocracy and atheism.”

And this other passage, how beautiful !

“ We have passed through criminal times ; we did not look for our rule of conduct in the law, but in our consciences. We have obeyed God, rather than men ; we are the same men who have forged passports, and perhaps given false testimony, to save the lives of the innocent. God will judge us in his justice and his mercy.”

Where could there be found a livelier picture of the immorality and selfishness of our age, than in the following incrimination ?

“ The government, instead of awakening the united energies of the people, coldly relegates each to the recesses of

his individual helplessness. Our fathers knew nothing of this deep humiliation. They had not to witness corruption embodied in the public law and held up a spectacle to astonished youth, a lesson to manhood."

We will close these extracts with an admirable fragment respecting the life-tenure of judicial functions.

"When the Executive power, charged to institute the judiciary in the name of the society, appoints a citizen to this eminent office, it addresses him to this effect: 'Organ of the law, be like the law impassible! You will be surrounded by all sorts of passions, let them never ruffle your soul!—Should my own errors, should the influences that beset me, and which it is so hard to entirely preclude, extort from me unjust orders, disobey those orders, resist my seductions, resist my threats. As soon as you ascend the tribunal, let your heart retain no vestige of either fear or hope. Be passionless like the law which you represent!'

"The citizen replies: 'I am a mere man, and what you enjoin is above humanity. You are too strong, and I am too weak: I will surely succumb in this unequal struggle. You will misconceive the motives of my resistance, and will punish it. If you would have me rise above my infirmities, you must protect me at the same time against myself and against you. Help therefore my weakness; free me from the temptations of fear and of hope; promise that I shall not be removed from office, unless upon conviction of having betrayed the duties which you impose upon me.'

"The Executive hesitates; it is the nature of power to divest itself reluctantly of the exercise of its will. Enlightened at length by experience respecting its real interests, and subdued by the ever increasing force of circumstances, it says to the judge: 'You shall be unamoveable!'"

Subjects, apothegms, thoughts, style, all that is of a time gone by and a peculiar man. M. Royer-Collard has pursued through the vicissitudes of men and things, the dream of his favorite form of government. He pursues it still.

The storms which have long agitated his life have fatigued its polemical ardor, but have confirmed him in his opinions. He thinks he sees, in the sudden revolutions of our country, the trials and the teachings of a Providence which chastises people and kings. He holds that there is a moral law which rules the world of intelligences, as there are physical laws which govern the phenomena of nature. M. Royer-Collard has been a sincere, but a systematic, legitimist. For him, legitimacy was, by the antiquity of its institution, the venerableness of its associations, and the breadth and depth of its foundation, the most authoritative expression of the social order ; but he was for tempering this order—the excess of which constituted despotism—by the austere conditions of liberty. He made himself, of his dynastic doctrines, a sort of imposing and rationalized religion. He arranged his plan of government, as we do a thesis in philosophy ; a chimera, which is more commendable for beauty than for use ; for the mysterious and strong alliances of the past and the present, of liberty and power, under the sceptre of a dynasty of immemorial origin, are unintelligible to the vulgar. Besides, they are constantly breaking, in the application. The equilibrium of this fiction is incessantly deranged by the irregular current of human affairs. That such structures might be kept up, it would be necessary that there should never be clouds in the firmament, nor wind in the air, and these are card castles, which tumble at the least breath.

What does honor to Royer-Collard beyond all the other parliamentary celebrities, is to have strictly conformed his conduct to his maxims. Great and rare praise for our times, to be simple in manner, not ambitious, disinterested, an honest man !

We may add that the virtue of M. Royer-Collard has shone not only by its own splendor, but also by the contrast with the corruption of his disciples.

While those little college Greeks who lauded so loudly the poverty of Diogenes and the simplicity of Plato, have

seized upon the offices of emolument and have filled their wallet, Royer-Collard, a philosopher of action as well as of words, has been seen to withdraw himself modestly aloof, to decline the honors of the Council of State, of the Peerage and of the Ministry, and to sequester himself in the solitary and profound observation of events.

Accordingly, in practice, the disciples of M. Royer-Collard very soon left him there with his philosophy, all alone on his sofa. Royer-Collard, who loves order, but not to the extreme of despotism, began then to return towards liberty. It was a little late, for liberty had ceased to exist.

Why has it so ceased? It is that power has never been, in France, enough restrained in the extravagant impetuosity of its caprices. It has always strayed into the abyss, not that it was pushed, but because it threw itself in of itself. The old Monarchy, the Empire, the Directory, the Restoration have perished one after another by the excess of their power. The fault in this country is always to govern too much, to administer too much, to legislate too much, to regulate too much. Liberty tries at the outset to keep the flood within its banks, but it breaks through them, infiltrates and escapes so quickly, that there soon remains nothing either of its noise or its waters.

It must also be owned that we are the most forgetful of mankind. As soon as they return to us, we applaud with a sort of frenzy those whom we probated with indignation. Parties in France have not the least rancor. There are no roots to their admiration or their hatred. It is no doubt a very amiable quality of our nation, this species of heedlessness. But would it not evince that, if we are fitted for all the other sciences, by the mobility of our genius, we are scarcely adapted for political science, which demands more of application, perseverance and steadiness?

M. Royer-Collard believes, above all, in the doctrine of legitimacy. He regrets the displacement of the ancient foundations of the monarchy. He took no part, either by counsel, or action, or feeling, in the Revolution of the Thre-

Days. He has advocated the succession of the peerage. He has opposed the extension of the electoral privilege. He has shed the tears of his eloquence upon the grave of the great Perrier, the fatal friend of July. He belongs neither to the extreme Left, nor to the dynastic Left, nor even to the Third party. He at first voted the budgets, the laws, and the measures of the government dictated as they were by fear and designed for corruption; and it was necessary that the cup of iniquity should be full to the brim, to bring him to cry aloud to them that it was going to run over. And you, deputies of the Opposition, forgetful of all this his past career which is not conformable with yours, you call Royer-Collard the apostle of liberty! But M. Royer-Collard himself does not accept this democratic apostleship. He does not wish to be thought to have been what he has not been, nor to appear what he is not. He wishes to be left with his proper character, with his original position, with his public conduct, his doctrines, his regrets, with his life quite legitimist; and although we conceive the government of our country in a different manner, that life is sufficiently honorable for us to leave it to go on to the close in its conscientious and spotless integrity.

## MANUEL.

THE French Empire revolved around Napoleon, as the circumference around its axis. Alone, he directed his armies on the field of battle. Alone, in the seclusion of his closet, he made and unmade his leagues and treaties. Alone, he dispatched his orders to the Prefects of the Interior. Alone, he wrote political dissertations in the newspapers, then subject to censorship. Alone, he spoke through his emissaries, in the mute assemblies of the Legislative body and the Senate. So that it might well be said, there was in the whole Empire no other general, no other diplomatist, no other administrator, no other publicist, no other orator but Napoleon.

Accordingly, when the Tribune became again free, and the barriers of eloquence were removed, our parliamentary orators advanced upon the course but gropingly, and like men disused to public speaking. They were constrained in their movements; they tried their voice which rendered them but feeble and common sounds.

Manuel appeared.

Manuel was tall, had a pale and melancholy countenance, an accent provincial but sonorous, and a remarkable simplicity of manners.

His manner was to untie difficulties rather than cut them. He wound, with incomparable dexterity, around each proposition. He interrogated it, he handled it all over, he sounded it so to speak in its inmost recesses, to examine what it contained, and then explained it to the Assembly, without omission and without ostentation. He was a man of lofty reason, natural and without pretension, always master of himself, brilliant and easy in language, skilled in the art of exposing, of abstracting and of concluding. These qualities delighted the Chamber of Representatives.

We must not think that, when political tempests are raging, an orator of excessive vehemence always obtains sway over assemblies ; for he pushes, ordinarily, towards extreme resolutions, and if he pleases the energetic, he alarms the timid, who are always the most numerous. As these imagine they see, in the dark, swords suspended over their heads, snares sown under their feet, and black treacheries beset them on every side, they like speakers of sincerity whom they can confide in and believe. As they are affected with a trembling of the limbs, they love to take refuge under the shelter of serene and firm souls. As their judging powers are not vigorous, they like to be presented the questions of debate all ready solved. Thus did Manuel.

When he saw, after the abdication of Napoleon, that the executive authority knew not in whose name to deliver its commands, that civil war threatened to break out in the midst of the foreign war, that the Chamber of Representatives itself was broken into factions, and that, impelled by a thousand contrary winds, each acted at random, and inclined, some for the Bourbons, some for the Republic, some for the Duke of Orleans, some for the Emperor's son, Manuel invoked the choice of the Army, the safety of the Country and the text of the Constitution in favor of Napoleon II.

The Assembly hailed this proposition with enthusiasm. It felt obliged to him for having relieved it from an embarrassing perplexity, and restored it to that unity, so necessary to all Assemblies, especially in a season of crisis.

Manuel was appointed to report the plan of a Constitution ; a commission of peril, a charge of confidence, a political testament, which, in the name of the dying Chamber, he drew up for posterity. He pursued nobly its discussion amid the balls and shells that whizzed about his ears. He called the citizens to arms. When all was lost, and the Prussian cannon was already roaring on the bridge of Jena, Manuel, intrepid and calm, repeated from the height of the tribune, those words of Mirabeau : " We will not leave this hall but by the force of bayonets."

Manuel was the most considerable and almost the only orator of the Chamber of Representatives. The confidence of that Chamber would have placed him at the head of the government, under the minority of Napoleon II.

His arrival to the Chambers of the Restoration was preceded by a colossal reputation. Ordinarily, those excessively trumpeted names do not sustain themselves, and disgust soon succeeds to enthusiasm. Manuel, besides, was internally undermined by a painful malady, which, some time after, carried him to the grave ; and under the pressure of its anguish, his fine faculties lost something of their force and splendor.

A ministerialist liberal and moderate during the Hundred-Days, Manuel became, during the Restoration, one of the tribunes of the Opposition. He served it with all the weight of his character and talent. As he was rather obstinate than impetuous, he withstood, in the vanguard, the final charges of the enemy. As he had more vigor of reasoning than oratorical vehemence, he argued every thesis minutely and turned against themselves, with equal vivacity and precision, the citations of his adversaries. However completely closed the discussion, he would always find means of entering it on some side or other, and renewed the contest with extraordinary subtlety of dialectics and abundance of amplification.

Manuel was the most remarkable improvisator of the Left side. His diction was entirely parliamentary, not charged with ambitious ornaments, but free from incorrectness, not remarkably vehement, but also without laxity. Perhaps he was a little too prolix, a little diffuse, without ceasing however to be quite clear, but apt to retrace his steps and repeat himself, like all speakers of extreme facility.

Sometimes he delivered his opinion in writing upon matters of finance. His speeches are well composed, but without large views, without profundity, and without style. Manuel, like most extemporizers, could rapidly appropriate

the ideas of others, and reproduce them in a skillful and discriminative order. But he was neither administrator, nor philosopher, nor financier, nor economist. Since his expulsion, fed and enriched by substantial studies, he might have re-entered with treasures of knowledge upon the legislative scene.

Two men incurred the antipathies in a peculiar degree of the two adverse parties; de Serre the antipathies of the Left, after his abjuration; Manuel, the antipathies of the Right, at all times.

At that period, the parties were in flagrant hostility to each other. The Emigration and the Revolution, aristocracy and democracy, equality and privilege, sat in the Chamber fronting each other, and hated each other with a deadly hatred. Every sitting was filled with little else than subtle and long-winded dissertations upon faction and parties, and while protesting with the lips the utmost respect for the intentions of adversaries, what was most incriminated in the heart was these very intentions. The truth—now that posterity has arrived for them—the truth may now be spoken respecting those parties. It is, that they were all equally acting a part. The royalists wanted the King without a Charter; the liberals the Charter without the King. This was the sum of what was true or serious at the bottom of the parliamentary debates; the rest was accident, stage-effect, mere talk. Finally, and after fifteen years of scene-shifting, the actors and spectators got tired of expecting, and it became imperative to disclose the clue of the comedy. The King without the Charter, means the Ordinances; the Charter without the King means the Revolution.

Manuel twined himself subtly around the Charter, as a serpent does about a tree which has but the green and flourishing appearance of life, but is dead within. He compressed it in his folds, he tortured it, and would have it absolutely render up what it did not contain. In our day, these continual calls to order, with interminable speeches about the strict or liberal construction of the Charter, those

imputations of constitutional treason, those essays of meagre metaphysics, would fatigue the auditors. But at that time, we were new to representative government, and wished to know through curiosity, if really there was something at the bottom of all its pretension.

The ministers, who love to enjoy the realities of power, are always in haste to finish. Manuel waged against them a war of temporization. He annoyed them at the beginning of the discussion with his attacks, and at the end with his repetitions. He would send the president amendment after amendment, and under pretext of developing them, would re-enter upon the main question and extend its ground. Defeated upon the amendment, he fell back upon the sub-amendment. He manœvered thus in a thousand ways, now advancing, now retiring, defending like a skilful general every position foot to foot, and when he saw himself about to be captured, he had himself blown into the air with powder.

Manuel proved the most judicious man of his party. He did not allow himself to be misled by imagination, nor dizzied by enthusiasm, that other French malady. He weighed things exactly at what they were worth, and his vision was so perspicacious and so precise, that he foresaw and foretold that a Revolution would proceed from the 14th article of the Charter.

He had also a very lively sentiment of good-will towards the laboring class, and it is perhaps on account of this secret sympathy which binds the masses to their defender, that his name amongst them remains so popular. The torch of democracy threw from time to time along his pathway a few of its rays, and it is by the light of its gleaming that he has touched upon almost all the great questions of the future.

The Right listened to Manuel with visible impatience. It covered him with its contempt and its insults. Sometimes it would shrug its shoulders, sometimes turn its back. Sometimes it groaned in murmurings that stifled his voice; at times it descended angrily from bench to bench, until it reached the foot of the tribune, taunting him with the bit-

terest sarcasms and epithets the most outrageous. Manuel, impassive amid the most violent storms, kept the serenity of his countenance and soul unruffled. He received the shock unmoved, folded his arms, and waited till silence was restored, to resume his discourse.

He was a man of calm intrepidity and a patriotic and warm heart, with manners the most affable, temper the most gentle, a rectitude of principle entirely natural, a reserve of ambition and a modesty quite singular. I will add nothing respecting his moral qualities. He was the friend of Lafitte and of Dupont de l'Eure. This is praise enough.

There is much more imagination than people think, in all parties. They are eager to live and to establish themselves, not only in the present and the future but also in the past. They recast, they dispose history at will, and in the interest of their passions. They impose, by a stretch of fancy, upon some illustrious dead, the part of representing their opinion, even when this personage would by no means have been willing to represent it, even when this opinion had now lost its vitality and almost its name. Thus, the Republicans will have it that, under the Restoration, Manuel had been their servant. The Doctrinarians of the Tuileries pretend that he would now walk in their ways. These are two sheer illusions. Manuel had, like millions of Frenchmen at this moment, the republican sentiment rather than republican opinions. He preferred openly, though free to do the contrary, Napoleon II. to a republic. He used to say: "The republicans are men not ripened by experience." And elsewhere: "That the republic might have charms for men of elevated soul; but that it was unsuited to a great people in the actual state of our societies." And lastly: "The throne is the guarantee of liberty." Then again: "Liberty is inseparable from the throne." He declared, besides, for the royal prerogative, for the institution of two Chambers, for a hereditary peerage, for the salary of the clergy, for the administrative guarantee of the public functionaries.

No more did Manuel belong to the coterie of the Palais-

Royal ; and as it was sought to turn his popularity to the advantage of a certain personage, Manuel beset with importunities dropped this exclamation :

“ Do not speak to me of that man ! ”

It is an opinion quite common, that had Manuel lived, his high experience would have directed the founders of the Revolution of July, would have signalized the shoals upon which the vessel was drawn by too confident pilots, and would have made it impossible for prerogative to overflow its banks and submerge the hopes of liberty. At all events, noble deeds are to be set above the wisest counsels and the finest speeches. No, all the counsels that Manuel could offer would not have hindered the fatality of things from taking its course ; and as to his discourses, they will pass away, they are even passed already. But so long as civic courage—more rare a thousand times than military courage—shall be honored amongst us, the name of Manuel will live in the memory of Frenchmen.

It was in 1823, when all of a sudden the patience of the Right gave way. It had already made some noise, when Manuel, giving vent to the fulness of his heart, expressed his repugnance for the Bourbons. From this instant, his name lay on the tables of proscription. With ear erect and arm uplifted, his enemies, lurking at the corner of the tribune, watched and waylaid upon its passage his every expression. The tempest hung over his head. Scarce had Manuel sketched the indirect and veiled apology of the Convention, than M. de la Bourdonnaie started from his place and called, on ground of indignity, for the expulsion of the member from la Vendée.

The Chamber punished Manuel for having praised the Convention and it imitated him itself. It alienated public opinion, which is a fault. It abused its power, which is an act of cowardice. It produced a political crisis, a thing which is the ruin of Chambers as of kings, even when they succeed. It violated the inviolability of the tribune. It enveloped, in the condemnation of a single expression, the

whole parliamentary life of Manuel. It prosecuted him for a tendency. It struck at the heart of freedom of speech, as it had just done by the press. What was strangest, in this strange proceeding, was to see the deputies of privilege arrogate the right of representing France and speaking in her name. Poor France! They all assume to speak for you, those of former days, those of the present day. When then, to silence them, wilt thou speak for once thyself?

The great character of Manuel was not untrue to itself in the debate. He wore that placidity of countenance, which irritated his weak and violent enemies. He defended himself with an eloquent simplicity, and France has retained his words:

“I declare that I recognize in no one here the right to accuse or to judge me. Moreover, I look around for judges and I find but accusers. I do not expect an act of justice, it is to an act of vengeance that I resign myself. I profess to respect the established authorities; but I respect still more the law by which they have been constituted, and I recognize in them no power whatever, from the moment that, in contempt of that law, they usurp rights which it has not conferred upon them.

“In such a situation of things, I know not if submission be an act of prudence; but I know that, whenever resistance is a right, it becomes a duty.

“Having arrived in this Chamber by the will of those who had the right to send me, I cannot leave it but by the violence of those who choose to arrogate to themselves the right of excluding me; and should this resolution on my part cost me the last extreme of peril, I have only to say that the field of liberty has been sometimes fertilized by generous blood.”

Manuel kept his word. He maintained his rights to the end, yielding only to force. The hand of a gendarme had to grapple him upon his seat and tear him from amidst his indignant friends.

The popular throng, who swelled by another immense

crowd, were soon after to attend the triumph of his obscurities, accompanied to his residence the democratic tribune. But the multitude departed, solitude and silence gathered around the illustrious orator. The electoral colleges of the day had the cowardice not to re-elect him, not to try at least. So true is it, that there is little civic spirit in France! That patriotic services find there but ungrateful memories! That renown the best earned dies there quickly!\*

Meanwhile, strange caprices of fortune! he little suspected, this great citizen, when, ignominiously expelled for having spoken of the Convention, he left the Chamber like a malefactor between two gendarmes, that one day the king of his dislike, chased in his turn, would have to embark for an eternal exile; that the son of a Conventionalist would occupy the throne and the bed of his master; that the deputies, who had just proscribed a deputy in the name of the electors, would themselves too, be proscribed by the same electors and excluded from the temple of the laws, and that, upon the frontispiece of another temple dedicated to her illustrious men by a grateful country, the immortal chisel of David would grave, in front of the figure of Napoleon, the emblem of military courage, the figure of Manuel, the emblem of civic courage.

\* The dereliction is not ascribable to "public spirit," strictly speaking, with which it might entirely consist to countenance individual oppression in certain cases, though the expulsion of Manuel was not an instance assuredly. Manuel would no doubt have been reinstated had the suffrage been universal in France. But it would be, possibly, from a less lofty and discerning motive than public spirit. Something of party tactics perhaps, which would thus attach to itself the devotion and the desperateness of its followers. Something more, probably, of that popular spite, which in the very country in question lead to the vindication from oppression, of those incorruptible patriots, Marat and Robespierre; and which, in every country, besides thinking of itself instinctively whenever the weak is assailed by the strong, loves moreover to display its defiance to those who arrogate the distinction of superiors. Demagogues assure us indeed, that it is the people's love of "fair play," their "gratitude" &c., which would not greatly mend the case: the former would oblige to take

Manuel bore his ostracism with dignity, but not without depression, without some regret for the tribune. "You are a man of letters," said the orator to Benjamin Constant, "you have your pen; but what remains to me?"

There remained his funeral procession and the Pantheon.

part (as the people have but too often done in fact) indiscriminately, with the criminal, who has the government all against him. And as to popular gratitude, it may claim some credit after they have reconciled it with the proverbial ingratitude of republics.

No; public spirit is not only animated by an ardent desire for, but also guided by an enlightened and steady view of, the public good. And hence, in truth, the defect imputed to the electors of France; a defect, no doubt, common to them with all their kind, whatever the country or the constitution. As yet, human nature seems to admit of but the wretched and mischievous counterfeit, which is only the brass of party Calculation with an alloy of popular Impulse, sterlingly stamped—public spirit, the public good!

I have remarked upon this distinction because of its special application to our own country, where the immoral course in question seems to have passed into a maxim of policy with one at least of the parties. Accordingly, it is the well-understood ambition or the tact (to use a term more appropriately abject) of the knowing ones to get themselves somehow *martyred* in the "cause," as the surest road to the canonization of office. And the worse the cause, the better the claim—doubtless upon the equitable principle, that the reward should be proportional to the tret and tare of conscience.—Tz'a. N.

## REVOLUTION OF JULY

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I AM about to walk upon live coals, I am come to, I am going to paint the orators of my own time. Most of these orators have been, are, or will be ministers. They have consequently flatterers and maligners, friends and enemies. Not to praise them enough is to offend the friends. Not to blame them enough is to displease the enemies. What is to be done? Be exclusively panegyrist or exclusively detractor? Then, I should be neither true nor just. Be impartial? With all my heart, when I shall have been shown a contemporary, painter or judge of public men, who is neither of the Centre, nor of the Third party, nor Democrat, nor Dynastic, nor Legitimist; for if he belong to one or other of these parties—and how should he not?—he will inevitably tincture his pallet with the colors of his opinions, and thenceforth he will cease to be impartial; and should he censure me for not seeing things as he does, I might reproach him in turn because he does not see them as I do. What! you are displeased that I should judge you according to my principles, and you pretend to judge me according to yours! There is but one arbiter possible between you and me, and who is that? Posterity; if it deigns to concern itself about such trifles as our present orators and Timon their painter. Posterity alone is impartial. But, on the other hand, can posterity, which has seen neither the things nor the men which it too would essay to paint, can it produce a likeness, and is not there always in its

pictures something of imagination and of illusion? Much more, it seeks itself with curiosity for the portraits taken by contemporaries, from nature. It studies them, admires them and prefers them to its own, and I maintain that it does well.

I do not therefore by any means pique myself upon being impartial towards the political orators of my time. I would not be so if I could, and I could not if I would. I do not pique myself upon being impartial, for I would thus avow that good and evil are indifferent to me; that governments may be conducted by any sort of regulations; that the most opposite systems are all equally good, if only they succeed; that there is neither true nor false in politics, neither virtue nor vice in statesmen; neither grandeur nor debility in the constitution of empires, nor lessons in history, nor experience in facts, nor morality in actions, nor consequences in principles.

No, I am not impartial, or rather eclectic, after this fashion, and I believe in God in politics, as in everything else.

Let me be permitted here, for I stand in need of it, to guard myself against the self-delusions of vanity, the muttered recriminations and interested suggestions of gentlemen among the orators who might pretend that I had viewed them with eyes completely blinded by passion, spite, anger or some other visual disturbance of this kind, and that I had travestied them, merely because I did not beplaster them with a ridiculous excess of praise. Besides, although it be hardly ever becoming to talk of oneself, I am bound to tell the public who have come to visit my gallery with so much eagerness and good will, in what disposition, political and mental, I was when I painted our orators.

I am a radical, but a radical more favorable to a centralized and strong government than most of those who call themselves conservatives. I am for liberty, but by the constraints of logic, and not the violence of daggers. I am also for power, by the intelligent, firm, humane and just

exercise of authority, and not by the brute force of oppression and arbitrariness. I care no more for despotism than for anarchy, no more for anarchy than for despotism.

I have taken up my pencil without favor or hatred. I have received from those who have sat to me neither benefits nor injuries. They have offered me nothing, I have asked them for nothing.

My duty and my principles have led me to decline the honors of the Bench, of the Council of State and of the Ministry, ten years ago, when I was at the age of ambition. I have passed that age. All I now desire is to remain in the obscure and solitary position into which I have voluntarily retired. I would easily content myself to be still less prominent. Is there in our days a post, however high, which is worth a wise man's wish? And then, in office, there is so little time left to live! and in the present day such a wear and tear of conscience, the sole one of all the goods of earth which has for me any great value.

Unquestionably, I do not despair of the future of my country, because after all, the voice of the people is the voice of God, and God, it must needs be, at last will speak. But it is not my fault that I have lost all illusion, respecting the men of the present time. I have no confidence in one of them, even of my own party, and in that dust of all parties I look in vain for any man who represents anything.

There is in every member of parliament two characters, the orator and the politician; the orator I have portrayed according to my taste as artist, which may well not accord, I admit, with the taste of others, and especially the orators, a race, vainglorious above all races. The politician I have judged by his opinions, when he had any, by mine, as a term of comparison.

It is now ten years since I began to spread my canvass on the easel and charge my pallet, and I continue still to paint without intermission.

The politics internal and external of a free people are now

no more to be looked for in the intrigues of courts, but in the causes and the effects of parliamentary debates: to portray the orators, then, is to write history.

It was my design to make this a serious work, and which should endure and be connected with the study of our revolutions, and conducive to a more exact and true knowledge of the affairs of my time. Shall I have succeeded? I should think so, if I were not liable to deceive myself; and, at all events, it would not be for me to say it.

All I can say, is, that I have been placed, to observe my models, in the best conditions wherein a painter has ever been. I have seen, I have heard General Foy, Benjamin Constant, Manuel, Royer-Collard, Casimir Perrier, Villelo, de Serre, and in addition, I have undertaken what no one in France had ever done before me, and what probably will never be done again; I have read and re-read, one by one, the whole cart-loads of their speeches.

I have witnessed the gathering parliamentary storms, not in the clouds of Olympus, but at the foot of the tribune, and have heard the thunder burst, and the lightning, conducted by an electric thread, disappear sometimes afar from the public, in the chamber of conference, a few paces from where I sat.

I have seen, alone among so many foreign spectators, the actors of our political dramas, dress and undress themselves behind the scenes. I have been present, and not another painter except me, at the dumb play of their pantomime, at their half-confidences—those exchanges of gestures, of looks, of smiles—those emotions scarce perceptible of spite, of embarrassment, of shame, of anger—those comings and goings of ministerial aid-de-camps—those dispatchings of notes under hand and under the table—those buzzings, orders and passwords—those changes of countenance, those sudden tuckings, those mutual stabs, those devices of warfare and of comedy, which explain better a situation of an orator than all the studied discourses in the world, and which always

escape the ears and the eyes of the Chamber and the reporters, however sagacious.

Yes, I know these orators well, for I have lived in close intimacy with their public life. But, on the other hand, I have fastened against myself the door of their private life, and have had no desire even to look through the key-hole.

It is not the praise of friends that flatters us most, but that of enemies; and we are by so much the more sensible to it, that it comes to us mixed with censure and criticism, and that its sincerity is thus the better attested. But, sincerity is the quality which charms us the most in others, even when we do not possess it ourselves.

The modern orators know well, and, besides, they feel it instinctively, that their effusions pass away like the sound of their words,—that if they shine with the splendor of the meridian sun, they must go down, at the end of the day, behind the horizon, into a night without morning or morrow; and they hold, they cling, as they can, to that life of remembrance and of renown which escapes them on all sides.

Of what avail is it, by a posthumous respect, to print rich editions of the speeches of General Foy, Casimir Perrier, Benjamin Constant, and so many others, if nobody touches them? People no more read orators in their works. They are now read but in their portraits.

Doubtless, to live by shreds, by fragments, to live in little more than the name, to live without his works, without his words, is scarcely to live to an orator. But it is, at least, not to die entirely, and he ought to be thankful to the helpful hand which makes an opening in his tomb and lets in upon his brow even a single ray of light.

Let each of those who live still and whom I have drawn, interrogate himself; let him examine himself in his own mirror, and then in my portraiture, and let him say, his hand upon his heart, if he does not think it a good likeness.

I am firmly persuaded he would; and it seems to me, if I had been myself an orator, at the risk of the consequences to me, I should wish to be painted by Timon.

## GARNIER-PAGES.

ALAS! how much I have already lived. I have seen Manuel perish amid the ungrateful desertion of his constituents and his friends. I have witnessed the death of Lafayette, who was not yet at the end of his green old-age, and who, by his majestic and simple rebuke, would have prevented the laws of September. I have seen Carrel fall in the spring-tide of life; Carrel, the brilliant knight of democracy, the flower of our hopes, the pen and the sword of the national party. I have seen extinguished Garnier-Pagès, who, had he sooner quitted the vitiated air of the Chamber, and the deadly agitation of our fruitless struggles, would have recovered his strength and health beneath the milder climate of the south and in the repose of study.

And I, the obscure companion of these illustrious men, I can only depict and admire them. I will begin with you Garnier-Pagès, and I owe you this homage; for you are now no more, and the dead are so soon forgotten! for, besides, you loved me and were as unwilling to separate from me, as I would be to ever separate from you! for there was not one of your thoughts which was not mine: like you, I disdained to accept honors or power; like you, I loved the people; like you, I expected reform, and we had no need of communicating to one another these sentiments, or of expressing these opinions. We formed together wishes so sincere and so ardent for the union of all the patriots, for the aggrandizement of our beloved France, for the amelioration of the condition of the poor, and for the definitive triumph of democracy! Yes, yours was a great intellect, Garnier-Pagès! yes, yours was a noble heart! you understood liberty, you knew how it should be loved! more than this, you knew how it should be served! I shall see you no more, you whom I had left so full of life! and when I return to the

Chamber, I shall find you no more at the extremity of our solitary bench !

Attacked myself, far away from you, by a malady not so destructive as yours, I have been unable to receive your latest breathings and pay you the duty of a faithful friendship ; but may these lines which I consecrate to you, and which flattery does not dictate, preserve your name from that flight of time which passes on and sweeps us along, and render you still dearer to our hearts and more regretted in our memory !

Garnier-Pagès had the good fortune of not undergoing, as a member of parliament, that trial almost always fatal of the passage through several governments. Had he been deputy when the Revolution of July broke out, would he have, as so many others have done, exceeded the limits of his commission ? Would he have quitted the battle-field to go pillage the dead ? Would he have lost, under the touch of power, that political virginity which he kept to the last with a continence so exemplary ? I do not think so. Garnier-Pagès had the rarest of courages in a country where all have personal bravery, he had the bravery of conscience. He would, in case of need, have sacrificed more than his life, he would have sacrificed his popularity ; and this is what I particularly esteem him for, for I should make little account of the orator or the writer, who could not, upon occasion, resist the prejudices and the precipitation of his own party. Truth should be spoken to friends still more than to enemies, and he who courts popularity *at any rate*, is but a coward, a demagogue or a blockhead.

Simple in manners, of upright life, and a democrat austere without being extravagant ; faithful to his principles, sincere, disinterested, generous, inoffensive ; such was the man in the moral and political aspect. As orator, he excelled, by the sage economy of his plan, the simpleness of his dialectics and the ingenious quickness of his repartees. He was deficient perhaps in that elevated, copious and ample vigor, which sustains the discourse, and leaves the adversary

no time to retreat or respire beneath the pressure and the pouring of its impetuous flow ; deficient also in that internal emotion which communicates itself to the auditory, because it is felt by the orator himself ; in that imagination which gives body to thought, and which has characterized all the great masters of the divine art of expression ; in fine, in that vehemence, that oratorical action which appertains to the power of the lungs and the coloration of the countenance.

But in a serious assembly, in a government of business, the man truly eloquent is not he who has brilliancy, passion, tears in the very voice, but he who discusses best. But Garnier-Pagès was a man of discussion. He was reason itself, spiced with wit. He had a talent completely parliamentary. He said but just what he meant to say, and, like an expert navigator, he steered his words and his ideas through the shoals which beset him on every side, not only without going to wreck, but without ever running aground.

Men in assemblages, parliamentary or popular, love what dazzles, what moves, what startles, what captivates, them. They do not enough take account of the justness of the thoughts, the propriety of the terms, the connection of the discourse. Garnier-Pagès did not charm the frivolous, but he pleased the grave, for his speeches had more of the solid than the brilliant. He did not attend so much to the rapidity of his ideas as to their sequence, nor to the pomp of the words as to the things the words expressed. His discussion was compact and substantial. He deduced his propositions from each other, beginning with the principal, to reach the secondary, and his reasonings fell into the utmost compression and unity, without the least confusion. I do not hesitate to say—and in this particular, I will, I think, be allowed to judge—that Garnier-Pagès was one of the best dialecticians of the Chamber.

His familiar conversation abounded in observations pointed and epigrammatic without being wounding. He sparkled with gayety and wit. The oratorical inmodesty which, in others, were superciliousness, in him was turned into

naïveté. Returned to his seat, he weakened sometimes, by his jesting, the impression which he had made in the tribune by his elevated reason. But the light Frenchman, can he refrain from banter and laughter, even in the height of danger, even at the hour of death ?

Garnier-Pagès, like all politicians, exaggerated the importance of the medium in which he acted. Where there were but a few scattered individuals, Garnier-Pagès would imagine he saw a party. He magnified, with the eye of a wolf, the microscopic slimness of the Extreme Left.

Ill at ease upon a narrow and ruinous ground which was failing him on all sides, he desired to show that the powerlessness of his position was not owing to want of power in the man, and he set himself to study, to expound, with indefatigable ardor, the subjects of finance and political economy. Thus it is that he passed night and day in delving into the vast and arid question of rent. His two discourses have made an epoch, and he may be said to have exhausted the subject. A perfect perspicuity of exposition, a remarkable sureness of judgment, a profound knowledge of details, a clear and vigorous argumentation, a sustained skill, a moderation of ideas, a circumspection of language, a pointed promptness of reply, never enough to be praised—such were the qualities that held captive during several hours, the attention of the Chamber the most inattentive on earth, and which so impressed his very adversaries, that they were heard to mutter on leaving the session :—Young orator of immense promise ! future minister of finance—of the democracy !

In the discussion of the Bureaus, he spoke upon every subject, little, but well, seasonably, clearly, practically, without phrases and without pretension, without anger and without abuse ; and ministers had not an antagonist more prompt, peremptory and embarrassing.

Garnier-Pagès and Guizot have been, in our day, the two only deputies who were in a condition to unite, to discipline and to conduct a party. Odillon-Barrot is too abstract, Man-

guin too frivolous, Thiers too careless, Saubert too hot-headed, Lamartine too vague, Dupin too mercurial, and the others have either not the will, or, not the power. I do not say that Garnier-Pagès and Guizot were men of intrigue, but I say they were men of ability. Both were active and energetic; both well-informed in the personal statistics of their troops; both consummate tacticians; both capable of assigning to each one the reason which should determine him; both employing unexpected stratagems; both in the Chamber, in the bureau, in the associations, elsewhere, anywhere, oppressed, possessed with the yearning to act, to state the question, to merge dissidences, to coalesce opinions, to organize the affair, and take the leadership themselves. Both were excellent leaders of Opposition, if Garnier-Pagès had a little more of the gravity of Guizot, and if Guizot had something more of the dexterity of Garnier-Pagès.

But, what is no difficult matter indeed, M. Guizot leads, with lash uplifted, his band of obedient school-boys, while the Extreme Left is impatient of the curb, discontented, mutinous and almost indisciplinable. As they do not care to be simple soldiers, and each would be an officer, every one has the pleasure of obeying and commanding himself, provided that he can come to an understanding with himself, a thing which does not always happen. And then does not the Extreme Left pride itself upon belonging to no one, and offering no systematical opposition? Just so; how profoundly shrewd! Make no systematic opposition to others who will make you a systematic ministerialism, and you may well flatter yourselves with having achieved magnificent things! Isolate yourselves, break your ranks, fire at random, while the ministry, backed by the dark masses of the Centre, pour upon you the volleys of their compact battalions. This is well-disciplined opposition! this is admirable tactic!

Either I am mistaken, or from the nature of his talent, Garnier-Pagès would have made a good minister. But think not I would have favored him as candidate, and been impatient to paint him, with a red portfolio under his arm

and his collar embroidered with gold. I merely say he would have had the talent, I do not say he would have had the ambition.

Yes, Garnier-Pagès had all the capacities requisite to a minister: a rapidity of glance which goes straight to the depths of things; a judgment never misled by imagination; a dialectic animated, exact and cogent; an intellect fruitful of resources, prompt in expedients, comprehensive in organization, active and persevering in means.

In like manner, in a few years Garnier-Pagès, had he wished it, might have placed himself at the head of the bar. He possessed all the qualities of the advocates of our day, as much perhaps as those of the orator: a plodding penetration, a profound knowledge of the law, a marvellous facility of argumentation, a power of natural and instant retort, a logical connection of thought, a great solidity of judgment.

What surprised me most in him was his eminent aptitude for business, an aptitude such that M. Thiers himself would not have surpassed him. For if Thiers saw more quickly and farther, Garnier-Pagès saw more justly. I do not, I own, much admire that light suppleness of speech and mind which consists in skirmishing around the benches of the ministers, and covering, roughening their skin with stings and pimples. These are refinements and subtleties which are not always comprehended by the public, ill initiated in the falsehoods and synonymes of the parliamentary jargon.

I prefer more nerve and earnestness in the discourse, and I think it necessary to know how to stop, when one has nothing to say. But the pleaders, in all parties, are as exacting as the litigants. If you do not speak, they say you betray them. If you speak, they say you have made a bad defence. It never enters their head that it is their cause that is worth nothing, and not their advocate.

It cannot be too often repeated, since the Revolution of July, there has never been a systematic Opposition; never recognized and regular chiefs of the combat; but merely

soldiers quaintly accoutred in all sorts of armor, fortuitous and miscellaneous aggregations of sharp-shooters. I would add, since I am in train of frankness, that the democratic party has its inconsistencies quite as well as other parties; and were I to perform its autopsy, I could show with how many disorders its poor system is shattered.

There are those who would be content to change once more a king, to try if that would not do perhaps better. Others are immediately for a republic. Others wish it equally, but not so soon. The latter would have the country fairly consulted, what has never yet been done, and the matter decided by a majority of the citizens.

The truth is that there is not in the Chamber a single deputy who is consistent in any one of his opinions. Ask rather the ministerialists, the Third-Party men, and the Dynasties if they think themselves really to represent the country: they will tell you the thing is evident, since the country has not remonstrated against their charter and their laws, and that *silence gives consent*.

To this I would reply in turn, that the Turks do not take it into their heads to remonstrate against the firmans of his Highness the Sultan Mahomet, a thing which does not at all prove that the Turks are free, nor that they have the smallest relish for the regime of the bastinado and the sack. This is, in fact, a very pretty dilemma. If you do not remonstrate, you are taken to consent; but if you do remonstrate, you are incarcerated provisionally in the Conciergerie, whence you are led in the company of thieves, to be escorted in the company of *gendarmes*, to the prison of Clairvaux, where, lodged between four walls, you are at liberty, if you have the least inclination, to remonstrate as loud and as long as you please. Very honest governments, and very truthful representations are those governments and representations of the "*silence gives consent!*"

Ask now the Legitimists, who take the oath in the religious sense, if they feel quite at ease in placing their sworn hand in that of Louis-Philippe, while their hearts are at Goritz;

they will answer you bravely, that they take their seats in virtue of the sovereignty of the people.

To this I would in turn reply that, to invoke the sovereignty of the people, it would be necessary to begin by recognizing it; that one cannot serve two masters, adore two gods, call himself the subject of two kings, hold at the same time to two contrary principles—to legitimacy and to usurpation. All the explanations in the world, you see, will not cure that forced position of its defects of precision and logic.

Finally, ask the men of the Extreme Left if they do not feel some compunction in taking the oath: they will reply that a political oath is a mere formality; that it obliges neither to serve nor to love this person or that; that it binds no more towards prince, charter and laws, the deputies who take it against their will, than the people who do not take it at all; and if you insist, if you ask why they pretend to make—they whom the country has not appointed—the laws which bind the country, they will answer that these laws would be still worse if they had not a hand in them.

To this I would again reply, that the excuse extenuates the fact, but does not alter it, and that the organical faithlessness of the representation is not cancelled by the necessity of the consequences.

This explains why it is that, as I have said, there is not a single deputy, of whatever hue of opinion, who is not anti-logical, and why that Chamber, which contains individually so many and distinguished talents, is so faded in color, so lax in fibre, so tremulous in every limb, so wasted, so exhausted, so faint, that it has not even the force of abortion, not having the force of production.

In fact, all the parties, without exception, are untrue to the great principle of the sovereignty of the people, and in consequence each party is untrue to its own principles. I affirm that there is nothing in the world more false or more stupid than such a position. Who has not beheld the puritans, and Garnier-Pagès first amongst them, take incredible

pains, wring their hands in the muteness of pantomime, twist and turn themselves in a thousand oratorical contortions, to intimate at half-voice that a different system would have done better? But what is the use of these efforts of style, these synonymes, these parliamentary feats of rhetoric? Is it hoped to delude the men of abuse? Their ears are long and keen. They perk up at the least word that tickles them. A system of government, moreover, is not to be modified by an oratorical allusion. Give me twenty lines of a newspaper, and I will say more upon the subject than the finest speech, of an hour's length.

Let there be no expectation then from the Chambers present or future. They are and will always be what they always have been, ministerial—ministerial, on any terms, filled, from floor to roof, with salaried functionaries, stationary when not retrograde, the sport of every idle fear, impotent for good, prodigal of our money, worthy offspring, in a word, of the electoral monopoly; they have done nothing, and will do nothing, for social progress. They have not repealed, and will not repeal, the laws of September. They have not organized, and will not organize, labor. They will die one after another of impotence and senility, and it will be always to begin anew, until every Frenchman shall have a voice in the electoral colleges.

One day, that radical Left, now so silent and cold, will shake off the trammels of this monopoly. One day, from the fertilizing springs of universal suffrage, will arise the orators of independent brow and whose burning words shall diffuse around them warmth and life. One day, the people themselves will lay, by the hands of their real representatives, the broad foundations of the temple of liberty. But for the present, without being as grand as it might be, the task of the Opposition is sufficiently glorious.

It has a right to claim all the consequences of the principle of popular sovereignty: abroad, independence; at home, liberty, equality, instruction, economy, reform. What is a deputy who would wrap himself up in the taciturnity of

spleen and despair? What is the soldier who would hide himself in his tent, instead of fighting in open day, at the head of the camp? It is the duty of the men of right to spread the truth before the men of abuse, even though the latter should trample the seed under foot. Contempt, interruptions, calumnies, insult, they should bear all for their country. If the country does not comprehend them, does not sustain them, does not remember them, so much the worse for the country, and not for them.

It must therefore not be said, with a publicist of my acquaintance, and thanks to me, well known,\* that he cannot improvisate; that he has a bad memory; that the murmurings of the Centre would drown his voice; that it would have no echo; that written discourses are cold, artificial, fit to be read, not to be heard; that the vanity of the writer would suffer from the feebleness of the orator; that the writer presents results, and the orator developments; that the writer is fastidious, if he repeats himself, and the orator not understood, if he does not; that thus the qualities of the publicist and of the orator exclude each other, and various other pretexts.

The question is not, sir, whether your vanity would suffer by not uttering the truth in fine language, but whether you are not bound to utter it in what terms soever; whether you ought to take less concern for your reputation than for the good of your country. Doubtless, if you have nothing worth saying, by all means hold your tongue; but if your conscience oppresses you, discharge it. Keep always advancing, always in quest of new knowledge, and cleave with your prow the unexplored ocean of the future. Truth is like the long wake which the steamboat leaves behind it, whose orbs, in expanding, are rolled gradually to either bank and end by enveloping the whole surface of the river. Is it that you imagine that, perchance, you will not be punished as well for your silence as for your speech, that your house has not been already marked with chalk by the

\* The Author himself?—T.'s N.

sbires of power, and that you will not sooner or later pass beneath the forks of proscription! Go then and rejoice, if you are destined to suffer for the good cause. Know, sir, that the field of liberty has need for a long time yet of being watered with the tears and the blood of its defenders!

No, the members of the Extreme Left cannot remain with folded arms, while society, impelled by a mysterious and powerful force, is marching towards a better, but inexorable, future.

At all events, quite different is the duty of the writer, who lives in the absolute, from the duty of the deputy, who lives in the relative. The one holds his commission but of himself, the other but of his constituents; the one chooses his position, the other accepts it; the one is the man of what is not yet, the other the man of what is actually; the one deals always with theories, the other always with applications.

Garnier-Pagès, like a shrewd politician, comprehended that in a monopoly Chamber, it is requisite to speak the whole truth, and not to demand but what is possible; that, by a skilful laborer, the seeds of progress may be brought to germinate in the most ungrateful soil; that a deputy is not master of refusing a proffered amelioration, however small it may be; that the fruits of violence are always bitter and rickety, and fall before being ripe; in fine, that the weapons of argument are more sure and more victorious in a free country than the resort to musketry and bayonets.\*

Yes, politics should not resemble those scourges of heaven, those ravagers of nations who are heralded along their paths by terror and despair, who batter down the temples of religion without rebuilding them, and the institutions of society without re-constituting them, who make around them a desert, and are delighted but amid vengeance, ruins and graves. If it is not permitted as yet to build an edifice regular, new and complete, we must at least cut the stones

\* This paragraph offers a sufficiently exact *resume* of the policy of O'Connell.—T.'s N.

and bring them upon the ground. Each season has its work, every age advances a step. The legislator should imitate nature, who never takes repose, who repairs and reproduces herself unceasingly, who is ever decorating herself afresh with new harvests and flowers, and who draws vitality from death itself. At the present day, the end of every statesman who comprehends his sacred mission, should be the amelioration of the condition of the human species. Every effort of the law-maker, which had not this tendency, would be anti-moral, anti-philosophical, anti-religious, barren, impotent, negative, without object and without excuse.

If it is not allowable to organize the great bases of government, nor even to discuss them, there is still much good to be done in the secondary questions. The Charter has not sprung forth, one fair August morning, from the brains of MM. Berard and Dupin. These gentlemen have not, that I know, invented the jury, the freedom of worship, the liberty of the press, the responsibility of ministers, nor even the equality of taxation. We, too, are conservatives of this and whatever else of the kind there is to be conserved in the Charter, and we defy the keenest hunters of office, of power, salaries, or sinecures, to love more prodigiously the good things of the Charter than we do. There is therefore still much to be said respecting this excellent personage, the Charter, without giving ground for reprehension or cause of pain.

What matters it, moreover, whether in that dull and desolate Chamber the Extreme Left speak out or not? What matter whether it be listened to or disdained? What matter that Lafayette die, that Carrel fall, that Garnier-Pagès disappear? The men depart, the principle remains. These two hundred years, and throughout all Europe, despotism has in vain cut down with musketry and cannon, the ranks of the people; the voids fill up, the battalions thicken, the land of democracy smiles in fertility, the generations grow up full of hope and ardor, and the battle recommences on every side, with certain triumph in the prospect.

No, the sovereignty of the nations, from which all emanates and to which all returns, will not perish, unless the people be put to death by the people and Europe made one immense solitude. The sovereignty of nations is the principle of liberty, based upon equality political, civil and religious. It is the principle of order founded upon respect for the rights of all and of each. It is the most beautiful of theories only because it is the truest. It is the most consolatory, only because it leaves no misfortune without succor, no injustice without redress. It is the most sublime, only because it is the expression of the general will. It is the most prolific, only because it is the fountain of all perfectibility. It is the most natural, only because it is no other than the law of the majority, who, all unconsciously, govern the free societies. It is the noblest, but because it is the only one which answers to the dignity of human nature. It is the most legitimate, only as being the sole theory which accounts for the alliance of power with liberty, and which makes the one respectable and the other possible. It is the most reasonable, only because the presumption is that several are right rather than one, and all than several. It is the holiest, only because it is the most perfect realization of the symbolical equality of all men. It is the most philosophic, but because it dispels the prejudices of aristocracy and of divine right. It is the most logical, but because there is not one serious objection which it cannot resolve, nor a form of government to which it cannot adapt itself, without altering its principle. In fine, it is the most magnificent, but because from the immense trunk of the sovereignty of nations, spring at once all the branches of the social tree, charged with sap and with foliage, with fruits and flowers.

## CASIMIR-PERIER.

THE Court, as yet ill fortified within and without, moved gropingly along the way of its infant establishment. Rid at last of Lafayette and of Lafitte, whom it had loved so much and pressed so often to its heart, it found itself placed between the adventurers of the doctrinism and the tremblers of the commonalty : it cast its eyes upon Casimir-Perier.

His immense wealth gave him that sort of apparent independence which elevates a man above the suspicions of corruption, and which always imposes upon the vulgar. He attracted the Legitimists by the secret predilection of Charles X. for his person, and he could excite no distrust in Louis-Philippe, having never served another master. His impassioned dialectic rendered him marvellously fit to struggle against the Opposition, man to man, invective to invective. He was a personage of action and vivid retort, endowed with more parliamentary resolution than personal courage, always ready to take the tribune by storm, and taking it in fact. There was nothing even to the height of his stature, his quick and imperious step, his eyes hidden under the thick lashes and always full of a red and glowing flame, which did not complete the wholeness of his circumstantial superiority. He seemed made for the command and for the presidency of the Council, and there was none, not even the conqueror of Toulouse, who thought of contesting it with him. The Court, the burgess tremblers, the peers of legitimacy, the sharpers of the Bourse, and the sheeplike majority of the Chamber, all threw themselves at the feet of Casimir-Perier to implore him to take the helm of State, to guide and save them.

Here, I must honestly beg the reader not to examine the portrait I am about to paint, but with a degree of distrust, of reserve at least. I am sincere, but I am not impartial.

Casimir-Perier deceived my liberal hopes: He violently attacked my character. It may well be that, in this situation of mind, I have, in depicting him, now some years ago, mixed too much black upon my easel. But it is necessary on the other hand, if I would not lie, to say what I have seen. I then drew, besides, but the sick man, a prey to keen and internal suffering, and to embarrassments of government and politics well capable of disturbing the thoughts and disordering the judgment.

These precautions taken against the possible error of my appreciation, I proceed.

Casimir-Perier exhibited towards his last days, a tempestuous energy which sapped his strength, and was carrying him rapidly to the tomb. He stirred up, he inflamed, without knowing it, without willing it perhaps, and by a sort of convulsive sympathy, all these bad passions which ever slumber in the corner of the most tranquil souls. His voice was the signal to both parties to rush upon one another, and you would have taken the Chamber for an unchained madhouse rather than an assembly of sober legislators.

The sessions at that period were somewhat like those of the Convention, with the exception of the theatric grandeur of the events, and the tragic end of the actors. The ministers and the Centres were afraid of themselves and of each other; it is an amusement like any other. Instead of action there was abuse; and the Chamber presented the spectacle of a reign of terror in miniature.

Fear has always been and ever will be, of all parliamentary springs, the most energetic and perhaps the most efficient. It acts upon the women, the children, the aged, and upon the pusillanimous deputies, who, in dangers, real or imaginary, flock tremblingly together. Add to their real fears, those they feign: for there is upon the ministerial benches a crowd of timorous pigeons, always in a flutter to get behind the altar and shelter themselves under the wing of the god who reigns and who governs for the time being.

Casimir-Perier should be seen in these moments, seen

face to face as I have seen him, to paint him faithfully. His lofty stature was already bowed. His beautiful and majestic countenance was altered with shade and wrinkles. His cheeks were sunken, his eyes rolled a fire mixed with blood. His words burned like the fever he felt, and he had fits of derangement. He abused, lashed, tyrannized the majority quite the same as the minority, and by his conduct astounded the other ministers. There was no distinction at that time of Third-party, of pure ministerialists, and of Doctrinarians. Casimir-Perier left the fractions of the majority no time to recognize and count themselves. He brought them together, he compressed them rigorously under his crisped fingers, and then dispatched pell-mell to the combat, Dupin, Thiers, Guizot, Barthe, Jaubert, Jacqueminot and Keratry. He himself wrestled in the estrade of the tribune, with the deputy Jousselin. Another time, an officer had to be sent to whisper to him that his garments were in disorder. So much had the preoccupations of the parliamentary struggle absorbed the entire man.

The majority did not obey him by conviction, opposition or system; it rallied mechanically to the will, to the ire of this maniac. It imitated his attitude, his gesture, his tone of voice, his anger. Like him, it leaped, stamped, howled and wrung its arms. But when, after several fits of parliamentary frenzy, Casimir-Perier had attained the paroxysm of his fury, his head grew dizzy; he sunk exhausted, shattered down, and giving up the ghost.

Since his death, these intelligent and peremptory transports passed for firmness, and two or three phrases, always the same, which were prompted to him, and which he repeated without comprehending, got him the reputation of genius. The priesthood of the *Juste-milieu* concealed the secret of their knaveries in the hollow of that idol, and gilded it from head to foot to captivate the homage of the vulgar.

We owe the dead no more than truth; but this is due to them in eulogy as well as in criticism, and I feel here the

necessity of retouching some features of my former portrait. Thus while now repeating that Casimir-Perier was harsh, irascible, imperious, without taste, without reading, without literary instruction, without philanthropy, without philosophy, I will say that he also possessed three great and principal qualities of the statesman, ardor and vivacity of conception, decision of command, force and persistence of will.

The friends of liberty who would not be ungrateful will always distinguish two periods in his life; the one glorious, his career of representative; the other fatal to France as to himself, his career of minister. The Revolution of July owes him too much in its early struggles not to praise him, and he has done it too much prejudice afterwards not to merit its blame.

This personage has been the representative the most vehement and perhaps the most sincere of the old liberalism. He had it not merely upon his lips like his ministerial successors, but also in his heart. But, whether blindness, or force of habit, he was unable to comprehend, that there is, between legitimacy and the popular sovereignty, all the depth of an abyss.

I do not see that the present benches of the Opposition possess an orator of the stamp of Casimir-Perier. Not one, whose penetration is so sagacious, whose eloquence so simple, so ready. Casimir-Perier was exercised in the animated contentions of the Restoration. Scarce did his wary eye see Villèle put the finger to the trigger, than his own charge was off and in the bosom of the man of power. He plunged headforemost into the melée; he marched right to the minister and sat beside him on his bench of torture; he pressed him around the loins, he worried him with questions, he overwhelmed him with apostrophes, without leaving him time to recover or to breathe; he held him obstinately upon his seat, and interrogated him authoritatively as if he was his judge. We are a quarrelsome people, more hardy to attack than patient to defend: we like

aggression. Perhaps that would fail another, which has so well succeeded in the case of Perier! but it suited the man.

While Royer-Collard gave his recriminations the philosophic elevation of an axiom, Casimir-Perier was ciphering his argumentations. With Lafitte and Casimir-Perier, those anatomists of budgets, those seekers, those investigators, those rummagers, those discussers of funds secret and disguised, it was not possible, as is the complaint now-a-days, to slip, into the chapter of criminal justice, the dowry of a beloved daughter or the cachmere shawl of an adored wife; in the purchase of military beds, the price of a boudoir and a silken divan; in the rough repairs of a partition-wall, the decoration of a dining-hall; in the purchase of a counting-desk, the expenses of a pleasure-trip; in the re-establishment of the fathers of La Trapp, the gratification of a cook; in fine in the expenditures upon the orphans of the Legion of Honor, the pension of an opera-girl.

Casimir-Perier had, during the Restoration, been engaged in speculations upon a vast scale, and there is not so much difference as is commonly thought, between a great financier and a great administrator. He had a practised aptitude for finance, and understood it in theory and detail. He saw the point of contestation better than other bankers, and almost with the promptness of an advocate. He introduced into the affairs of the State the same order which reigned in his own.\* He possessed comprehensiveness of view,

\* This, as a fact, has not, I think, been commonly the case. On the contrary, the greatest statesmen have often been among the least prudent managers of their private affairs. View the two great rival statesmen of England, in the last century, in this character. Even Burke, a greater far than either, though brought up in the school of adversity, was very little better as a domestic economist. A like imputation is sometimes made upon the first of our own statesmen, Webster. The instances are without number. Indeed they constitute the principle. For the breadth of intellect and the elevation of



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and in his character, in his intellect, in his habits, in his person, had that absoluteness, that peremptoriness, that decision which is perhaps indispensable to a minister of the Interior, in order to overcome the doubts and hesitations of prefects and commissioners, to get rid of the courtiers and office-seekers, to cut short the perplexities of detail, to sweep away the encumbrance of arrears, to open and conclude great undertakings, and to conduct resolutely the affairs and interests of France.

Doubtless, he cannot be too severely reproached for having inflicted upon the Revolution of July the violence of a transient reaction ;\* but had he lived, he would, I believe, have returned to the normal ground of the Charter. He could have never imagined that a revolution was brought about merely to paint yellow the shutters of the representative shop. He would not have erected the Chamber of Peers into a court of provost, and recommended, as did the Doctrinarians, to expose the naked head of the proscribed to the burning sun of the equator. He would have battered down the barriers of the Dardanelles, launched our fleets, marched our armies, emptied the treasury, rather than suffer an insult to France, a spot upon our flag. Born a great

soul which qualify to conduct the affairs and the destinies of a nation seem to be incompatible with the narrow-eyed minuteness and the mercantile spirit, which give to personal concerns their system and their success.

\* The chief endeavor of M. Perier's Ministry appears to have been "to keep France at peace with Europe, and thereby to make commerce and manufactures flourish, to establish civil liberty, and repress the military spirit; and secondly, to render the government more firm." The Opposition reproached him with ignominiously courting the favor of the absolute monarchs, with having deprived France of the honorable and elevated position due to her in the European System, with being unwilling to follow up frankly the principles of the "July Revolution," and with "having sacrificed Italy to Austria, and Poland to Russia." But Perier's administration was of great value to France, on account of his financial abilities—for France had not yet recovered from the exhaustion produced by her protracted wars.

personage on the birth-day of the dynasty, he knew by experience how kings are made and of what stuff. He was not a man to be flattered into a prostration of his indomitable will at the feet of a master. He would not therefore be content to be a nominal President, a *Comarilla*\* valet, a train-bearer of the commandants of the wardrobe, and leaving Royalty to reign amid the splendors of its gold upon its solitary throne, he would have stopped it at the legal limits of the government, saying: "Thus far, but no farther!"

\* A nickname of the Louis-Philippe dynasty.

## SAUZET.

## PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTEES.

THE orator does not exhibit himself in profile, like the writer, but in full face. He attires, gesticulates, declaims upon a stage, before a number of spectators, who survey him as we do a mimic, from head to foot. The writer is accountable but for his intellect. The orator is held responsible for his figure.

M. Sauzet is somewhat effeminate and negligent in his personal habits. He is not muscular nor well set. His complexion is fair and slightly colored; his countenance is open, and his blue eyes are full of sweetness. He is a mixture of the man and the woman.

Simple, easily led, not sufficiently bearded and tempered with vigor for great effort. A good sort of man, and who must be put to bed by his wife, if he is married, and by the servant, if he is not.

M. Sauzet fidgets and waddles about like a child, so that it is impossible to seize his outline, and it will be necessary to wait till the perfected daguerreotype come to my aid to keep him quiet, at least for a moment, in the field of the camera-obscura. And then M. Sauzet too would perhaps like—they have all this failing—that I should make him a Demosthenes. But it is not my fault, no more is it yours, reader, if the Demosthenes of the city of Canuts does not resemble completely the Demosthenes of the city of Minerva.

When the Lyonese lawyer made his appearance in the Chamber, he carried constantly a smile upon his lips. Be it natural affability, or policy, he set himself to please everybody, and especially the ministers. He courted with fawn-

ing gaze, one after the other, the melancholy figures on that bench of pain, whereon he grew impatient and fretful that he had not as yet a seat.

M. Sauzet has what we call good natural advantages, a sonorous voice, a pleasing countenance, a prompt intelligence, and a clear and easy elocution. His voice is ample, and perfectly audible throughout the Chamber. There are however some false notes in its intonation, and its flagging cadences fall with the period.

M. Sauzet is mild, polite, affable, moderate. He courts the good-will of others and imparts to them his own. There is in his face, his sentiments, and his language, something I know not what of honest and engaging which charms and attracts you. With a mind better furnished with ideas and of a more practical cast, he has nearly the figurative style and cadenced modulation of another orator, the demi-god of poetry. He is M. de Lamartine made man.

Memory is the principal agent of his eloquence. At the age of ten, he used to recite, word for word, a chapter of *Telemachus*, which he had read but once. He can, while speaking, suppress entire fragments of his discourse, and substitute new portions, which he inserts into the same tissue, as properly as if he had fastened them with pins.

His intellect is wrought to a point, and puns occur to him so familiarly in conversation, that, when he speaks in the tribune, he has to chase them away, as he would an importunate fly that should keep buzzing at his ear.

M. Sauzet is the type of the provincial orator. His pompous style is inflated rather than full. It pleases the ear, but does not reach the soul. He seems as if he had been spoiled by his practice in the Court of Assize. He squanders, by handfuls, the brilliant flowers of language, the modulations of harmony, rambling epithets and college metaphors—an obsolete rhetoric, which has now scarce name or value in the commerce of political eloquence.

It is not that I blame M. Sauzet for having recourse bo-

fore a jury, and in a Court of Sessions, to these pathetic means of saving the accused. That spectacle of a woman in tears who clasps the altars of mercy and of justice—those heart-rending cries of remorse—those young men about to be cut off in the bloom of life by the axe of the executioner, like the lilies of spring by the ploughshare—innocence struggling against the terrors of punishment—the dark uncertainties of the prosecution, those glimmerings of doubt that flit before you, now brightening, then expiring—those broken sighs, those muttering lips, those plaints, those implorings, those melting images of a young and helpless family asking back its father, and doomed to perish if he perish, or of an old man crowned with gray hairs, who throws himself at your knees to expiate the involuntary crime of a misguided son;—all this is drawn from nature, all this has been beautiful in its time, all this may still have an effect upon fancies easily moved, and sensible, like unsophisticated men, to the charm of public speaking and the exciting dramas of eloquence.

But to deputies, to those men surfeited with intellectual delicacies, to those cloyed stomachs, we should present the viands of oratory but with fresh stimulants and fresh seasonings. It is not well that the spectators see too near the machinery of the green-room, lest their illusion be dispelled. A discourse should not have too much pomp and savor of the stage. The great art, in a parliamentary orator, lies in his skill to conceal art.

It is said that M. Sauzet has no principles: but where then, pray, is the practising advocate who has principles? When a man has, for twenty years of his life, been laboring indifferently in the cause of truth and of falsehood; when he has been the habitual and hired protector and concealer of malice and fraud, it is difficult, it is impossible that he should have any fixity in his principles.

The lawyers have always a stock of fine phrases respecting what they call their professional discretion.

But, would you know what this discretion of a practising lawyer comes to? Peter sues Paul; he instantly takes a chaise, and drives post to the office of the most celebrated lawyer in the city, who says to him: "You have a better case than Paul." Paul, who started later, arrives ten minutes after, at the office of the same advocate, who tells him: "You have a better case than Peter; but what can I do? he was before you." I surely do not mean that the lawyer is the first-comer's man always, but almost always.

It is well known that the lawyers carry in one of the pockets of their robe, the reasons for, and in the other, the reasons against either and every side. But they sometimes mistake the right pocket in the hurry of pleading, and this is why their conclusion is not always in very perfect accord with their exordium. They hardly know how to come to a decision, and are never very sure of their ground. If they press upon you with a huge argumentation, you may hold them in check by a quite trifling objection. To them everything presents a question, everything is an obstacle. Throw, under their whirling chariot-wheel, a grain of sand, they will climb down to inspect it, instead of passing it over.

They will deny, with the sun before you, that it is day, and if you begin to laugh, they will undertake to convince you.

Singular fact! These men who, all their lives, have studied nothing but the laws, are forever in doubt about the laws.

For them the law has always two meanings, two acceptations, a double language and a Janus face.

They see less the causes than the effects, the spirit than the letter, the law than the fact, the principle than the application, and the plan than the details.

A new government, monarchical, aristocratical, republican, or of whatever sort, ought to strive to gain the army by honors, the commercial classes by security, and the people by justice: it need not concern itself about the lawyers. It is all but certain to have them in its favor.

The lawyers have the art of keeping up a revolution by their interminable speeching ; but it is never they who begin nor who finish it.

There is no truth so clear that they do not tarnish, by dint of polishing it. There is no patience of ear they do not weary by the endless flux of their orations. There is no reasoning, be it ever so powerful and nervous, that does not lose in their hands, by dint of repetition, its elasticity and vigor.

Do not hasten to think they will enter at once upon the subject, because you may have said to them : " Well, what do you wait for ; go on ! " They must first arrange their rabat, they must fix their cap over the ear, they must truss up gracefully the flowing folds of their robe,\* they must hem, they must spit, and they must sneeze. This done, they prelude like musicians who tune their violin, or dancing-girls who practise their capers behind the curtain, or like the rope-dancers, making trial of their balancer. They keep bowing and turning to either side of them in their salutations, and it takes them a large quarter-hour of oratorical precautions, of phrases, of periphrases, of circumlocutions, of turnings and windings, before they determine to say at last : Gentlemen of the Jury, the case is this.

Let no one say to me : Are you not afraid to stir up against you this waspish race ? You have there taken in hand a pretty business, and truly, I admire your temerity ! Admire nothing, for you know as well as I do, however bad may be my cause against the lawyers, I will find lawyers to plead it ; and I myself—is it that you think I am not equal to my own defence ?

Who, pray, could hinder me to paint them, with their various physiognomies, as they are, and as I see them ? This one, for example, this Ergaste, merited that I should draw his portrait at full length. But I have sought in vain under what standard and colors to class him. In what

\* Neither robe nor rabat is worn in this country, and only the former in England

memorable parliamentary action has he taken any part? In the debate respect material interests, Ergaste speaks and sheds light upon the subject from his stores of knowledge. If it be a political question—vast, fundamental, peremptory—he is silent as a statue. He seems to possess two qualities, contradictory of one another: by character he is conciliatory, by talent he is aggressive.

No matter: his physiognomy suits the fancy of my pencil. The sunny south beams in his burning glance. His hair waves gracefully and glossily, his voice of silvery distinctness vibrates upon my ear. Ergaste has the gesture, the attitude, the eye, the animation and the rapid impassionate movements of the orator. He does not ramble in his exordium. He grapples at once with his subject and shakes it vigorously. His eloquence is nervous, and there is muscle and life in his discourses. Ergaste was born an orator. It has been his will to remain an advocate. Well, let him plead at the bar, let him plead still in the tribune, let him die an advocate!

This other is Cleophon, who perpetrates wit unintentionally, by sheer naïvete, and as others do a blunder. At the outset of his legislative career, this Norman advocate used to pump from the depths of his thorax, a voice which he inflated and inflated till it swelled into a roar. He poured it forth at random and tolled it as loudly as the cathedral bell of Rouen. He shook the old hall of the Palais Bourbon, which, to say truth, was not very solid, and the colleagues of Cleophon raised their eyes, while he spoke, to the shivering windows of the cupola, fearing it should tumble about their ears.

The next has a keen and intellectual countenance, and his eloquence flows from a spring, not from a cistern. But his attitudinizing is too studied, too ambitious. He does not enough forget the Court of Sessions, and speaks before the deputies, as if he was before a jury. Jurors are generally a sort of well-meaning men, natural, simple, somewhat credulous, confiding; who open themselves to emotion, who

invite it, who absolutely require it, and who allow themselves to be taken and led captive by its influence. The deputies are, on the contrary, an artificial, cold, bantering, suspicious, heartless race, who resist all emotions by a sort of induration of the political lymph, rather than through wisdom. In them the pulse scarce beats, and to draw the blood demands the nicest dexterity. Here is no place for startling effects, or oratorical draperies, or high-flown eloquence. To fix the attention of the auditory in a deliberative assembly, to keep it up, to suspend and then precipitate it and force it along with you, this is a grand art. It is the art of the consummate orator; and Pherinte is but a tyro.

Oronte spoils his exordiums by the fastidious superabundance of his oratorical preliminaries. You would say that he has always his pockets filled with flasks of perfumery, for fear of offending the smell of his auditors when he advances to address them, and that he will not touch their hand but with gloves of the finest kid. Ah! my God! Be not so squeamish. Grasp and shake vigorously these hardened reprobates with gauntlets of iron, if you can, and until they cry out for mercy! Do they give quarter to the people, they, who take them by the throat and plunder them of the best of their substance?

Isocles is a man of probity, conscience, honesty, no one denies it. But, by an awkward contrast, his ideas are often trivial and his expressions inflated, whereas the former should be elevated and the latter simple. Isocles has brought to the tribune the vicious forms of the bar, and the extravagant gesticulation of the Court of Sessions. He takes the solemn intonation of a melo-dramatic hero, to relate the smallest fact. He is moved to tears over the disasters of a mortgage. He gets into a towering passion about a question of bankruptcy. The bar is not always—far from it—a good school of politics. The practice stifles all originality of thought. Lawyers by profession make, ordinarily, judges without decision and ministers without

views and without capacity, diffuse, hair-splitting, redundant, declamatory. They understand nothing of State affairs. It is but after an hour's exercise that they begin to warm, that the blood creeps into their face and some faith into their hearts. Still is it with much difficulty that they determine to come to any conclusion, and they would cheerfully render thanks to the assembly which would permit them to remain suspended arms aloft and erect on tip-toe, between the pro and the con of the question.

A government of sharpers would be a government without morality and without economy. A government of soldiers would be a government without gentleness and without justice. A government of lawyers would be a government without conviction, without ideas, without principles and what is perhaps worse, without action.

Unfortunately for himself, M. Sauzet has not put off the old man, his lawyer's gown. He empties out, good or bad, the whole contents of his sack. He knows not how to restrain his intemperance of argument. He wants the skill to choose, to pick out his political topics. He pleads them all, except however those, mind you, which might compromise him with the majority.

M. Sauzet is no writer. His manner is that of rhetoricians, feeble and tumid. His logic—which is not the exactest, does not proportion his consequences to their principle.

M. Sauzet, whether from mental propensity, or imitation, or calculation, is of the school of Martignac. Less temperate, less graceful, less elegant, less adroit than his master, but more copious, more vehement, more pathetic, more picturesque. Like M. de Martignac, he parries with address, and steps aside from the lance of the antagonist. He does not suffer himself easily to be unhorsed, and slides to the ground rather than falls. Like Martignac, he continues still a worshipper of those representative forms and that hollow and metaphysical constitutionalism which is called the balanced government of three powers. Like Martignac—for a final point of resemblance—M. Sauzet resumes admi-

rably the opinions of others, and acquits himself in the most intricate discussions, with a sagacity, a delicacy and a skill that have not been duly admired.

With what profundity of science, with what solidity of sense, with what dialectic ability he has conducted the debate upon the law of Mines! The more his language is pompous when he declaims, too pompous, the more it is simple, elegant, and beautiful when he discusses. He overlooks no grave objection, and he appends the reply at the instant. He is never afraid of breaking through, because he knows where he is about to put his foot. He does not allow himself to be provoked to offensive personalities, nor does he substitute epigrams to arguments, or hypotheses to the realities of the question. His mind maintains all its firmness and all its presence, and his march is always progressive, logical and steady. M. Sauzet may console himself for the fall of his oratorical reputation. He will be, whenever he wishes, the first business orator of the Chamber, and what is there higher than this?

I am not surprised that he presided over the Council of State with so remarkable a superiority. He should have been left at the head of this great body of administrative magistracy. That was his talent, that was his place.

I do not remember to have ever heard, since M. de Martignac, a more intelligent and fluent reporter; and M. Sauzet owes this advantage to a union of the three qualities which constitute eminence in this line: namely, perspicuity, memory, and impartiality.

I have now balanced, I think with sufficient exactness, the defects and the excellencies of M. Sauzet, as an orator, as a president, and as a framer of reports; and you will deem with me, reader, that I have assigned him a position still sufficiently handsome. But I should not find it equally easy to follow and excuse him in his political vagaries.

Of M. Sauzet, I several years ago thus wrote:

M. Sauzet is not decidedly either Legitimist, or Third-partyite, or Dynastic, or Republican. But he is at once a

little of all this. He will take his seat by M. Berryer. He would have no objection to vote with M. Dupin. He will support the ministry of Odillon-Barrot, and he would not renounce entirely Garnier-Pagès. He is one of those good, happy, and easy natures which heaven, in the treasures of its mercy, had reserved for the tempting experiments of our well-beloved monarch.

M. Sauzet was not slow, in fact, to be taken as I had predicted. He passed his arms through the long sleeves of the smitar, and postured himself, as well as he could, in the chair of d'Augesseau.

Afterwards, forced to quit the tassels of gold and ermine, he slid into the train of M. Thiers, firing off squibs, as a boy his pop-gun, without attracting a great deal of notice.

You will see, I said, that he will be sent back to sing in the choirs; he who might be one of the first tenors of the troupe, and that, instead of having a value of his own, and signifying something, M. Sauzet will be by and by but a secondary utility, fit at most to make a keeper of the seals!

And knowing no longer what to make of him, I added:

Where does M. Sauzet sit at present? On what side? With whom? What are his doctrines? Who are his friends? Whom does he follow? Whom does he lead? Is this a position? is this a character? To begin by demanding the amnesty and end by voting the confiscation of the press and the transportations to Salazie! What a debut and what a fall! This infamous post fulfilled, the Doctrinarians slighted and treated him with scorn.

Since then, fortune has again veered round, and behold him seated in the first post of the State, after that of king. He presides over and, consequently represents, the Chamber if you take his own word for it; in like manner as the Chamber represents the Country, if it too is to be believed. Very fine this, if it were only true!

But as the representation of France is but a fiction in the person of the Chamber, the representation of the Chamber

might well be likewise no more than a fiction in the president.

Nevertheless, we are ordered by authority of the Doctrinarians, to prostrate ourselves in gaping admiration of the hierarchical gradation of the British constitution, as if there was the least resemblance between the most democratical of all democratical people and the most aristocratic of all aristocracies ! With our neighbors, there is at least some reality, some truth in these institutions, because they correspond to their manners, to their social condition, to their ideas, to their prejudices, if you will. With us, all is fiction—both persons and principles.

Accordingly, to say what were yesterday, what are to-day, what will be to-morrow the principles of the Chamber, would be no easy task. To say what are, at the moment I write, the principles of M. Sauzet, were a task more embarrassing still ; and, in truth, it is a knowledge of little consequence either to the Chamber, or to M. Sauzet himself, nor more to me.

For the rest, the principle which every President of the Chamber, without allusion to any in particular, seems to comprehend the best is, that he is to pocket, and does in fact, pocket punctually, some hundred thousand francs, for ringing his bell, tapping with his penknife on the desk, and repeating twenty, thirty, forty times, during the same sitting, the following sacramental words : “ Let those of the members who are in favor of adopting the motion please to stand up, and let those gentlemen who are of the contrary opinion please to rise ! ”

Think you not, reader, that so interesting a piece of work is well worth a hundred thousand francs, besides lodging, an equipage and servants ? and for my part, I really do not deem it at all too much.

When Giton and Thersite, these pests of the tribune, begin to harangue in the Areopagus, I can, I Timon, give a drachme or two to the door-keeper to let me out and I get into the open plains.

But to be officially nailed to one's chair, to be obliged to hear Giton and Thersite from noon to sundown, without being able to fly them, nor to escape them—no, for a trade of this torture, a hundred thousand francs is not excessive, and I am sure that I would not be willing to earn them

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### GENERAL LAFAYETTE.

PUBLIC opinion has its prejudices. Thus, it has been said of three persons of the liberal party—Lafitte, Dupont de l'Eure and Lafayette—that Lafitte did not compose his own discourses, that Dupont de l'Eure was merely a good man, and that Lafayette was but a simpleton.

But, Lafitte was the most clear-headed and comprehensive financier of our times. The good sense of Dupont de l'Eure, as far as it goes, is said to prove, like Phocion's, the axe to many a labored speech. But Lafayette was a mere simpleton; oh! quite simple, I own: he believed, as did a multitude of simpletons which we have all been in common with him, in the promises of the government of July.

He imagined, the simpleton! that kings were to be found who would not resemble all other kings; that a man must love liberty because he draws out some hurrahs in honor of it; that we were brought round to the golden age; that the reins might be thrown loose upon the back of the government, and it would curb itself. Subsequently when he saw that the same piece continued to be played day after day upon the great stage, and that the only change of decoration was, the substitution of a dunghill cock for the lily, he repented, wept bitterly, and striking his breast exclaimed: "Pardon me, my God! pardon me, beloved comrades in liberty! I have been a dupe and a duper."

Not a duper, I can well believe; but it was too much for you, Lafayette, to have been a dupe! Few are the men to whom Providence has given the opportunity and the means of regenerating their country and establishing its liberties. To lose this opportunity is a crime against one's country.

Lafayette has committed two great faults from which posterity will not absolve him. In making to Napoleon, after the defeat of Waterloo, an opposition in the tribune and the cabinet, he divided our forces, and was thus co-operating, without meaning it, to the dismemberment of France. He failed to see, like the great Carnot, that Napoleon alone could then save the country, that the independence of the nation ought so to fill the soul of the citizen, that (to compare small things with great.) I would not hesitate myself, despite of my "repugnance," as Manuel would say, to take sides with a certain personage, if I were well convinced that the said personage alone would, in a given case, prevent the subjugation and partition of France. For, before all liberty, before any form of government, before any political or social organization, before any administrative system, before anything and all things—the safety of the nation!

The second fault of Lafayette was that of July. The imperial throne was vacant. Lafayette reigned the third day over Paris, and Paris reigned over France. Three parties were in deliberation. We know what was expected by the army and the people. But Lafayette allowed himself to be wheedled by the Orleanists. The tri-colored flag was played off before the old man's eyes. He was seized by the hand and covered with caresses. His head was turned with loud-sounding flourishes about '89, Jemappe, Valmy, America, liberty, national guard, republican monarchy, citizen, transatlantic, and what not? In short, in the open Place de Greve and in presence of the people, he was put under the goblet and fingered away.

Lafayette, in his infantine candor, did not advert that he

had to do with profligates more profligate than those of the regency. When the patriots confided their alarms to him, he put a hand to his heart and pledged his own fidelity to liberty, for the fidelity of the others. In his deplorable blindness, he left everything to the management of the majority of the Chambers of 1830, who had in fact done nothing, and left nothing to the disposal of the people who had brought all about. Had not the patriots taken the word of Lafayette, who repeated to them naively what he was told, things would have been arranged in a different manner, and it would not be now forbidden, by the laws of September, to write the history of that other day of Dupes, which none could do with more fidelity than I, as the whole thing was acted behind the curtain where I was, and I alone took no part in the farce.

Lafayette was not an orator, if we understand by oratory that emphatic and loud-sounding verbosity which stuns the auditors and leaves but wind in the ear. His was a serious and familiar conversation, grammatically incorrect if you will, and a little redundant, but cut into curt phrases and relieved occasionally by happy turns. No figures, no highly-colored imagery; but the proper word in the proper place, the precise word which expresses the exact idea—no passionate transports, but a speech infused with feeling by the accent of conviction—no strong, cogent, elaborate logic, but reasonings systematically combined, obviously connected amongst each other, and resulting naturally from the exposition of the facts.

There was in the habits of his person and in his countenance, I know not what mixture of French grace, American phlegm and Roman placidity.

When he ascended the tribune and said: "I am a republican," no one felt tempted to ask him: "What is that you say, Monsieur de Lafayette, and wherefore the declaration?" Every one was satisfied the friend of Washington could not but be a republican.

He had a habit of speaking freely of the kings of Eu-

rope, whom he treated unceremoniously as despots, and as one power would another. He stirred up against them, in his wide propagandism, all the fires of popular insurrection. To the oppressed of every country he opened his house, his purse and his heart.

He should be seen when he resisted in the tribune the dastardly abandonment of the Greeks and the Poles. Then did his overflowing indignation rush on like a torrent; his virtue was eloquence, and his language, ordinarily cheerful, was charged with fire and lightning.

Lafayette had what is better than ideas, he had principles, fundamental principles, to which he ever adhered with an immovable pertinacity. He wished the sovereignty of the people both in theory and practice; and, in truth, this is the whole. But he troubled himself no more about the tyranny of all or of several, than that of one. He considered the substance rather than the form, justice rather than the laws, principles before governments, and the human race before nations. He would have free minorities under a dominant majority.

When the sturdiest characters gave way, when the finest geniuses passed one after another, under the yoke of Napoleon, and the nation, infatuated with his glory and conquests, ran to meet his triumphal car, Lafayette resisted the current of fortune and of men, without violence to others or struggle with himself, simply by the immovability of his convictions, like a rock that stands stirless amid the conflicting agitation of the waves.

The love of gold, from which kings themselves are not exempt, had no place in his great soul. The vulgar ambition of a throne was far beneath him; and at the utmost what he would desire would have been to be Washington, if he had not been Lafayette.

Lafayette experienced, even in his old age, that yearning of affectionate hearts to be universally loved. But this noble propension, so delightful to indulge in private life, is almost always dangerous in political affairs. A true statesman must

be ready to sacrifice his friendships and his popularity itself for the interests of his country.

The Revolution of July was executed by the school students of the middle classes and of the people, and conducted by two old men, Lafitte and Lafayette. The former commenced the movement by the lever of his popularity and his credit, and Lafayette accomplished it by means of the tri-colored flag, and the bayonets of the National Guard.

Strange inventions of modern genius! The telescope has peopled the firmament with worlds of stars. The compass has discovered America. The invention of gunpowder has changed the system of warfare. Paper money has overthrown feudalism, by the substitution of movable wealth, commercial and industrial, to landed wealth and predominance. Printing has pierced a thousand mouths in the trumpet of fame. Steam has supplied, on land and water, the motive power of horses, water, and wind. In fine, the National Guard has taken the government out of the absolute hands of the king, to restore it to those of the country. In fact, the National Guard of each village is master of the village, of each town of the town, of each city of the city, and the Guards united of all the villages, towns and cities, are masters of France. What I say of France may be said of all Europe; for it may truly be said that, throughout all the rest of Europe, the muskets are ready, the matches are ready, the banner is ready, and there remains but to issue the proclamation and appoint the officers. And it happens, as if by I know not what providential design, that the most revolutionary of all institutions has been invented and put in practice by the most revolutionary of all men.

Yes, Lafayette has been the man the most frankly and resolutely revolutionary of our time. He entered with ardor, with impetuosity into every combination which had for its object the subversion of some despotism, and life was with him a stake of no great account. Martyr to his political faith, he would have mounted the scaffold and held out his head to the executioner, with the serenity of a young wo-

man who, crowned with roses, drops into slumber at the close of a banquet.

It is confidently reported that after the funeral oration of General Lamarque, certain conspirators entertained the horrible design to kill Lafayette in the carriage in which they led him back in triumph, and to exhibit his bloody corpse to the people, like Anthony, in order to excite them to insurrection; which having been after related to Lafayette, he only smiled, as if he considered the thing natural and an ingenious stratagem!

I have the idea, but do not affirm it—for who could affirm or gainsay it—that Lafayette, on his death-bed, in the last lullings of thought, flattered himself that an insurrection of the people might possibly break out on the passage of his remains to the grave, to reanimate liberty and illustrate his obsequies!

There are many fiery lovers of democracy who might be, as far as the thing is now possible, aristocrats, if they were born among the aristocracy. It is difficult to determine whether such are of the liberal party from spite or from conviction; and their love of equality is often but an arrogant covetousness of privileges which they do not enjoy. But when men of birth become democrats, the people surround them with their confidence, because these have honored the popular cause by a costly abjuration. Such was Lafayette.

He retained, of the old aristocracy, but that refined and sprightly naïvete, which is the grace of speech, and that elegant simplicity of manners, which is passed away and will never return. But his soul was entirely plebeian. He loved the people in his heart, as a father loves his children, ready at all hours of the day or the night, to rise, to march, to fight, to suffer, to conquer or be conquered, to sacrifice himself for it without reserve, with his fame, his fortune, his liberty, his blood and his life.

Illustrious citizen! contemporary at once of our fathers and our children, placed, as if to open and to close it, at the two extremities of this heroic half-century, you have wit

nessed the death of the revolution of 1789, beneath the sabre of a soldier, and that of the revolution of 1830, under the cat-o'-nine-tails of the Doctrinarians; and, notwithstanding this twofold failure, you did not regret what you had accomplished for them, for you knew that everything has its due time, and that, though it may germinate and flourish more or less slowly, not a grain is lost of the seed which is sown in the fields of republicanism! You knew that all nations, some by the direct paths, others by oblique routes, are advancing towards their emancipation with the irresistibility of the current which empties the waters of all the tributary rivers into the sea, and you moved on, with head erect and hopeful heart, along the highways of truth! I thank you, generous old man, for not having been shaken in your faith in the eternal sovereignty of the nations, and for having always sacredly preferred the proscribed to their oppressors, the people to their tyrants! When the veil of a patriotic but deplorable illusion fell from your eyes and showed you the present generation, with its gangrened sores and its dying languors, you turned consoled to the vitality, the virtue, and the greatness of future generations; you did not allow yourself to be overcome, like Benjamin Constant, by the melancholy of disgust, and you were worthy of liberty because you never despaired of her cause!

## ODILLON-BARROT.

ODILLON-BARROT does not possess, like Maguin, one of those lithe and spiritual figures which twirl about incessantly as on a pivot, and which, reflecting both shade and light, both force and grace, please when painted, by the variety of ornaments and the bold vivacity of lineament and coloring.

Odillon-Barrot is marked rather by the imposing and staid wisdom of the philosopher than the capricious activity and brilliant impetuosity of the extemporizers. His intellect, like a fruit precocious but sound, has ripened before its time. He was, at four-and-twenty, an advocate of the Councils and of the Court of Cassation. Nicod was the dialectician of his companions ; Odillon-Barrot was the orator.

Half lawyer, half politician, Odillon-Barrot had already, under the Restoration, set his name beside the most celebrated names of the Opposition, and liberty was proud in numbering him among her defenders.

Odillon-Barrot studies little and reads little ; he meditates. His mind has no activity and can scarce keep awake but in the upper regions of thought. A minister, he would languish and be dangerously dilatory in matters of application. He would be more fit to direct than to execute, and would excel much less in action than in counsel. He would neglect the details and daily current of business, not that he was unqualified for it, but he would be inattentive to it.

He sheds his own fertility upon the subject, rather than borrows any from it. He culls off it but the blossom, he touches but the elevations. He reflects rather than observes. What strikes him first in a subject is its general aspect ; and this mode of viewing things arises from the particular aptitude of his mind, from the exercise of the tribune and the practice of his former calling as advocate of the Court of Cassation. No man is more capable of making an abstract and presenting

a summary of a theory ; and I regard Odillon-Barrot as the first generalizer of the Chamber. He even possesses this faculty in a higher degree than M. Guizot, who brings it to bear but upon certain points of philosophy and politics, whereas Odillon-Barrot improvisates his generalizations with remarkable power, upon the first question that offers. Both are dogmatic, like all theorists. Both positive, but M. Guizot more ; for Guizot doubts less than Odillon-Barrot. He decides more promptly, and carries his resolution into effect with the energy and determination of his character.

Odillon-Barrot is an honest man, a quality which I am ashamed to praise, but which, however, I am obliged to praise, since it is so rare. No manager, no intriguer, and scarce ambitious. His political reputation is high and without a stain ; his eloquence is always ready when the cause is generous, always at the service of the oppressed. Odillon-Barrot enjoys electoral popularity, but not popular popularity. At the same time, it appears hard to conceive that Odillon-Barrot is not at heart a radical by sentiment of equality, by experience of monarchical government, by conscious dignity of manhood, by foresight of the future. How is it, then, that, in the tribune, he is so prone, uselessly enough, to make dynastical professions of faith ? This is sometimes explained by saying that he feels for the person of Louis-Philippe a sort of unaccountable predilection which captivates and entralls him. But we are very sure that Odillon-Barrot does not love Louis-Philippe upon whatever conditions, after the manner of his domestics, liveried in silk and gold, and that he would not hesitate a single instant, were he obliged to choose, between the cause of the country and the Ordinances of another July.

Odillon-Barrot has a beautiful and meditative countenance. His vast and well-developed forehead announces the power of his intellect. His voice is full and sonorous, and his expression singularly grave. In dress, he is somewhat finical, which does not misbecome him. His attitude is dignified without being theatrical, and his gesticulation is full of

noble simplicity. When speaking, he animates, intonates, kindies, colors his expression, which is cold and dull when he writes. His discussion is solid and learned, strong in matter, sufficiently ornate, and always swayed by his elevated reason. He is apt to apply himself less, in a cause, to the point of fact than the question of law. He seizes it, sounds it, turns it over, and extracts from it its whole contents of new views and broad and salient considerations.

His method is, at the same time, not without defect. He is often embarrassed amid the prolixities of his exordium. He loses himself also in the breadth of his conceptions, and rejoins them with great difficulty when their thread is broken. In like manner, he does not precipitate sufficiently rapidly his harangues to an end. Perhaps, indeed, this affects me more disagreeably than another, as I like above all things that the discourse be substantial and compressed. I must allow, however, that Odillon-Barrot is more abundant than diffuse, and there is pleasure in accompanying him to the chase of ideas, while your vulgar rhetoricians pursue and catch but phrases.

Odillon-Barrot is more reasoning than ingenuous, more disdainful than bitter, more temperate than vehement. His eye wants fire. You do not feel enough his breast heave and his heart bound against the oppression of despotism. Too often his vigor flags and fails, and his weapon weighs him down before the close of the combat.

Master of his passions and of his words, he calms within him and around him, the wrath of the Centre and the turbulence of the Left. He prepares and covers the retreat, in the most difficult passes, with the ability of a consummate strategist: he is the Fabius Cunctator of the Opposition. Unhappily, these tactics of temporization, when too often repeated, damp parliamentary courage, not already very daring. The part of the Opposition is not to hide itself behind the baggage-carts, but to push energetically to the front of battle. When the people do not see their defenders

mount the breach and fire, they become lukewarm, yawn, turn away and go in quest of other spectacles.

The orators are the spoiled children of the press; and as spoiled children beat their nurse, the orators are in the tribune, constantly abusing the press. It is very much also the fault of the press itself, for you see it go into ecstasy at every word that drops from the lips of these parliamentary heroes, and receive their rhapsodies so preciously in its finest linen, as if they were so many venerable and saintly relics. There is perhaps not one of our orators, dynastic or ministerial, who has not been told a hundred times that he was beautiful, sublime, admirable; and who, incensed all over with their praises, does not fancy himself in fact a little marvel of eloquence, quite on a level with Cicero or Demosthenes. Are you now astonished that these gentlemen assume incredible airs of vanity, and that their head is turned under the fanning of these adulations? I myself, notwithstanding the misanthropy with which I am reproached, I have yielded, I yield at the moment I write, to this amiable weakness of the press, and have too much moderated the impetuosity and ardor of my pencil. In truth it would be small harm to extol the oratorical merits of our discoursers; it would be at most a fault of taste. But there is something of a nature more gross in this sort of infatuation; in fact we have witnessed so many somersets of opinion, that one cannot be too much on guard against the political probity of the most illustrious of our parliamentarians. It is constantly to be dreaded that they will seek to reinstate themselves in the favor of heaven, and offer us, after the example of M. Thiers, the edification of one day seeing them on both knees, invoking divine Providence. It is well therefore to keep a stiff rein to them, and not to spare the spurs when they halt or slacken pace upon a fair road, nor even the lash when they deal some joltings to liberty.

It is a misfortune to Odillon-Barrot not to have by him a single friend, that is to say, a man who would tell him the

truth. He has been spoiled by dint of doing reverence to his eloquence and virtues. He is so befuddled that he will by and by be inflated into a wind-bag. It will be carried so far as to make him believe that the consequences he insists upon are always exactly in accord with the principles which he does not possess; that his vague theses do not evaporate in mist, and that his moderation never sinks into the languor of impotence.

Who does not remember the Opposition of fifteen years ago? At rare intervals, but in compact array, night and day, it kept watch, armed, marched, fought. It did not wait till confronted by danger, it rushed to meet it. A minister had scarce done violating the domicile of the obscurest citizen, than he was taken in the act and called to account. The smallest liberty was no sooner menaced than it found defenders. An arbitrary act was hardly committed by the government than it was denounced by the Opposition. A patriotic deed, a liberal sacrifice was scarcely known, than it was crowned by popular applause. All the deputies of the Left were one in thought, in doctrine, in vote, in action. It was the golden age of the party, the season of youth and hope!

But since the Revolution of July and in the earlier legislatures, the dynastic Opposition has marched divided under discordant chiefs. It knew not what it wanted nor whither it was going. It was actuated rather by dislikes than by hopes, by aversions than by principles. It was overrun by the extra-parliamentary Opposition, whose brilliant star arose amid the mists of the evening to guide new generations to other shores. Cramped within its little burgess circle, it reanimated, it recruited itself no more at the fountains of popular inspiration. It seemed as if it bore upon its brow the brand of its original sin, of that atrocious usurpation which it perpetrated in 1830 upon the sovereignty of the people, and that, despondent, repentant, weary of others and of itself, it would hide from all eyes, and in the depths of solitude, its sorrow and remorse.

It knew not even to what degree it was advancing towards the Centre, of which the Third party debarred it the way, nor where it halted in the direction of the extreme Left. It was incapable of either defining its position, of counting its forces, or conducting itself or getting itself conducted; it knew not where to plant its standard, nor under what banner to rank itself; nor what was the password, nor when the day of battle, nor for what cause to fight, nor who was to be commander. Had it two leaders? Had it only one? Was this Odillon-Barrot? Was it Maguin? If Odillon-Barrot desired to take the command, Maguin spited, like another Achilles, pouted in his tent, abandoning the Greeks to the darts of Hector and the wrath of the gods. No consultation, no combination, no plan, no system. Odillon-Barrot was too absorbed in his political reveries to discipline his troops. Maguin was too venturesome for them to confide themselves to the caprices of his schemes. One was too absent-minded, the other too light-minded. They were not content to be soldiers, they were not qualified to be officers.

The dynastic Opposition was accustomed to act with a sloth of movement, a circumspection of periphrases and a superabundance of academical preliminaries, which is quite antipathical to the French character. You were constantly tempted to cry to these orators: To the fact! to the fact! come at last to the fact!

It never attacked, it only resisted. It dissertated, but did not argue. It complimented the ministry upon its good intentions, while it was transgressing still more by the intention than the fact. It began with anger to end with disgust. It stopped short in the middle of its consequence, through fear of the principle. It would not say of a bad institution that it was bad, but that it was badly applied. It would have a monarchy without the conditions of monarchy, and it demanded what a republic alone could yield, while strenuously denying that it had the least desire of a republic. The strong were mortified at its lack

of energy ; the weak, themselves, began to fear, in leaning upon it, that it would sink beneath them. Its temporizing was but inertness, its moderation but pusillanimity.

As it knew not itself what it was it wanted, the patriots throughout the country knew not what it ought to seek. Each session passed away in hearing speeches, very fine to be sure, rather inconclusive, and three weeks thereafter to be buried in oblivion. Who remembers anything of them ? and what did they say ?

You have seen those meagre grasses that sprout through the chinks of a wall ; it is well that they be a little agitated by the wind to strengthen their filaments. So with the ministry ; the gentle and rustling attacks of the Opposition, instead of shaking its hold, only give it vigor and root.

Another reproach to be made the dynastic Opposition, and this is the gravest, is that it pays too little attention to the instruction and moralization of the people. Of constitutional phraseology, it will be as profuse, in the Chamber, as you please ; but of money or time elsewhere, not an hour or a stiver. It is found at the head of no intellectual establishment. It directs nothing, centralizes nothing, vivifies nothing. The session closed, each takes flight towards the steeple of his locality, re-enters his nest, and there squats, warm and reposing, until the season of parliamentary storms.

I have asked myself often, not why I should not participate the opinions of Odillon-Barrot, but why he should not be of mine. If I had Odillon-Barrot in a corner of the confessional, I am sure that between his ideas and mine there would not be the breadth of a hair. But, out of the confessional, it would no longer be the same thing. Odillon-Barrot, like several other great and good patriots, commenced by serving the government of the 7th August, which since . . . . but there are certain precedents which explain certain managements, and which force a man into situations of inconsistency from which, once entered, no efforts can after extricate him. But we, who have had the good fortune not to accept the fat favors and employments that were flung a

our head, we who have not been soiled by the impure touch of the ministry, we are not disposed, for our part, to continue this comedy of fifteen years. We are aware that people say, some that we are imprudent, and others that we are dupes. These, that we are ambitious—ambitious of what? Those, that we are utopists, Carlists, anarchists, agrarians, and whatever you please. With a few spots and a little paint on both cheeks, we might win the good graces of the electors and the caresses of power. But we should play an unworthy part, a part we certainly will not play. We are perfectly aware, we can expect but to be despised, scoffed at, hssed, persecuted for our love to liberty, and what is worst of all, to be mistaken for suspicious patriots, and misapprehended by the ignorant. But there is such a power of attraction in truth, there is a gratification of conscience so noble and so pure in defending the popular cause, that the greatest sacrifices, were they needed, would appear to us light indeed, and all the joys of the world have nothing comparable to this!

The difference between Odillon-Barrot and us, is this: that we insist upon the consequences of our principle, whereas he renounces the principle of his consequences. Another difference is, that he does not wish our co-operation, and that we, on the contrary, are desirous of his. We desire it in order at least to see resolved this insoluble problem of a monarchy dancing upon a slack-rope without the aid of a balancer. It is a regret, a heartfelt regret, to me especially who esteem and love him, as he well knows, these twenty years back, not to be able to be on his side, and to see myself obliged, perhaps some day, to be opposed to him; a circumstance which, while, through patriotism, I desire his accession to power, would lead me, through affection, to deprecate it. I honor Odillon-Barrot, but I pity him. I pity and blame him. For he is not, like me, and like so many others, master of his political individuality. He is more than a person, he is at present, in the Chamber and the nation, the head of a collective opinion, the representative of

the liberal burgess class, the avowed and incontestable leader of a numerous and powerful party. Odillon-Barrot leads to combat the most numerous phalanx of the Chamber. They are but chance soldiers, conscript aggregations, battalions of accident, officers without troops, scouts, guerillas, adventurers and mercenaries. But by dint of enjoining his people to be very reasonable, very wise, not to furbish their arms, not to make too much noise, to wait, to wait always, Odillon-Barrot has rendered them cautious, laggard and almost timorous. So well has he clipped the wings of the dynastic Opposition, for fear apparently of its escape, that it can no longer either fly or walk. In place of returning its adversary dart for dart, it contents itself quite christianly with stanching the blood and binding the wound. Instead of flowing always in the same channel and retaining the same name, it has mingled with other rivers sprung from other sources, so that we can no more recognize either its course or its waters. It has ceased to have any proper and distinct personality. It goes and comes like a floating body from one bank to the other. It explodes and dissipates its force. It extends and coils itself. It has no limits, because it has no domain, and that it transfers its territory and standard wheresoever the caprice of the winds may carry and keep it. It is the ally of all who ask it, but under the odd condition of never profiting by the victory. It lends to whoever would borrow, but at the interest of never repaying. It gives but never receives. It chains itself to parties without exacting the least reciprocity of tie. It assumes all the duties, without claiming the rights, all the charges without enjoying the benefits. It fears its enemies to the degree of not daring to look them in the face. It is afraid of itself, to the degree of not venturing to count its numbers. It takes its illusions for sentiments, and its sentiments for maxims. It is polite and courteous, but it is a dupe. It is honest, disinterested, virtuous, eloquent, but it is not capable. It does the business of the government, but not that of France. Would it not be better to leave the sewers of cor-

ruption to disgorge themselves, without wallowing in their mire, to repudiate adulterous and disreputable connections, to press around the flag of liberty, and fight to the last drop of blood for the eternal truth of principle, and say with Francis First, on delivering up his sword: "All is lost except honor!"

But it is that the dynastic Opposition is not reduced to this, and that it has lost nothing, neither honor nor the rest.

I insist, because this anomaly is the trait the most characteristic of the physiognomy of Odillon-Barrot; never has there been witnessed so much force and so much feebleness, so many engagements, with so large a troop and so few victories, so much speech-making and so little action, so much noise and so little wool. What or who is to blame? Fatality, the fault of the principle, the want of skill, the color of the banner, the soldiers or the general? What better is needed, however, and when to be expected? I do not fear exaggerating when I say that at the moment I write, Odillon-Barrot, with the elections free, would, if he wished, be made a candidate in two hundred of the electoral colleges. So completely is he the expression, the formula, the true truth of the bourgeois monopoly. Situation without example in our annals, fortune unheard of and which seems to have befallen him asleep! but also responsibility far greater than that of any minister, and of which he will one day owe an account to his country. Does he not already hear electoral France cry: "Varus, give me back my legions!"

It is however a pity! What a fine and valiant band you had to lead, and whither would they not have carried you, Varus, had you known to avoid the defiles and gorges of Germany! What soldiers! But since they are defiling before me, why may I not runningly sketch their roll?

It was you, first, M. DUBAURE, terror of the Doctrinaires, minister dead and laid out at your full length in the sweat and dust of the 29th October, who would be very glad of a resurrection before the final judgment, and who had commenced your career as aide-de-camp of Odillon-Barrot. You con-

veyed, the day of battle, the order of your general, and caracoled about the wings of the dynastic Opposition. You supported the harassed troops and covered their retreat. You were colonel of the heavy cavalry. Your weapon was argument, and you excelled in its management. You mastered the questions of law. You took them on every side. You divided, dissected, unfolded them in some sort, and laid bare their inmost recesses.

You came next, M. Ducos, with eyes full of fire, and aspect pale and contemplative. M. Ducos has something of the Girondist in the pomp and brilliance of his language. He makes his heart discourse with a religious abundance, and the sacred words of country, of conscience, of virtue flow unctuously from his lips. I fear there is more imagination and tenderness of soul in his talent than of logic. M. Ducos has something candid in his manner which touches and pleases. He has the heart and the voice of an orator.

At the time of the famous discussion respecting the contemptible affair of the American claims, M. Ducos had the sagacity to see what it was to enter upon a false route. As he made use of terms mysterious, covert, inexplicable in appearance, to say, rather not to say, what had become of the funds, M. Guizot, ferule in hand, rushed to the tribune, and in the tone of a master who orders up a scholar, summoned M. Ducos to explain his hieroglyphics. Ducos stammered, and it was amusing to see the doctrinarian hold M. Ducos in his clutches like a poor bird, and refuse to let him go without a formal retraction of what he had said or not said. There was, in truth no need of getting into such a rage. No one has ever pretended that M. Guizot had pilfered, stolen, trafficked, sold, discounted, embezzled the American debt. Ah! my God, M. Guizot, you well know that the allusion was not to you. You do not gamble stocks in the dens of brokerage. You are not the person who sends gold in bars to the banks of England and the United States. You are not a large capitalist, an enormous stockjobber. You know perfectly well that these debts, though nominally in the

hands of American owners, had not the less really and foully fallen into hands which we dare not name; which make money of everything, which are proverbial for rapacity, and which will, one day, be nailed to the pillory of history. You knew all this, M. Guizot, quite as well as we. Must we then write you the names with the finger? Come, come, only have the will and you will soon cease to be ignorant of what everybody knows.

You too, were you not, are you not still, one of the troop, you M. ISAMBERT, man of vast erudition in all law, civil, criminal, administrative, diplomatic and commercial, I do not say ecclesiastical, for we are not agreed upon the matter wherein I had the honor to encounter and perhaps discomfit you. Conscientious man, whence your eloquence, when occasionally you are so? Why, from your heart. Rifer of records, of secret documents and unofficial treatises, where do you unearth all these things? Why, where your science and your ardor guide you, where others do not think of going, do not know how to study, to explore, to plunder. M. Isambert shakes off the dust from mouldy archives and old books. He analyzes, extracts, deciphers manuscripts. He collates the editions, compares the passages, and confronts curiously the dates. He amalgamates afterwards the whole in an exposition substantiated and sustained by facts, calculations and authorities. He has none of those theories which fall in beautiful cadence and flatter agreeably the ear, like the windy rhetoricians of the Socialist party. He reasons upon documents and figures; for the ministers who laugh at your theories, cannot dispose quite so cavalierly of facts. If the facts are not true, they deny them; if they are true, they deny them still. But M. Isambert displays before their eyes the texts, and if they are unwilling to read them themselves, he reads them. M. Isambert dismays and torments them. Poor fellows! What is it they have done to merit such treatment?

He, with hair prematurely gray and countenance so pale, whom death has surprised in a dilemma, it was NICOD; a powerful dialectitian, an intellect comprehensive and vigor-

ous, who approached his subject without indecision and dispatched it without fatigue. The thoughts of Nicod flowed vivid and copious. His strength had nothing too strained or too salient. A democrat from conviction, independent in spite of his amovability, passionate but in the cause of justice. When he got animated and indignant at the violation of a principle, he found eloquence in defending but right, and seeking but truth.

There goes BIGNON, whom relentless death has already wrapped in his shadow; Bignon, a clever writer, an ingenious and learned speaker, a lover of our nationality, but moderate to timidity. There are who betray their trust by abuse of speech; there are who betray it by abuse of silence. For a long time, people asked why Bignon, the first diplomatist of the Chamber, never spoke upon foreign affairs. Were we then become anew the conquerors of Europe? Bignon was not so proud as this! He had the honor to be deputy, the first honor of the country, and he suffered himself to be travestied a peer of France. Oh! weakness of old age!

Pass, pass before me M. CHARAMAULE, dogged jurisconsult, subtle dialectician, and most puzzling of cross-questioners. You, M. CHARLEMAGNE, so precise and so penetrating. You, M. DUBOIS, doctrinal rather than doctrinarian, profound and solid metaphysician, warm and radiant writer! You conceive with fruitfulness, but bring forth with pain. When your thoughts and sentiments flow over, you are unable to contain them. They seem to inundate you, to take you by the throat and stifle you. You would unbosom yourself of them all at once, but your imperfect expression fails you. You seek them as they escape you, you disconcert yourself, you get embarrassed, you interrupt yourself, and strike, as if to recall them, with reiterated blows the resounding mantle of the tribune. There are some orators whom their words suffocate; with M. Dubois, it is the ideas.

You, M. HAVIN, keen and piquant observer, who can touch with address the most delicate subjects, and tell the

ministers, with a smile, some good truths which do not make them smile. Officer in waiting of Odilon-Barrot, is it not you? Oh! yes, it is surely you who narrated the banquet of Thorigny with a wealth of description and a party adroitness for which I have, I think, already made you my compliments.

You, M. PAGES, disciple and brilliant successor of Benjamin Constant. Less versatile perhaps, less broken to the language of business, not possessing the skill of your master, to entwine himself serpent-wise around a thesis, and clasp it in the thousand coils of his crushing argumentation. Less dialectical, less copious, less natural and less ingenious; but perhaps more able and more practised in the art of throwing your ideas with precision into axioms; more sparkling in the variety of your antitheses, more religious in your political morals, more chastened, more pure in the forms of your expression, and the only deputy whose written discourses can captivate, by the sustained splendor of style and thought, the attention of a Chamber drait, careless, and very little sensible to the pains taken to entertain it with eloquence.

You, M. ROGER, of financial and maritime notoriety; useful and honest deputy, who filled the Chamber with shudderings of horror, while you painted to it in living colors, the tortures of imprisonment beneath the lurid and devouring sky of Senegal.

You, M. DE SADE, conscientious dissester, who recite with a surd and psalmodizing voice whole discourses learned by rote and painfully elaborated. Well-instructed publicist, moderate Liberal, and one of the honestest men of the Chamber.

You, M. DE TRACY, universal philanthropist, champion of humanity, man of virtue and purity, who find in your noble soul the loftiest impulses of eloquence, and who preferred the palms of the elective deputation to the burning and branding stigmas of the ministerial peerage.

You, General BERTRAND, energetic and true patriot, whose name shall never perish as long as fidelity to misfortune

shall be honored among men, and as long as the rock of Saint-Helena shall hold its place amid the waves. Unlimited freedom of the press! was his exclamation at the close of each of his speeches; and in fact this is the bulwark of all representative government. If the friend of Napoleon is so liberal as this, it is not probable that Napoleon was, after all, so much the despot! And in truth, notwithstanding the absolute character of his government, there were more ideas of liberty in the head of Napoleon, than in that of all the living kings of Europe at the present day.

You, M. CHAPAYS DE MONTAVILLE, who is it has advised you, I know not wherefore, to paint me on foot, with a purple cloak, the cut of an artist and other fancy decorations, which do much more honor to your imagination than your judgment. For me, I will not draw even your oratorical sketch; I am unwilling that it should be said: "Ah! Timon, Timon, you praise those who praise you, and you too, then, have your confederates of adulation!"

You, M. CHAMBOLLE, pupil of Carrel, indefatigable athlete of the press, who multiply by your able and elegant pen, the friends of liberty, and who never leave unwhipped either an apostasy of party or a treachery of principle.

You, M. SALVERTE, exemplary man, austere philanthropist, courageous citizen, erudite scholar. Exact to your post, you are the first to enter and the last to quit the Chamber. Riveted to your bench, you follow continually with the keen eyes of intelligence, the most dry and difficult discussions. Not a law of any importance found you mute, not a ministerial villainy escaped your penetration, not a thesis of political economy whereupon you did not pour floods of light from your pregnant, practised and sagacious intellect. Whatever may be, even after death, the recklessness and injustice of parties, they cannot deprive you of your name of model-deputy.

And you too, I must not forget you, M. BILLAUT, elegant and fluent orator, jurist and administrator, dialectition cogent, nervous, rapid, incisive, who quitted but with regret

the standard of Odillon-Barrot, and who would, were you pressed to it, again attach yourself to his fortunes.

Such are the chiefs of the brave, intellectual and learned band which Odillon-Barrot has allowed to slip like water through his hands! At last a few passed over into the ranks of the Extreme Left. The condottieri of the party, seeing that they were not occupied, determined to make war on their own account. They passed, arms and baggage, into the ministerial camp. The others, less prompt, less eager for the spoils, less impatient to take the yoke of servitude, have crossed the lines and hedges of the dynastic Opposition, and spread, on marauding excursions, through the vineyard of M. Thiers; but after they have slept off the wine of contraband, they will return perhaps to the homestead.

Odillon-Barrot has, besides, scarce ever had any trouble to give himself. As soon as he commits a fault, it is repaired. In proportion as he deserts himself, he is supported. According as he occasions a void in his ranks, it is filled up. Thus, while a portion of his adherents, through sheer neglect on his part, secede from Odillon-Barrot, there formed, there gathered upon his deserted wings, a little phalanx, aristocratic in origin, expert in the exertions of philosophy, history and political economy, friendly to measured but limited progress, who are disgusted with the corruption of what they see, with the sterility of what they hear, who are tired of the desperate strife of so many petty and sordid ambitions, who take concern in the amelioration of the condition of the people, and who would strip politics of that mass of misty fictions which envelope it, and would shed over it some rays of fresh and pure light. In this little band of officers, march in ranks unequal but close, M. M. de Tocqueville, de Sivry, de Terrebonne, de Laborde, de Rampon, de La Sizeraine, de Chasseloup, de Lanjuinais, de Corcelles, de Courbarel, de Grammont.

Here they are all armed, equipped and ready to mount! They wait to charge but a sign from Odillon-Barrot. But

an act of will is necessary, and can Odillon-Barrot perform it? Is he after all made only to subserve the purposes of M. Thiers and to add a cipher to his unity? Does he not comprehend that the parliamentary Opposition cannot remain, like a sort of Olympian Jupiter in a majestic repose, gazing with indifference as they pass upon the things of heaven and earth? Its part is motion, and perpetual motion. When it can, like the Extreme Left, pick up but principles, it takes the principles. When it can, like the Left, glean at once both the principles and the facts which put them in action, it must descend from theory to practice, and take the government at the point of the bayonet. Odillon-Barrot has been reproached with being too ambitious. My reproach would be, that he is not ambitious enough. He loans his funds to people who use them for their own ends, and return him neither principal nor interest. This is the trade of a dupe.

Poor Chamber and poor Country! public opinion is fast evaporating in smoke, and progress is fallen lame. While the parliament is at a halt, the Court recedes at a giant pace into the past. The Camarilla is spinning us days of shame and servitude. The government is fallen to a woman.

During this time, what does the dynastic Opposition? There it is reclining on the beach. It amuses itself by throwing grains of sand into the counter-revolutionary torrent which passes and carries it off.

## M. DUPIN.

THE chameleon which changes color even under the gazer's eye, the bird that makes a thousand twirls and darts off in the air, the disk of the moon which slips aside from the field of the telescope, the skiff that, on a stormy sea, mounts, dives, and reappears on the crest of the billows, a flitting shadow, a startled fly, a whirling wheel, a gleam of lightning, a vanishing sound—all these comparisons give but an imperfect idea of the rapidity of sensation and mobility of mind of M. Dupin.

How shall I contrive to sketch that disparate and ever-varying physiognomy? by what means can I seize it, and where begin?

I tell you plainly, M. Dupin, that if you keep constantly stirring on your chair, if you keep turning about your head every moment, and do not sit for me better than that, I mean to break my pallet and fling down my pencils! You wish that I make you a likeness, do you not? Very well, be so kind then as to let me examine you for a few minutes merely. Also, do not set to scolding me if the proportions of your face are not always in accord, and some of the features be distorted. I am a painter, and to imitate nature, I must make the portrait conformable to the model.

There are in M. Dupin two, three, four men; nay, an infinity of different characters. There is the man of Saint-Acheul and the man of France, the man of the Tuileries and the man of the shop-keepers, the man of courage and the man of fear, the man of prodigality and the man of economy, the man of the exordium and the man of the peroration, the man who wishes and the man who does not, the man of the past and the man of the present—never the man of the future.

M. Dupin is an author, a lawyer, a magistrate, a president, an orator and a wit.\*

M. Dupin has written a good deal, some even in Latin—in bad Latin, to be sure, but it is still Latin—which he has learned late, almost without a teacher, and with a rare force of intelligence. He has written a multitude of elementary treatises upon law, good as well as bad, which might be strung one after another like beads, and which compose his entire baggage as author.

These little tracts are scarce more than compilations of familiar legal science, brief, concise, judicious, but without originality.

M. Dupin is not endowed with that faculty of patient and close investigation which digs into a subject and goes deeply down into the spring-heads of principles. Near objects he sees justly and quickly; he does not see far and long. He has the philosophy of experience, he has not the philosophy of reflection. He cannot create, he only arranges. He throws off a manual as he draws up a declaration; he could not compose a book.

As advocate, his manner was lively, sarcastic, rough, jerking, able but without method, forcible but without grace. He carried to superstition his respect for the gown and wig of the old parliament. He was a great stickler for what he called the prerogatives of his order, and you might have seen him ready to devote himself, to die if necessary, in defence of his gown and rabato—a thing which is assuredly quite heroic. He ransacked Justinian to find apothegms, history to amass citations, and the ancient authors to extract quaint sayings, and he mixed up the whole with some pleasantries of his own fabric, which made it a seasoning rather piquant and singular. Blunt, impetuous, unequal, desultory, a stringer of anecdotes, prodigal of witticisms, he was the amusement of the auditory, the bar, the judges and the clients.

As attorney-general of the gravest court of France, M.

\* *Dicter de bons-mots.*

Dupin has retained of his professional talent but the serious and solid side. He does not possess the vast erudition of Merlin, neither the treasures of his jurisprudence, nor his free and rather subtile argumentation. But he has strong sense, a sure judgment, and his written pleadings are models of perspicuity, precision and logic. He is the lawyer rather than the legislator, a lover of the text rather than of the spirit. If there be two interpretations, the one philosophical, the other vulgar, it is the vulgar that, by instinct, he will adopt. He has much sense and little genius. Spiritless, inconsistent, and almost cowardly in political causes; but in civil cases, firm, progressive, candid and dignified.

As President of the Chamber, M. Dupin has great merits and great defects. He is versed in the precedents and the law, he applies with sagacity the rules of the House, and maintains the parliamentary prerogatives against the encroachments of the ministry. Standing up, his eyes go the rounds of every point of the hall. He domineers, like a pedagogue, the noisy and intractable deputies, and deals them, from time to time, on the fingers, some smart slaps of the rule.

He is not to be surpassed at unravelling the tangled thread of our legislative oratory. If a question happens to fall into the hands of confused and embarrassed speakers who huddle amendments upon amendments, distinctions upon distinctions, and who, unable longer to comprehend it, drop it there, M. Dupin picks it up, wipes it clean, and winds it upon his fingers. He restores it its meaning, its policy, its divisions, its principle and its consequences. He is admirable at resuming the debates, and exposes with so much neatness the logical order of the deliberation, that the least intelligent recognize it, and cry: "That's it!"

Should some luckless deputy approach him too close, he rolls himself up like a hedge-hog, and the ministers themselves do not venture to meddle with his prickles. If some oratorical novice makes his debut while members are talking, and turns to the chair to claim silence, M. Dupin flings

at him, as the only answer, a withering sarcasm which stuns the poor man and kills him off. Not that M. Dupin is naturally malicious, but he forgets sometimes that he is presiding, and when a *bon-mot* itches him, he cannot resist the temptation to scratch.

There are still two characters to be painted in M. Dupin—the politician and the orator.

M. Dupin is the most expressive and exact personification of the burgess, not the elegant and polished burgess of the Chaussée-d'Antin who apes the gentleman, not the petty burgess who wears linen lace and sells it; but the burgess annuitant, the burgess functionary, the burgess proprietor, the burgess advocate, the burgess merchant, the big burgess who has no great relish for men of birth, and who turns up his nose at the laborer. *To live every one for himself and every one within himself*, these are his favorite maxims of domestic philanthropy and of foreign policy. Become afterwards what may of the people!

He has the plebeian instinct, but not the revolutionary instinct. He has been Legitimist after having been Imperialist. He is now Philippist, and to-morrow would be republican, without great concern about the change. But, for that matter, has not the burgess class he represents been by turns all this, and would it not be so again?

M. Dupin is going to speak: will he be to-day for the people, or for the government? he has to choose. For both at once, is still better, or for one after the other, before, behind, as you please, and this without the smallest embarrassment in the world. He has always three or four inclinations to start from three or four different points, and ordinarily he rushes across the first current without knowing and without caring, for that matter, by what means he is to gain the opposite shore: plank, corks, cordage, sail or steam, anything will answer him. He commits himself to his star.

Sometimes he has fits of stronger good sense than we often find in a Frenchman. He will kindle all of a sudden into indignation at some violation of the law, some waste of pub-

lic money, or some grave and solemn insult to the national honor. His probity shrinks, his patriotism warms and boils up. He stamps in his seat. He pulls his hat over his eyes. He draws his brave blade from the scabbard, and brandishing it with both hands, is going to demolish all before him! But a Court breeze passes during the night over that patriotic and triumphant brow, and he yields to its whispering impulse. The lion, become lamb, now sheathes his claws, and is quietly led back to his lair. He still bleats a few low murmurs, and then lies down at the feet of his master.

It ill becomes M. Dupin to open the strings of the national purse, but he does open them. He engages to speak against a certain side and he will speak, but for it. He promises to say, at once, the decisive word, and he will finish without ever concluding. He swears by his great gods he would make a tempest, and the zephyr is not gentler than the breath of his words; that he would go direct to the law, and he rests in the fact; that he would treat one of the two questions, and it is the other; that he would reason soundly on the principal thesis, and he even touches but upon the accessory. At sea, the flow of the tide occurs not till twelve hours after the ebb. But in the head of M. Dupin, the flowing and ebbing toss his will, to and fro, within the space of even a minute. He is more mobile than the sea in a storm.

One day an editor—it was not mine—wrote biographical sketches of all the deputies, and he placed and classified them:—who Ministerial, who belonging to the Opposition, who to the Left, who to the Right, who to the Centre, who to the intermediate shades of opinion. But when he came to the letter D, and to the turn of M. Dupin, he knew not what to say of his opinion, nor what to do with his place, and was forced to omit him. Remark to the praise of the Chamber as of M. Dupin, that the latter was just appointed, almost unanimously, President of the Chamber, and avow, reader, that this is a charming trait of political life.

M. Dupin affects still the obsolete distinction of being

Gallican, and was much more concerned, in drawing up the Charter, to combat the Ultramontanists, than to see that the very principle of the government was not changed completely. The Revolution of July having fallen into the hands of a man of this compass of mind, how would you expect it to turn out otherwise than it has done? M. Dupin imagined that the people fought, beneath a burning sun, during three days, merely to encamp his master—Dupin's master—on the throne, and him, Dupin, on the bench of the Court of Cassation. Verily, the people had something better to do!

M. Dupin has three antipathies—the office-seekers, the aristocrats and the military. He is in constant fear that the spurs of these last will tear the skirt of his gown, and he keeps a tight rein in the Chamber to the Military party.

He is a man of some courage and he is not. He showed courage when his house was besieged by bands of ruffians, who threatened to assassinate him. He had none when he refused to plead before the Court of Cassation and the Chamber, against the abominable fortifications of the city.

He is neither ambitious nor disinterested, neither without simplicity nor without ostentation. He pursues fortune ardently if she resists him, and if she offers herself he slights her favors.

He has mind as much as possible and more, and he makes little account of it. But if you would please him, assure him that he has great constancy in his opinions, and he will believe you.

He is more dreaded at the Tuileries than liked; his visits there are rather tolerated than encouraged, for he is blunt in his manners and sarcastic in his language. He is a sort of peasant of the Danube in a court-dress. Look behind the door of the *Salon de Diane*, and you will see the hob-nailed shoes he left there on coming in.

At Court, he is awkward and ill-mannered. He is offensive, by his drolleries, to princely susceptibilities. The excursions of his volubility importune; but he is allowed to

run at large, because it is known that he will return to the stall and let himself be caught easily by both the ears.

M. Dupin is the most rustic of courtiers, and the most a courtier of rustics. Let us not mistake them, the courtiers of this species are not the least manageable. The outside of the bark is rough to the touch, but the inside is soft and smooth.

M. Dupin entertains for his king all the affection of an attorney, and it is probable, that, in the intimacy of their august conferences, his king is better pleased to converse with him upon the drawing up of a lease than about the genius of the ministers, and upon the arrangements of his household than the polity of the Great Turk.

Twenty times M. Dupin has been on the point of laying hold of the ministry. It has even been thrust into his hand, and he let it fall. He has the whims and humor of a child. He wishes, and he does not wish. He cries and weeps. He throws his arms around your neck with a sportive and confiding air, and then in an instant he retires to a corner in a fit of sullenness. He looks sheepish, and if you go near him, he scrapes you.

He is bold, resolute, a fine talker in the green-room, but as soon as he mounts the stage, he stumbles, forgets his part, stammers, pulls his wig over his eyes, and acts the mute.

M. Dupin has long passed for being the leader of the Third-Party. Of the Third-Party! what in the name of wonder, was this Third-Party?

It is known that after the death of Casimir-Perier, the triumphant majority broke down. The apostates of July, the shameless Legitimists, the sabre-wearers, the Court valets, the thorough-bred Doctrinarians, the ambitious functionaries, and the greedy speculators banded together apart and formed the bulk of the army.

But some of the combatants began to desert, unwilling, through shame or prudence, to enlist under the ferule of the Doctrinarians. They beheld dawning in the future, a new

minister, and twenty times has he been within their reach, and they have once even grasped, for some minutes, the shadow they were pursuing. This fraction of dissidents gave itself the title of Third-Party. What did it do, this party? what did it want? had it officers? had it soldiers, and who were they? It is said that seated on the outskirts of both the ministry and the Opposition, they leaned sometimes to one side, sometimes to the other. But they concealed themselves so well that you might have worn out your eyes to discern them, and they passed so quickly from one principle to the other, that it was impossible to define their position. They did not betray each other, because they did not know each other. They did not count their strength, because they did not know whom they were composed of. They coveted power, but dared neither to take nor to keep it. They were ministers for three days, and after this they were nothing, neither ministerial nor Opposition. No one could say whether they were alive, or dying, or dead. They had not strength to carry a resolution, a measure, a principle, and all their fecundity was but a succession of abortions. Singular folks! whom Providence had very probably constituted, like ourselves, of flesh and bone, who drank, ate, spoke and voted like the rest of mortals, and with whom we have communed, sat, discussed and legislated, a good moiety of the day, during whole years, without being able to say very precisely what was their name, and if they had one, nor what their opinions, or if they had any.

No matter, the Third-Party passes for having existed in the days of fable, and M. Dupin for having been its valorous and eloquent chief.

M. Dupin is one of those men whom it is unsafe to have for political friends, and undesirable to have for enemies. He is an embarrassment nearly as great to the ministry he does not favor, as to that which he should support. He is not supple, conciliatory, insinuating enough to unravel the thousand difficulties of a thousand affairs. His mind is

wrought into a hedging-bill which saws more than it cleaves. Were he minister, he would defer to the morrow the plan of to-day, and, in his moments of good-humor, would skewer all his colleagues on the point of his witticisms.

M. Dupin would make a bad figure at the private parties of the Court, with the sword dangling at his side and the golden eaglet knotted upon his left shoulder, and he would be the first himself to admit the ridiculousness of his figure mounted Don Quixote-wise, mailed all over in feudal armor, upon the poney of the Apanage. He should have left these heroical exhibitions to the knights of the sorrowful countenance.

The flattery of others, which spoils presidents and kings, has also spoiled M. Dupin, who has not a little contributed to this result himself, and I profoundly pitied him when he showed himself so far gone as to tell us, in a fit of ludicrous vanity: "Gentlemen, you may believe it or not as you will, but let me assure you that I am the Demosthenes of the Tribune, the Cicero of the Bar, and the elder Cato of the fields." No, M. Dupin, we do not believe you; for these three proud republicans whom you pretend to embody, by yourself alone, would not have stooped to wear the livery of Louis-Philippe, and kiss the petticoat hems of the royal damsels. There is nothing in common, M. Dupin should know it, between a poor little court sycophant like him, and the glorious galaxies of Greece and of Rome!

Demosthenes, after having devoted to the infernal deities Philip of Macedon, died by the dagger of an assassin, embracing as he expired the altars of liberty, and M. Dupin, as far as we know, has no wish to hurl like imprecations against Philippe of Orleans, nor to die after the manner of Demosthenes.

Cicero combated in the Roman Senate, that assembly of kings, the knavish and plausible Octavius who had a hand and a word for everybody while he was meditating at the same time the subversion of the republic, and M. Dupin has lent himself as president to the purposes of a Chamber of

speculators, office-seekers, attornies, court-dependants, and shop-keepers, which have not the least resemblance to an assembly of kings.

In fine, Cato the elder lived on black broth in the frugality of his country abode, and was scarce in the habit of making drafts at sight upon the treasury of Rome, while M. Dupin luxuriates amid flowers and wines, by the light of a thousand tapers, in his resplendent festivities, and hoards besides all that he can lay hands on of gold or paper money, after having once applauded the writer of this, for his courage in denouncing the abuse of hoarding.

M. Dupin had never but a vulgar and easily-contented ambition. If he has aspired to no more than being President of the Chamber, attorney-general of the Court of Cassation, and great-cross of the Legion of Honor, he ought to have made speeches and not pamphlets. If he desired to go down to posterity, he should have made pamphlets and not speeches.

I do not mean to say however, that M. Dupin, for not being quite as eloquent as Cicero, nor as logical as Demosthenes, is not a very remarkable extempore speaker. Doubtless, his elocution lacks the skill of method, the elevation of thought, and the purity of form of that of Berryer; but it is perhaps more substantial, more animated, and more picturesque. Examined closely, the sallies of M. Dupin are somewhat coarse, but at a distance they strike by their naturalness and their very rusticity. He draws his comparisons from common things, from the habits of living, usages, manners, law terms and proverbial modes of speaking, and he throws his auditory into fits of hearty and national laughter. He has occasionally the eloquence of strong common sense, and after a manner entirely new, singular, original, admirable.

Quick, passionate, full of fire, he electrifies an assembly. He does not let it breathe, and when he has a good cause and is in the vein, he prosecutes it with astonishing vigor and precision. Then all his ideas are connected, all his

words weigh, all his proofs are deduced in regular sequence. Then is he solid, cogent, nervous, concise and luminous. Then M. Dupin is comparable to the most rational among our dialecticians, and the most vehement among our orators.

Unfortunately, M. Dupin is often unequal, and falls into the low and the trivial. His imagination overmasters him. If a bon-mot chance to cross him while he gesticulates in the tribune, he seizes it on the wing, and holding it by the middle, hurls it upon the Chamber at the risk of hurting the first head it may happen to encounter.

He has more manliness in his speeches than his principles, more power of argumentation than of judgment, and more independence of head than of heart. He has passed through so many political events, and advocated truth and falsehood in so many and different causes, that it is not easy to say whether he has done more good or harm to the interests of liberty, nor also more harm or good to his own.

This sort of orators—a rare kind in our day especially—are men of impulse, and who never speak better than when they speak at a moment's notice. They flutter, they fret themselves in their seat and take fire like a chemic match.

Do you see that inflammable personage who enters the hall in a flurry? He sits, he rises, he fidgets about, he stretches out his hand to claim the tribune, he mounts it and *perorates*. Ask him not what was his object in commencing; ask him not, above all, how he is going to close. Can it be that you would be surprised, should he speak for the measure and vote against it? Don't you know him to be a man who gives himself up to the current of his inspirations, without even a surmise as to whither they transport him? He sets out, and as he goes along, beats the bushes for arguments.

Nevertheless—who would think it—M. Dupin still insists and wishes, against wind and wave, to pass for a man of constancy, of great constancy.

Constant, upon what? Constant, to whom? can he say; and we ourselves? Alas! we cannot change our nature.

Feeble and fickle mortals, we are that which the gods have made us. Each light has its shadow, each quality its defect. If M. Dupin had not his mobility, he would not have his talent. Would he be without the one, or the other? Be it so, but let him choose!

I desire in closing, reader, to acquaint you very secretly with an embarrassment of mine, and to ask your advice; stipulating, above all, that you must not go tell this to M. Dupin. You are to know then that the honorable legislator has voted at the Academy, against his own brother, for me, Timon, your unworthy servant and his. What am I to do, and blockhead that I am! can it be a matter of doubt? How, for the whim of being academician, I Timon of Athens, a painter without talent, but a man of sincerity, how should I prove delinquent to M. Dupin, to you reader, to myself, in suppressing the truth?

No, reader, I rather will charitably advise M. Dupin not to get himself bepraised so extravagantly, in the flattering biographies he writes of himself, or that he dictates, which is pretty much the same thing.

How these men of intellect have singular ways! M. Dupin wishes absolutely to be something different from himself. It is his settled idea. He gazes coquettishly in his mirror, and changing countenance in proportion as he looks—the effect apparently of inveterate habit—he just now says to me: “It is not I whom you have sketched, I am not M. Dupin!”—How, you are not M. Dupin? Why, I assure you it is you and no other who sat at this moment for the pencil of Timon. It is you I see, it is you I paint, it is you, it is certainly you whom I have just portrayed!

Come, let us see what you would have me do to appease you? Do you wish me, for example, to say that other orators have been as inconstant as you; that the Greeks and Romans have fluctuated, neither more nor less than you, in their sentiments of the forum, the Senate and the closet; that Voltaire, Pascal, Fenelon, Rousseau have varied their opinion upon all sorts of subjects; in fine, and this will

please you more, that there are to be found certain pamphleteers—those cursed pamphleteers—who are said to have been at first Tories, afterwards radicals ; at first Legitimists, then quasi-republicans ; at first republicans, then Constitutionalists ; at first liberals, then monarchists ; at first monarchists, then liberals ? Dead or living, give these what name you please, let me be placed with them in a common category ; do not consider me, act your will.

But you will understand, M. Dupin, that, to gain your good graces, I cannot forfeit those of the public, and spoil one of the best of my portraits. After all, if you be dissatisfied, I am resolved, if I am not academician at your hands, to be so at my own, or rather at yours, kind reader ; an election well worth the other, is it not ?

At the same time, I feel some compunctions of pity—M. Dupin will say it is remorse—and I should like, with your permission, reader, to console this poor sufferer and shed a little balm upon his wound. I should like to say, and it is but justice to mention, that M. Dupin is a man of excellent moral parts ; that he is generous, inoffensive, not vindictive, and of the last I am the proof ; that he has a lively sense of justice and the law ; that he has independence, although a little stubborn ; that he is sparing of the public money, except, indeed, towards himself and his master ; that he is beneficent, charitable, and naturally friendly to the people.

May I add to the picture this other trait, that he has a foible for the privileged classes, and yet does not love privilege ; that he has a foible for the Court, and yet he does not like either courts or courtiers.

I must, in fine, repeat—and upon this point M. Dupin will not think my recapitulation too long—that he is full of fancy, sarcasm, and sprightliness in familiar conversation, subtle and profound, clear, nervous and skilful in his pleadings, ingenious and original in his literary productions

Still a word to complete his portrait.

M. Dupin's voice is full, grave, clear, modulated at the medium pitch, sometimes powerful and thrilling. His face

is scarred, blotched, mangled, wrinkled. But when his physiognomy is in motion, enlivened by passion, wrought up by argumentation, it is devoid neither of elevation nor nobleness. His deep-set eyes sparkle with fire, and gleam from the depths of their orbits like two diamonds; and really, I do not call this being an ugly man.

Note, reader, that this is quite fresh from the pencil and mere appendix. Will M. Dupin be satisfied? he ought to be certainly; yet you will see that he will not unless I say that he is consistent. Well, no, I will not say it!

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### M. BERRYER:

It is just, it is lawful that all the varieties of the political opinion of the country should be represented in the Chamber of Deputies. The Chamber derives its moral authority from the illustrious of its members; and of what service would be to the minister himself an incompetent and ridiculous legislature, which he might lead in his train amongst the baggage of his household.

The Legitimist party have done what intelligent minorities should always do: it has supplied the number by the quality. The deputies which it has selected are men of eloquence and probity. They are dignified in deportment, prudent in conduct, polished and measured in language, and their doctrines are never urged but with all the urbanity of parliamentary propriety.

But they are placed in a false position. They have been sent to the Chamber by their party to hoist there the white flag, and as soon as they display the smallest glimpse of this flag, the universal tempest which rises and rages compels them to furl it with all speed. They have therefore to place themselves in the wake of the Opposition, to tag themselves to its coat-skirts, to imitate its language, to talk like it of

liberty, of large liberty; and these are expressions rather strange, rather new upon their lips, words which would have passed for seditious in the reign of Charles X., and which accord, in fact, neither with the principle nor with the acts of his government. These liberal professions are distrusted, appearing to be rather a stratagem of opposition than the expression of a sincere conversion. It is feared that the Legitimists would soon put off the mask if Henry V. were to return, and that as they are now but for liberty, they would then be but for power.

The Legitimist deputies form, in the Chamber, a separate band. It is a miniature church, having its invariable dogmas, and where they chant in chorus the praises of their lord and master. They bear some resemblance to the children of Israel, separated from their country, and who wept in the secrecy of the tabernacle, the exile of their God and the subversion of their temple and their holy laws.

At their head, and the most distinguished of all, shines M. Berryer.

M. Berryer has long been the sole orator and almost the sole deputy of his party. Not that there is not in the Chamber a certain number of shameless Legitimists who group themselves high in the centre, and who would not fail to turn to account their quasi-legitimacy, were Henry V. to appear, the white flag in his hand, within twenty-five or thirty miles of Paris. But these disguised Legitimists reveal but at the ballot their secret predilections, and, at all other times, they bind so well the mask of the *Juste-milieu* about their visage, that it is quite impossible to tear it off. If, in the first legislatures, M. Berryer, carried away by the heat of improvisation, used to let slip some regrets a little too lively for the absence of his king, these renegade Legitimists were the first to raise a murmur of displeasure. But in the lobbies, they dropped this part, and if they met M. Berryer alone, would shake him by the shoulder, squeeze discreetly his fingers, and say: "Oh! how you are right, M. Berryer! Go on; we are at your side! Who would

not sigh for those excellent princes?" M. Berryer might admire the great prudence of this noble conduct, but he must have desired a little more support when he ascended the tribune.

Perhaps, too, that sentiment of indulgence, of decency, of generosity, which, especially in a French Chamber, is felt towards a courageous champion contending alone against a battalion of adversaries, has proved of more advantage to M. Berryer than could have been the adhesion of a numerous party. Perhaps the very difficulty of this extraordinary position has given to his talent additional energy and lustre, as the jet of water is seen to issue the more vigorously, the narrower the tube that contains it.

Berryer is, after Mirabeau, the greatest of the French orators. Yes, not one, since Mirabeau, has equalled Berryer: neither General Foy, who used to recite, rather than extemporize, and who did not unite the close reasoning of business to the powerful voice and the copious eloquence of Berryer; nor Lainé, whose sole recommendation was a harmonious and pathetic delivery; nor de Serre, who, heavy and involved in his exordiums, gave expression but at rare intervals to his oratorical passion; nor Casimir-Perier, who was vehement only at an apostrophe; nor Benjamin Constant, who had more of suppleness and art than of grandeur and energy; nor Manuel, in fine, who was endowed with a sure and firm judgment, but who, more a dialectician than an orator, never wrung like Berryer involuntary bursts of applause from the charmed and enraptured auditory.

Nature has treated Berryer as a favorite. His stature is not tall, but his handsome and expressive countenance paints and reflects every emotion of his soul. There is a fascination in the soft gaze of his full and finely-cut eyes, his gesture is marvellously beautiful like his delivery. He is eloquent in his whole person. He sways the assembly with the bearing of his head. He throws it backward, like Mirabeau, an attitude which gives a prepossessing openness and candor to the aspect. He is perfectly at ease in the tribune

and takes possession of it as if he were the master; I had almost said the despot. His breast swells, his bust dilates, his stature rises, and you would imagine him expanding to the dimensions of a giant. His wrinkled forehead glows, and when his head is vehemently agitated, a strange circumstance! the blood is seen to ooze from the pores of the face.

But that in which he is incomparable and beyond all the other orators of the Chamber, is the tone of the voice, the first of beauties in the actor and the orator. Men in assemblages are extremely sensible to the physical qualities of the speaker or the comedian. Talma and Mademoiselle Mars owed their fame but to the charm of their voice. Give them a common voice, and whatever might have been the profundity of their acting and the exquisite sentiment of their art, they had lived and died unknown. It is by the vocal powers, frequently more than by the arguments, that an assembly is moved. ♪

But M. Berryer's pre-eminence is not due alone to the accident of his external qualities. He is also a master in the oratorical art. Most other speakers abandon themselves to their extempore inspirations, and, in the disorder of their excursions, they fall upon some fine movements, but they are destitute of method. It is not always clear, and they don't know themselves, where they start from and whither they would go. They rest themselves on the route, and halt to reconnoitre the way. Berryer's superiority here is, that from the threshold of his discourse, he sees as from an elevated ground, the goal whereto he is tending. He does not precipitate himself upon his adversary. He begins by drawing around him several lines of circumvallation. He routs him from post to post. He deceives him by feigned marches. He approaches him gradually—he pursues him—he surrounds him—he seizes him—he strangles him in the concentric coils of his argumentation. This is the method of capacious intellects, and it would soon fatigue an audience so inattentive as a French Chamber, if M. Berryer did not fix its levity by the charm of his voice, the

animation of his gesture, and the noble elegance of his diction.

Mirabeau became himself but under the stimulus of contradiction and obstacle. His element was in governing rebellions and revolutions. He was a wrestler, a man of contention. He was never so grand as in the full glow of the battle.

Mirabeau was besieged with murmuring to the extent of being interrupted. Berryer, on the contrary, speaks amid a silence not merely attentive, but in some sort respectful. He is listened to, and you would fancy his sympathizing auditory repeat in low chorus the notes which flow from that beautiful and melodious instrument.

He enthralled the assembly, he submits it to his will, like the subject of the magnetizer who is made to speak, be silent, walk, stop, pursue, sleep; but if he once awake, the spell is broken. In like manner, when the assembly arouses itself and descends the steps to go vote—material interests, party principles or passions resuming the ascendant—it ballots against the greatest of our orators as if it had only heard one of the officers of the Chamber cry: "Silence, gentlemen!"

Berryer powerless, deserted as he is in the sphere of his principles, can do nothing but by taking sides with the liberal Opposition, and availing himself of the weapons of that Opposition which he wields to admiration.

He questions, he presses, he nonplusses his adversary, in order that he may be thrown off his guard by the confusion, and pierced on the spot in default of the cuirass. A fact, a document he shivers to its base, but he is careful not to subvert it entirely, it being enough for his purpose that it is unable to sustain itself, in such its shattered condition. The doubts he expresses pass for so many affirmations to his auditors; but ministers can make no more of them, against him, than mere doubts, and he thus deprives them in advance of part of the advantages of their reply.

Should some speculator in the secret funds of police, should some intimate of the Court kitchen, feeling himself hit to the quick, emit from his œsophagus a dumb and cav-

ernous groan. Take no notice that he interpellates the orator, lest Berryer, in turning about to see who permitted himself thus to reply, should knock him over with the back of his mallet. But if some minister mutter a tangible interruption, M. Berryer retreats a little backwards in the tribune; and then springing upon him as upon a prey, he shakes him, he tosses him aloft, and letting him fall back, he nails and cakes him upon his seat by a crushing reply.

His vast and faithful memory supplies him without effort, with the most complicated dates, and he can put his finger, without hesitation, on the scattered passages of the numerous documents which he is analyzing and which fortify the tissue of his discourses.

Nothing can equal the variety of his intonations, at times simple and familiar, again bold, pompous, ornate, piercing.

There is nothing bitter in his vehemence, nothing offensive in his personalities.

He extracts from a cause all that it contains both of specious and solid, and bristles it with arguments so close and so captious, that you know not by what side to approach or to take it. After he has gone through the series of his proofs, he pauses a moment; then he accumulates them upon each other into a pile under which he overwhelms his adversaries.

A man of the world, a man of dissipation and pleasure, and of a jovial character, M. Berryer is not naturally laborious. He has, however, great aptitude for business. No man, when he wishes, can more thoroughly master a question, collect its details with a more curious investigation, or arrange them into a more learned and methodical whole.

It may be that, in the profusion of his diction, he is not always quite correct; but this defect, common to all our parliamentary improvisators, does not prejudice the effect of the discourse. We have already said that our orators are not to be analyzed or read, but must be heard. Their fame

would be much greater, if the press did not reproduce them. They have an enemy in every reporter.\*

Since the Revolution of July, the long and large career of our orators has been marked by some gleams of genius, some pithy axioms, some brilliant thoughts, some witty expressions, some phrases of effect, some oratorical effusions; but there has not been a single discourse which would pass, in print, for a veritable model of eloquence. They have been preserved all of them, printed in the public collections, edited superbly, aye, even gilt-edged, but nobody reads them.

They are like an uncorked jar, whence the ambrosia should have evaporated, and which should be no longer worthy of being served up on the table of the gods.

The Pythoness too is beautiful on her tripod and in her temple; but elsewhere, she is merely an old woman, naked, decrepit, and in whom we now behold but her ugliness and her rags.

Yes, the printer has killed the orators, and were I in M. Berryer's place, I would prosecute by all legal means, even that of the correctional police, whatever editor should do me the wrong and injury of publishing my speeches; and this even though he should produce before the court my signature at the bottom, of *fit for the press*; for, of course, he could have extorted it but by treachery or by surprise!

But what then, there would remain of M. Berryer but the name! Well! what remains, I pray you, of Talma, of (m'lle) Mars, of Paganini? What remains of Apelles, of Phidias, of the comedies of Menander, of the sighs of Sappho, of the wisdom of Socrates, and the grace of Aspasia? A name alone, a name!

Nothing more; and for M. Berryer, for his glory, this is enough. Go now, drag this orator from his sacred tripod, and hawk him without inspiration or voice, through the

\* This may be true of the French orators; and is so, no doubt, of all real oratory. But there are orators, whom we wot of, to whom, on the contrary, the reporter is the best of friends.—Tr's. N.

streets in some rag of a newspaper! Reproduce, if you can, by a reporter, that inimitable voice which sends a thrill of delight through every finer organization! Mark, when he brings such physically in communication with him, how he imparts to them, by a sort of electricity, the vehement emotions of his own soul! He is not only an orator by his passion and eloquence, but moreover a musician by the voice, a painter by the eye, a poet by the expression.

M. Berryer does not imitate those deputies of the Restoration so sentimentally silly, whose sole reply to the arguments of the Opposition was the exclamation: "I love my king, O my king!" M. Berryer does not content himself thus, and if he too loves his, of which we have no doubt, at least he makes no display of it for ostentation. He avoids, like a man who knows his audience, to tread upon the burning coals of dynastic personalities, and prefers to engage in the higher themes of national interests, wherein his talent has full scope to soar and spread its pinions. He does not set himself to justify, item by item, the blunders of the Restoration. He avows them, and from the brilliant profusion of his historical reminiscences, he demonstrates that the preceding governments, in consequence of their delinquency to the eternal duties of justice, have all been wrecked upon the shoals and scattered by the tempest. This manner is full of grandeur, and permits the genius of Berryer to sweep freely in the elevated region of principles. It is also full of tact, for without appearing to intend any reference to the ministers, it leaves the auditors themselves to make immediate and special application of the general objections of the orator.

M. Berryer does not ask indulgence to the dogma of Legitimacy. He does not defend what is not, what cannot be, admitted to debate in the Chamber. But he changes the point of attack and combats the ministry with their own weapons. He presses them, he pushes them from consequence to consequence to the last extremities of parliamentary argument; and, with the sovereignty of the people in

his hand, he *corners* them in their violation of the Charter and the perjury of their oaths of office.

So then, every defender of the fallen powers who have oppressed France, is obliged, in order to throw dust into the eyes of the world, to invoke the sacred name of liberty. Ah! let us not complain of this abuse! There must surely be truth in our cause, since our adversaries themselves confess it. It must needs have force too, since they come to temper in it their swords and even their bucklers; and the tardy homage of the Legitimists advances the Liberal interest as much as the combined treacheries of the Camarilla and the Doctrine.

Nevertheless, we must not deceive ourselves. In heart, M. Berryer has not our principles, and on his lips he has not even his own. Yes, his real principle—that vivacious and glowing Legitimism which consumes him—he does not defend in the tribune; he compresses it within himself, he hides it and seems to dread its explosion. He throws himself into the byways, as if he feared to walk upon the high road of Goritz, as if for him this road was barred across, and bordered with abysses and precipices! He does not attempt to reason, to discuss, to prove. His is an eloquence of impulse rather than of dialectic, of action more than of thought, of sentiment more than of demonstration. It is Berryer, it is an orator, a great orator you hear, but it is not a Legitimist. He is not a politician, he is an orator, I repeat; one of those orators who cannot be said to be within their own control, who are at the least as much overmastered, as they overmaster you, by their ecstasy, who cannot resist their own excitability, like M. Thiers, like all artists of delicate organization.

Think not that he seeks, that he solicits these inspirations, they arise spontaneously. He trembles through every limb, from head to foot. He is moved, he weeps, he rages, he droops, he sinks beneath the emotions of the Chamber as well as his own. Once within the popular current, he cannot remain there. He rolls with the torrent, he roars with

the tempest, you feel that he cannot brook the narrowness of his own principle ; that he spurns the chains which fetter him ; that he wants air, that he wants room, that he wants a Carlist auditory ; and without air, without room, without an audience, Berryer is not in his element. He must fire the spectators to passion, pour abroad his soul, disport himself in the billows of his harmonious voice, traverse immensity, and expand himself freely in his august flight. Then will he forget that he is a Legitimist, to remember but that he is a Frenchman. Then will he become national. Like Antæus, to reinvigorate his powers, he falls back upon the generous soil of country. He plunges into, he disappears in the splendor of France, and returns with his head encircled in a magnificent halo. He leads the assembly around our map. He marks on our frontiers Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Prussia, Belgium. He represents us environed by a girdle of steel, of foes and desolations, and in his patriotic enthusiasm, he exclaims : " I thank the Convention for having saved the independence of France."

Again, he revolts at the cowardly concessions of our diplomacy, and, with his hand extended over the tribune with a gesture of singular expressiveness : " This hand," says he, " will wither before casting a vote which may say that the ministry are duly jealous of the dignity of France. Never ! never !"

And as if unable to master his oratorical emotion, he turns incidentally to M. Thiers, and says to him : " I honor you, sir, because you have done two honorable acts, in sustaining Ancona, and resigning your place. By what distance soever we may naturally be separated, only promote the interest and the grandeur of France, and you shall always have my applause, because after all I have been born in France, and I mean to live and die a Frenchman !"

On another occasion he represents Russia and England contending with each other for aggrandizement, and his indignation is kindled to find his brave, his glorious France

remain an impotent spectator of their contests and of the partition of their conquests.

“Behold that vast antagonism, political and military, which extends from the frontiers of Tartary along to the shores of the Mediterranean, between two nations who must one day meet one another in mortal conflict. Behold, from the extremity of the earth along to our borders, England arraying her warlike barriers against Russia, by whom she is menaced in turn on the confines of her magnificent Indian colonies. Consider those grand expeditions to the distance of five hundred leagues from the national territory ; on the one side, the expedition to Caboul, on the other, the attempt upon Kiva. Observe these two great nations march across the globe to erect their lines of precaution against one another. What, gentlemen ! and France, is France to be but a Continental power, despite of those vast seas which come to roll their billows upon our shores, and to solicit, so to say, the genius of our empire and our intelligence !”

This is a fine image, and M. Berryer, like all the great orators, particularly affects the figurative style in all the processes of his eloquence.

There are, in fact, several modes of acting powerfully upon public assemblies. The speaker may address himself, either to their logic by the vigor and conclusiveness of his reasonings, or to their wit, by the vivacity and piquancy of his expressions, allusions, and repartees, or to their hearts, by the emotions of sensibility, or to their passions, by vehemence of invective, or to their imagination, by the splendor of rhetorical figures. But most frequently it is by means of figure, of imagery, that eloquence produces its greatest effects. The prosopopœia of the warriors who fell at Marathon, by Demosthenes—the Roman citizens affixed to the infamous gibbet of Verres, by Cicero—the night, the terrible night when the death of Henrietta broke upon two kingdoms like a thunder-clap, by Bossuet—the avenging dust of Marius, the apostrophe of the bayonets and the Tarpeian rock, by Mirabeau—the “audacity, audacity, always audacity,”

by Danton—the Republic that, like Saturn, is devouring its own children, by Vergniaud—the voice of liberty re-echoed from the lakes and mountains, by O'Connell—the car which conveys the remains of Ireland to the grave, by Grattan—the turban which marks on the map the place of the Turkish empire, by Lamartine—Algeria, of which the fruit does not present itself even in blossom upon the tree so copiously watered with our blood, by Berryer—the fathers of the Revolution, those noble spirits looking down upon us from the heights of Heaven, by Guizot; all this is the eloquence of imagery.

What a pity that Berryer, that so powerful an orator, does not fight in the Liberal ranks, at the head of the popular party! How is it that such an intellect does not perceive the inanity of the doctrines of Legitimacy? How is it that he does not labor with us in the ways of liberty, for the emancipation of mankind? How happens he not to comprehend that the principle of the sovereignty of the people is the sole true one, that alone which reason acknowledges, that alone which the future of all the nations will glorify?

Already Napoleon, Chateaubriand, de Laménais, Beranger, have proclaimed the future era of the European republic. Unfortunately, the orators are not as far-seeing as these great men. They absorb and waste themselves in the petty passions and prejudices of the moment. They are content with playing upon the instrument of speech, the airs of the day which meet their ears. They trifle away their time in amusing on the quarter-deck of the vessel the group who stand around them and clap their hands. But they do not cast their eyes over the vast expanse of the surrounding seas. They do not examine the direction of the wind or the course of the stars, nor do they seek in the distance to discover the coasts where the weather-beaten vessel that bears humanity must at last find a port.

## L A M A R T I N E .

WHEN a Parliament is divided but between two principles, such as that of nationality and that of privilege, the lesser shades of opinion fade away, the individualities disappear, and there is in presence one of the other but two standards, two camps, two armies. This was our situation under the Restoration. The Chamber, which is but a large mirror, reflected then, as it will always reflect, the out-door opinions. The orators of the Right represented the nobility, the clergy, the magistracy, the royal guard, the functionaries and the Court. The orators of the Left represented the students, the soldiers, the middle burges class, the bar, the artists and the people.

But when, as at present, privilege, under the name of legitimacy, dares not hold up its head for fear of seeming to be retrogressive, and nationality, under the name of sovereignty of the people, dares not unfold itself for fear of passing for revolutionary, there can be no common ties, no definite doctrines, no staff, no capacious tent where the chiefs might meet to concert their plans for the campaign. There will be almost as many generals as soldiers. Each arms, equips, costumes himself according to his fancy. One wears a *shako*, another a white crest ; the third a red-cap, the next goes without a cockade. Each makes war on his own account, posts himself in the plain or on the mountain, fires on the right or the left and wastes his powder and ball.

This parliamentary pell-mell images exactly the confusion of our actual society. The young dream of republican institutions. The mature regret the glorious order of the Empire. The nobility, and in part the clergy, invoke

Henry V. The artizans and laborers want work. The electoral body want monopoly. The burgess class want repose, they care not how or under whom. The military party want despotism. The Doctrinarian party want power and pelf. The national party want liberty and equality, and the socialist party do not know what they want.

What then is this socialist party? The socialist party is a medley of Saintsimonianism, Quixotism and a bastard Liberalism, dazzling with words and destitute of ideas.

Each party desires to have in the Chambers a representative of its opinions, because the finest theories remain, outside the Chambers, but mere theories. But in the Chambers, when they triumph, they take the name and authority of laws and are turned to practice. But, all opinions, by the invincible tendency of human affairs, point to some application. There is not an Utopia, even the wildest, that does not pretend to realize its visions. Those who begin with disinterestedness strive to end with power.

The socialist party has not been behind others, and imagined it found a representative in M. de Lamartine.

There are two personages in M. de Lamartine—the politician and the poet; but as the politician is but the reflection of the poet, it will be proper first to define the latter. But here is the manner in which the most accredited critics of my time define and estimate M. de Lamartine.

France, say they, has had its revolutions in literature as in politics. In the days of Montaigne and Amiot, our tongue was little else than Greek and Latin written in French. It would seem the lips of these writers still clung to the dugs of antiquity, replete with milk so pure and abundant.

The style of the age of Louis XIV. attains the perfection of full-grown manhood. It has maturity, vigor and coloring, majesty and grace. It is forcible without being strained; original without being quaint; simple without being vulgar; pompous without being pedantic. One imagines seeing still the Greek blood flow in its veins which it swells and blues beneath the translucent skin.

Subsequently, the invasion of a host of philosophical and industrial terms, as well as the derivatives from the British and Slavonic idioms, spoiled the language while enriching it, as a river, swollen by the mixture of several streams, is apt to lose the limpidity of its fountain.

Voltaire, however, kept alive the sacred fire of ancient literature, and he is, by the universality of his knowledge, his exquisite purity of taste, and the justness of his understanding, immeasurably above all our living men of letters—a thing which they, we well know, will not allow.

There is more true philosophy in a single page of Voltaire than in all the pages together of MM. Cousin, Jouffroy & Co., who strive far too much after the sublime and the profound. Voltaire is one of the latest masters of good sense. Do you know what one of the Lycophrons of our day, who dig for their style under ground, makes a reproach to this Voltaire, this puny genius? Why, that he is too luminous! So is the sun too luminous for moles.

In like manner as our literary prose, our poetry bears no longer any resemblance to the ancient poetry. It is no more one of the graces whom the brilliant genius of Athens used to crown with flowers. It is a howling spectre that rattles its bones at you from the cavity of the tombs.

M. de Lamartine seems to have thrown his entire poet-soul into his first meditations. He sung, and Naples—the voluptuous Naples—appeared to breathe in his verses. Those beautiful shores of Italy, those Isles of enchantment, those odoriferous breezes, those languishing plaints of love, those softening notes that flowed from his lyre, threw us into a sort of vague and melancholy sadness. It was neither pure like antiquity, nor severe like Christianity, nor positive like the age: but it was a poetry tender and dreamy which had a charm like the passing of an autumn shade, the murmur of a billow, the sighing of a virgin, the moanings of a harp.

Had there but been in those times a little literary criticism, M. de Lamartine, who knew how to write, would have learned to think. He sings too negligently. He outrages

the grammatical connection of words and the rational connection of ideas. He affects constantly the same note, a monotonous note. He employs constantly the same color, the azure color. It is the azure of the eye, the azure of the firmament, the azure of the sea, azures, always azures! He selects a tomb-stone, he turns it on every side; he takes its square and cube; he delineates and colors the smallest blades of grass that grow around it; he depicts one by one the leaves of the cypress that overshadows it; then he wears away the stone with his knees, his tears, and his lamentations. He counts upon his watch the pulsations of a dying person. Dead, he takes him, dissects the flesh, trepanns the skull, and cracks the bones. But is not this the grief of an anatomist rather than the grief of a poet, a grief true, deep, natural, genuine? Oh! how much are we more touched to hear Malherbe cry:

*Elle était de ce monde, où les plus belles choses,  
Ont le pire destin,  
Et rose,\* elle a vécu ce que vivent les roses,  
L'espace d'un matin!*

A child of earth, where darkest doom  
Awaits the pure and fair,  
A rose, she bloomed, as roses bloom,  
But one brief morning there.

To describe, to analyze, like Dubartas and Rensard, the most secret beauties of a woman, the eyebrows and iris of her eyes, the moles of her skin, the enamel of her teeth, the veins of her bosom, the delicacy of her figure, even with accompaniment of some languishing metaphysics, this is but to relapse to the infancy of the art.

\* I remember an anecdote respecting this passage, which seems worth relating, if only to mitigate the well-known wrath of authors against "printers' devils." The subject of the poem was named Rosette; and the line ran originally: *Et Rosette a vécu, &c.* But the poet it seems omitted "to cross his *t's*" (not having been a printer, or editor, or school-master.) and the proof sent him read *Roselle*; which instantly striking his fancy, through the *ear* probably, produced the present form, which is the greatest beauty of the verses.—Tr's. N

Praxiteles did not surcharge his Venus with coquettish ornaments, with roses, pink flowers and ostrich feathers. He put no paint on her cheeks, and no rubies on her fingers. He drew her bare, but decent, beautiful, and in the simplicity of nature. All the greatest geniuses have been characterized by simplicity—all—Homer, Virgil, Racine, Shakspeare, Raphael.

The true poets have been as great logicians as the philosophers. Who has better known the human heart than Molière, better painted than old Corneille the grandeur of virtue, better sighed than Racine the subtle weaknesses of love? Who had ever a sounder taste, a more exact intellect, than Voltaire? And in our own day, can the government, the bar, or the tribune produce a man with a correcter judgment than that of Beranger? It is that poetry, true poetry, is but reason ornamented by imagination and rhythm.

Unfortunately, this cannot be said of the poems of M. de Lamartine. He utters some sublime cries, cries of the soul. He brings out some unexpected notes, which ravish the ear. But also, what a disorder of imagination! what a multitude of false and broken notes in his melody! what profusion of ambitious epithets! what abuse of description, of inversion, of metaphor, and color! Of plan and arrangement, not a trace. Of dramatic progression, not a step. M. de Lamartine seems to have forgotten that words are not ideas; nor the clash of sounds, harmony; nor confusion, science; nor physiology, sorrow. If the French should become a dead language, and M. de Lamartine should go down to posterity with the other poets of the decline, he will be found, from the incoherence of his thoughts and his style, one of the authors the most difficult to be explained, and will one day be the despair of school-boys and commentators.

Such is the judgment of the critics upon M. de Lamartine as poet. But he is judged still more severely as deputy by the puritans of the Left, and here is their estimate.

M. de Lamartine, as a political orator, lives upon his poetical reputation. There is nothing of passion, nothing

of inspiration in his aspect, gesture, or voice. He is dry, measured, sententious, cold. He shines but does not warm. He is religious but has no faith. He does not feel his heart throb, his lips tremble, and his speech take fire and life.

It is not that M. de Lamartine is distinguished in his poetry by the qualities of the ages of Augustus and of Louis XIV.—the learned disposition of the plan, the preservation of the characters, the nice gradation of art, the skill in details, the purity of the touch and outline, the sequence and justness of the thoughts. But here, at least, the constraint of metre and rhyme, forces his ideas into some degree of order, which is not observed in his speeches. His oratorical style is flat and fluent, and rocks from one leg to the other. Still more glittering than brilliant, more monotonous than harmonious, more inflated than full, he lacks the free, easy, firm, and natural step of well-written prose. He cannot march without a baggage of unmeaning epithets. He abandons the idea to pursue the pleasing sounds of the ear and the effects of prosody. He delights and dwells complacently in the euphonious terminations. He drowns his thoughts in a deluge of tropes and metaphors, and his parliamentary motions always end with the tail of a strophe. If by your melodious phrases you only mean to give us music we would quite as lief go hear Rossini. M. de Lamartine is to our good orators what rhetoric is to eloquence.

Parliament is not a theatre where actors may come to utter their flute-like amplifications and flowing periods, for the amusement of the spectators. You say you represent the people! Speak then as the people would who should speak properly.

M. de Lamartine may astonish the country-members by the scintillations of his coloring, but he offends the delicacy of men of taste. Deliberative oratory has its rules and its beauties, which are not the rules and beauties of lyric poetry. The style of the orator should be full, but perspicuous. His thoughts should be lofty, but simple. They should move and be combined in a precise and logical order. But

M. de Lamartine is diffuse and redundant. He has neither profundity of ideas, nor vigor of argumentation. You meet people, however, who take his parliamentary dithyrambs for eloquence. With reason, indeed, is it said that we are in the midst of universal anarchy, for not only has France lost all political virtue, but moreover that which she had maintained in all vicissitudes, she has lost her good taste.

We go farther : the oratorical phrasology of M. de Lamartine has more of show than of body, more splendor than depth, more variety than vigor, more sonorousness than substance, more copiousness than precision, more development than connection.

Far be it from us not to render full justice to the moral and religious sentiments of M. de Lamartine, to his lofty character, his amiable qualities, and his noble heart. He has ever a generous word to oppose to the arbitrary and vindictive proceedings of power, and we thank him for these inspirations of his virtue. But as he is ignorant of the language of business and does not attack abuse on its practical side, nor descend to applications, the ministers willingly leave him to wander and lose himself in the *vague* of his orations. They laugh scornfully at your fine sentiments.

Though M. de Lamartine should preach to them the whole day long, Bible in hand, about parliamentary moralities, what effect, tell me, could that have upon the mammon-worshippers of the ministry ? They have never had any pretension of getting to heaven by means of their good works. Ah ! my God, provided they are left in peace upon earth, with their offices, their secret funds, their telegraphs, their bottle, and their treatises of America, of the East, of Africa, they ask no more.

Let a poet, if he will, sing, upon the same lyre, of the sufferings of the Cross and the mysteries of Isis ; let him celebrate in the same strain the purity of Christian virginity and the voluptuous graces of the yellow-haired *Næra* ; let him, about the same time, write enthusiastic odes to Napoleon and solemn hymns to liberty, there can be no objection.

Passions of the heart, diversity of character, fall of empires, heroes, wars, festivals, natural scenery, flowers, volcanoes, tempests, zephyrs, thunder, ocean, sky, stars, immensity, the whole universe is legitimate ground.

But when the poet turns deputy, when he deigns to sit with the herd of his colleagues on the benches of Parliament, he is asked, and he is asked rightfully : Whence do you come, what principles do you espouse, what office do you look for ? The business here is not to sing, to keep gazing on the blue firmament and perch in the clouds. Are you man or bird, angel or demon ? Do you dwell in heaven or upon the earth ? Do you mean to be a Legitimist, a Republican, or an ambassador ? Come, speak, that this may be known, and you accordingly denominated.

You inform us that there are two standards, the white and the tri-colored. We know this well ; but what we do not know is, to which of them you belong ? You sound upon your theorbo equally the praises of the republican soldiery and of the Vendéans ; but on which side do you plant your tent ? You shed floods of evangelical tears over the hard-heartedness of the ministry, and then, when comes the moment to ballot, a sort of heathen change takes place at the end of your fingers, and the white ball slips through them ! You support bad laws to secure the good-will of the ministers, and you say these bad laws are good for nothing, in order to please the Opposition ! You philanthropize about the wants of the French working-class, and you make them pay American philanthropy twenty-five millions ! You laud the minister for having maintained what you call public order, and you blame him for prosecuting those who express their indignation at this sort of order ! You were an admirer of the great Perier, the small Thiers and his company, and then when the small Thiers asked your support for the secret funds to the end of continuing in office the subject of your admiration, you refused peremptorily the secret funds ! You stigmatize slavery, and, at the same moment, you hold that society may put the citizen in chains !

You profess negro-emancipation, and you vote the government money and soldiers to prevent that emancipation! You plead eloquently the cause of foundlings, and lament the wretchedness of the people, and you take ground against the conversion of the interest accruing from the money of the people! Try, then, to reconcile a little better, though at the risk of displeasing the ministry, your peroration with your exordium, and your conclusions with your premises!

But where M. de Lamartine has completely forgotten himself, was when he was led by some strange and inexplicable caprice, to defend the Disjunction law. In any other country and with any other Chamber, a ministry which should permit itself to procure the escape of the culprit while bringing to trial the accomplices, would have been itself impeached for violation of the law. If the Strasburg Jury did not unanimously acquit the companions of Louis Bonaparte, it would have been wanting to the divine law which is the law of conscience, and to the civil law which is the law of reason. M. de Lamartine, in defending this stupid and abominable Disjunction law, has erred through want of judgment—a thing that does not surprise us; and also through defect of heart—a thing which has afflicted those who love him. After this, put your trust in poets!

His whole discourse, in this unfortunate debate, was but a tedious vagary and a heap of contradictions and inconsequences of every sort. He declares that beyond all things he loves liberty and equality, and he delivers the most aristocratic speech of the session. He stigmatizes the Disjunction law by calling it a legislative Coup d' Etât, and yet he votes for this ministerial trick. He respects the immutability of the Charter, and he wants a second constituent Assembly. He wishes to preserve the country, and he excuses an armed attack upon that country. He has but just learned the distinction between connexity and indivisibility, and he disserts, like Bartholus, upon this distinction of transcendental jurisprudence. He insists upon obedience to the laws, and he saps the inviolability of the Jury. He reproves mil-

itary revolutions, but he would resign himself to popular revolutions, provided, behold you, that they occurred only now and then; and the rest of the speech is of the same calibre.

For the rest, M. de Lamartine was not here in his proper element, and it is no wonder that he has rambled from his subject. How should he be expected to speak the language of business? he does not know even the cant of it, happily for his muse. But he sometimes, not always, shines in literary questions, which have constituted the study and the glory of his life, and in questions of sentiment, which is the poetry of noble hearts.

We respectfully listen, when M. de Lamartine, a religious bard, chants a hymn to religion. We laugh, when M. Thiers, a frivolous scoffer and a Voltarian sceptic, invokes the divine Providence. It is that the one believes in something, the other in nothing.

But, if M. de Lamartine, in place of chanting, attempts to reason, it behooves us to see that his argument does not offend against the rules of logic, and also not to receive his figures, as conclusive, without verifying the arithmetic.

M. de Lamartine approaches sometimes nearer the truth than the other speakers, carried away as he is, unconsciously, by the inevitable consequences of the principles which he lays down, and he is left uninterrupted to finish expressions of a radical tendency, which Garnier-Pagès would not be permitted to begin. It is that a parliamentary auditory attaches no serious importance to the opinion of poets. It knows that they pursue in politics, through the affairs of society, as in poetry, through the fields, the shadowy or sunny caprices of their imagination;—like those harps of Æolia which, suspended in the sacred groves, used to tremble languidly to the breath of the zephyrs, or vibrate sonorously to the blast of the storm.

Let M. de Lamartine not deceive himself: if the Chamber lends him a general and kind attention, when he speaks of literature and morality, it is, that, by a secret self-com-

placency, there is not a single deputy, ministerial or puritan, who does not pique himself upon being a man of sense and taste. But too often, while M. de Lamartine is advocating human literature, he falls into the rhapsodical. It seems as if he made up his discourse of broken hexameters, cacadences, and unfinished phrases. *Aegri somnia.*

A cloud-traveller, he delights in a sort of aerial and quintessential metaphysics, which he imagines to be social science, and which is in fact but a sort of dreamy deism applied to the things of earth. He constructs, in his visions, definitions of it so irregular, that the meaning defies all analysis.

Take, for example, his theory of Literature :

“The beautiful is the virtue of the intellect. In restricting its worship, let us beware of impairing the virtue of the heart.”

What is to be thought of M. de Lamartine retailing, in full Chamber, such enigmatical nonsense, and what think you especially of the hypocritical deputies who gave it their applause ?

Strange, but too common perversity of noble minds ! M. de Lamartine holds himself in high esteem but as publicist, and perhaps as financier. He disdains his quality of poet. What is it, for M. de Lamartine, to be a poet ? It is only for pastime that he calls for his lyre, and if he was apprised that the nine Muses were up stairs and expected to hear from him, he would carelessly take up his pen and deign to write them in verse, as M. le Duc de Broglie too condescends sometimes to write in prose.

We do not deny that the talent of M. de Lamartine possesses considerable readiness and versatility. He improvisates, he retorts even with a brilliant facility, sometimes with great happiness of turn and expression, always with that conviction by so much the more animated and the more dangerous to the generality of assemblies, and to the orator himself, that he doubts of nothing, because he discerns, in the hasty and consequently incomplete vision of his imagination, but one half the object, while the other escapes his

ken. In poetry, M. de Lamartine flings his sheets to the printer, as in prose, his speeches to the auditory, just as the matter occurs to him, as fast as he can put it on paper and without concerning himself about what goes before or what follows. In one word, M. de Lamartine does not work sufficiently; and without the long, persevering and profound meditations of study, there can be no logical solidity. But it cannot be too often repeated to writers and parliamentary speakers, *It is by logic only they can hope to live.*\*

Our representative government has been so arranged that people of imagination are little adapted for it. Our legislation has a technical language which it is necessary to have acquired. It bristles with law terms, frequently barbarous, and founded upon scholastic subtleties. Hence, the large number of acute and crafty lawyers in the Chambers. And they are there in their proper sphere. For to make laws is to discuss, and they are eminently men of discussion. We will not say however with Plato: take the poets by the hand, and after having crowned them with flowers, conduct them politely to the frontiers of the republic. We will not say with Paul-Louis Courier, that in general literary men, in office, lose their talents without gaining a knowledge of business; nor with Lafitte, that M. de Lamartine might be a great poet, but that he was not a great logician.

At the same time, we are forced to admit that the poets are rather out of place on the bench of Correctional Police, in the Council of State, in the Stamp and registration office, or even in the capacity of ambassadors. We should greatly scandalize M. de Lamartine, were we to pretend that a village mayor, in wooden shoes if you will, possessed of sense and experience, would govern more wisely than he the affairs of the nation, and yet we should not scruple to affirm it, and we would find many to believe us.

\* A maxim which should be inscribed upon every temple of education of the age, and which will become more and more evident and operative with the progress of scientific philosophy and intellectual civilization.

If M. de Lamartine should deem us puritans rather severe, it is that he ought not to have left his natural vocation, and that having turned statesman, it is our duty to say what we think of the inconsistencies of character and conduct of the statesman.

When a man desires social amelioration, he should desire political amelioration. When a man knows anything of logic, he does not speak for a measure, but in the end to conclude against it. When a man is deputy, he ought to know what he wants, what he is, what party he sides with, what principles he supports. He who loves glory sincerely will twine but for glorious brows the laurels of poetry. He who loves the people sincerely, will not ask for them bread, but labor, respect and equality. He who loves liberty sincerely will not vote with its enemies!

Such are the reproaches, classical on the one hand, political on the other, which the critics and the puritans address to M. de Lamartine, as poet, as orator, and as statesman. Let me be allowed, in turn, to consider him under these three aspects.

Beyond doubt, M. de Lamartine is not a poet of a classical taste. He has not been cast in the mould of the antique Apollo. But he is the greatest extemporizer of verses in the French language. He is original, as all men of genius are, in his own way. He is negligent, but he is simple, precisely because he is negligent. He sports with the rhyme and the measure, transforms, moulds and adapts them to all his inspirations, to his every fantasy. The celestial spheres roll not through immensity with more harmony than his verses. The rivulet flows not through the meadow with a gentler murmur. The bird is not fresher in its earliest song. The lakes of Sicily, ruffled by the languid breezes, do not lighten, at night, with purer or softer rays. And it is not alone his voice that sings, it is his soul that sighs and speaks to mine the mystic language of sympathy, that vibrates through my frame, that thrills my whole being and inundates me with floods of tenderness and tears. It

is his meditation that transports me on wings of flame, into the regions of eternity, of death, of time, of space, of thought never before visited by me, and which gives expression to metaphysical truth in a language picturesque, sublime, seraphic.

I know not if the *cæsura* of his verse is not sometimes broken, if his rhymes be always perfect, if the idea be not expressed with confusion, with contradiction, if the chords of his lyre do not render everlastingly the same tone,—and I do not wish to know it. Do not the paired oars beat the wave with an equal and measured cadence? Do I complain that the linnet warbles over and over the same sweet song? Does not the nightingale intoxicate me always—undiminishedly—with its melody, beauty with her gaze, and the violet with its fragrance? Do I turn away my ear from the distant sound of the waterfall, and my eyes from the unchanging splendor of the stars? How should the soul that suffers not emit eternally the same cry? The mother who has just lost her son, does she not love to pour the inconsolable repetitions of her grief? In like manner, am I to expect Lamartine to prove, in a melodious syllogism, the abstract truth of his song? No, I ask him to rave upon his lyre and I rave, to sigh and I sigh, to love and I love, to enjoy and I enjoy!

Who could deny, without injustice, that Lamartine and Victor Hugo have enriched with their brilliants our poetic crown already so effulgent? Both irregular in their march and rebellious to the restraints of grammar. Both no doubt more attentive to the word than the idea, to inversion than simplicity, to novelty than method, to the surprising than to the natural, and sometimes to the rhyme than to the reason. Both a little somniferous in their monotony, somewhat stunning by the hubbub of their raptures. But both powerful intellects, original geniuses come to reinvigorate our exhausted literature. The one throwing off flame and sparkles like an East-Indian carbuncle; the other sighing like the harp of Fingal amid the desolate heaths. The one uncon-

trolled in his lyric impetuosity, too prodigal of his force and wealth, extravagant, fantastic, sometimes sublime; the other more religious, more meditative, more enveloped in allegories and symbols, more in communication with heaven and singing as if he prayed. The one torturing his rhyme and violating the Muse, whom the other caresses. The one, with bent arm, seeming to draw with effort from his bow, inflated and victorious sounds; the other abandoning himself like a limpid stream to his facile and flowing genius. The one more precise, but more attempered with the philosophical moralities; the other more inspired, but more mystical. The one, with more dramatic skill, interweaving man in the scenes of nature; the other more tender, more feeling, more persuasive, more eloquent in depicting the sentiments of the heart and the mysterious labyrinths of thought. The one more dazzling, more thundering than the bolt which leaps from crag to crag, and discharges in a thousand flashes amid the deep gorges of Hemus; the other more pensive, more visionary than the virgins of Israel along the banks of the lonely river that severed them from their country. The one going to the intellect, the other to the heart; the one suited to the sex of reason and action, the other to the sex of feeling and of love.

What! after having abolished the absurd property qualification, wherefore should we not send to sit on the legislative benches, by the side of the poet Lamartine, the poet Beranger, and the poet Victor Hugo, and the poet Alexander Dumas, and Laménais, and Chateaubriand, who also are great poets? And were I to see there a score of celebrities in the physical and natural sciences, in music, painting, sculpture, and the arts in general, I should be rejoiced at it for the honor of my country. This brilliant élite of talents and genius, without prejudicing the fundamental and more serious business of the legislature, would stipulate also for the moral, intellectual, scientific, and artistic interests, which are not less precious, not less dear to France than the finan-

cial and material. That which best represents France, is that which does her honor.

I know not whether it be predilection for men of mind, natural equity, or parliamentary vanity, but assuredly I would not exclude from the Chamber, suppose it in my power, such adversaries as Guizot, Berryer, Thiers, Lamartine, Jaubert, and other leading men, and I am not, I own, sufficiently exclusive, sufficiently partisan, to be unwilling that all opinions should be represented by the superiorities of their selection, or to hinder from shining in Parliament, with the reservation of combatting their doctrines, the illustrious men of my country.

It is also well—to return to our poets—it is well that their generous voice should protest from the tribune against that odious death penalty which was the subject of so much crocodile weeping in certain high quarters, and which has since been forgotten so quietly with all the rest. It is well that they interpose between the political parties who assail each other without measure or mercy, and that they awaken some pity, if not some remorse, in the hardened soul of the issuers of relentless orders, the creators of taxes which devour the poor people, the slayers of men after the third citation. Such is my conception of the mission of the parliamentary poet, and a beautiful mission it is, and you are, Lamartine, quite worthy to fulfil it!

Console yourself if you are not as great a politician, as good a logician as your flatterers tell you, as you think you are yourself, and as you would be wretched to believe that others did not think you. Console yourself, for poets are they not always in need of consolation? If you had not your defects, you would not have your qualities; if you were not changeable, you would not be impressionable; if you were not impressionable, you would not be poet; if you did not emit harmonious sounds, you would not be a lyre; if you had the precision of prose, you would not have the cadence of verse; if you had the logic of reasoning, you would not have the exquisite vagueness of sensibility; if you had the

purity of outline, you would not have the richness of coloring; if you knew the language of business, you would not know the language of angels!

Yes, Lamartine, console yourself for not being as some pretend, the first of our statesmen, and as I would be almost tempted myself to believe, seeing that this would be a great matter. Your lot is sufficiently fortunate, and for my part, I would prefer four or five of your stanzas to the whole pile of their parliamentary harangues, your own included. You will live, illustrious poet, when the actual readers of oratory will be forgotten, they and their works, and when perhaps two or three names will float down the stream of time, the sole survivors from the vast wreck of our ephemeral governments. You will live, and our children's children, in musing at the mid hour of a beautiful night, will love to recite these stanzas which fall with all the grace and the softness of the snow-flake.

Doux reflet d'un globe de flamme,  
 Charmant rayon, que me veux-tu?  
 Viens-tu dans mon sein abattu,  
 Porter la lumière à mon œil?  
 Descends-tu pour me révéler  
 Des mondes le divin mystère,  
 Ces secrets cachés dans la sphère  
 Où le jour va te rappeler?  
 Une secrète intelligence  
 T'adresse-t-elle aux malheureux?  
 Viens-tu, la nuit, briller sur eux  
 Comme un rayon de l'espérance?  
 Viens-tu dévoiler l'avenir  
 Au cœur fatigué qui t'implore?  
 Rayon divin, es-tu l'aurore  
 Du jour qui ne doit pas finir?  
 Mon cœur à ta clarté s'enflamme,  
 Je sens des transports inconnus;  
 Je songe à ceux qui ne sont plus—  
 Douce lumière, es-tu leur âme?\*

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\* I deemed it proper to present this poem in the original, the beauties, for which especially it is commended by our author, being of those which

This is the place to say that M. de Lamartine is tall, has blue eyes, the forehead narrow and prominent, the lips thin, the features aristocratic and regular, the port elegant, the gestures noble and a sort of stateliness a little stiff of the *grand seigneur*. The women, charmed with his sentimental melodies which touch so well their souls, look out but for him amid the multitude of the deputies, and ask each other : Where is he ?

Where is he ? Happily it is not in the clouds of the Socialist party. He has slipped down from it by more than

elude even the best translation. Now, however, with the proof-sheets before me, and the messenger waiting, I am tempted, for the use of the popular reader, to try a running version of it, which shall pretend to give no more than the sense, the substance. For such it has, Lamartine being something more than sound. His sentiments are always natural and noble: so unlike the epileptic sentimentalism introduced by Wordsworth, who succeeded in erecting a school of *poetry* (forsooth !) upon the poetic and intellectual imbecility of the age—contorsion being much more imitable and general than grace.

Mild image of a globe of flame,  
Fair orb of night, what would'st with me ?  
Or send'st thou to this breast thy beam  
To light its depths of misery ?

Descend'st thou, to my soul to bear  
The mysteries high of worlds above,  
Those secrets hidden in the sphere  
Where day will soon thy light remove ?

Some secret sorrow thou hast known  
Does't lead thee on thy heavenly way ?  
Come'st thou, by night, to beam upon  
The unhappy with Hope's cheering ray ?

Shew'st thou the future's veil undrawn  
To wearied hearts who thee implore ?  
Oh ray divine, art thou the dawn  
Of the bright day that ends no more ?

My heart enkindles at thy beam,  
I transports feel before unknown,  
I muse on those now but a dream—  
Sweet orb, art thou their spirit's throne ?—Tr's N.

half his body. He has furled his wings, he has alighted on the earth, and deigned to mingle with his brother mortals.

As orator—for I have to consider him under this second aspect—M. de Lamartine has been rising from year to year, and is at present in full possession of parliamentary glory. He possesses a happy and lively turn of imagination, a memory capacious, simple and fresh, which retains and renders promptly whatever has been committed to it, which is not disconcerted by interruption, is always well-possessed and follows, without missing the way, the uncertain thread of a thousand windings—a rare and wonderful faculty of appropriating to himself the ideas of others which has perhaps not its like in the Assembly—a perception distinct and vivid of the difficulties of each subject—a richness of coloring, which is bespread in the shape of flowers, waves, golden clouds, over all his speeches—a fine development of well-connected phrases—an improvisation free and well-sustained—a power of pointed reply, a cadence, a volume, a harmony, an abundance of images, sounds, movements which fall, without fatiguing the ear, and bear so close a resemblance to the loftiest eloquence, that it might well be mistaken for something of the kind.

For me who prefer, in Parliament, I must say, argument to oratory, logic to imagination, the language of affairs to that of the muses, I would be more affected by a masculine and nervous discourse, than with these melodious and roseate embellishments of style. But I must agree too that this pomp of language which would in others be elaboration, affectation, empty rhetoric, is entirely natural in Lamartine. He extemporizes as he sings. It is pure lyrical effusion, fresh from the fountain, without adulteration and without effort.

I like his balanced and rhythmical phraseology, though it be more fit to deliver the oracles of Apollo than to express the passions of the Forum. I like it because it rolls along the slime of the river with a sort of sweet and plaintive lamentings, like the scattered limbs of Orpheus. I like it be-

cause if it is not the prose of oratory, that grand and beautiful prose which I can nowhere find, it is at least the prose of poetry. There is wanting but the rhyme, and to relieve us from the provincial *patois* of our parliamentary honorables, much do I desire that the poet legislator should address us occasionally in verse. Take up thy lyre, O Lamartine for my ear is still full of the gravel of their jargon. For God's sake, verses, verses!

Less an orator than a poet, less a statesman than an orator, I have now to view him in this third and last quality.

M. de Lamartine is too much under the dominion of his imagination, which leads him back and forth through the labyrinths of a thousand systems. We know pretty nearly what it is he does not wish. Thus, he does not wish Legitimacy, nor the Empire, nor the Republic, nor the aristocracy, nor the *Camarilla*; but what he does wish it is not so easy to ascertain. Here is, at any rate, his principle, and comprehend it who can: It is "The organic and progressive constitution of the entire democracy, the diffusive principle of mutual charity and social fraternity, organized and applied to the satisfaction of the interests of the masses."

Verily, for the audacious temerities of this new Charter, M. de Lamartine needs not dread incurring the application of the September laws (against libellous and treasonable writings,) not being summoned by M. the Attorney-general of the King, before M. the Judge of instruction, sitting in his chambers at the Hall of Justice.

But if, to put in practice these grand and misty theories, M. de Lamartine coveted as he does covet, a high post in the executive authority, I know him better than he knows himself, and would lay a wager that, before the end of three months as ambassador or minister, he would be thoroughly disgusted, and sigh for a return to his wandering and beloved independence. The poet-man is thus constituted!

For the sake of his own fame, of his peace, of the affection of his friends, it is to be wished that M. de Lamartine may be neither minister nor ambassador. He does not know

the masters and the footmen, the high profligates and the low profligates with whom he would be under the necessity of mixing and living. He does not know to what they can descend in their professions. He does not know what they can dare in their fears. He does not know how often their touch has already polluted pure and innocent and elevated reputations. He is not made to be their judge. Still less is he made to be their accomplice.

The interested caressings of power, these transports of a poetic imagination, these tactics of poetry, these inconsistencies of doctrine, these aberrations of logic, can never pervert the fundamentally excellent character of Lamartine. By instinct, by sentiment, he is generous, charitable, devoted to the people, impatient of the theories and jargon of the humanitarians, ready at all times to say and do to whatever is useful, elevated, and national; independent and courageous in his opinions, sometimes even on the border of being radical; in fine, without a particle of gall upon those lips, with the simplicity of the poet and an honesty of heart which has something in it of virginal.

No, whatever may have been the error of your politics, of your vote, and of your speeches, no, Lamartine, you cannot hate liberty, for yours is a noble soul! No, you are not so unhappy as to believe that government can with impunity be unjust, violent, and corrupt; that human affairs are controlled by hard and blind necessity; that the sanction of a principle resides but in its triumph, and that revolutions purchased with the blood of the citizens ought to lead to no other lesson and no other consummation, than the cowardly oppression of the people.

Shame upon those doctrines, and I love to believe, Lamartine, and do believe from my heart, that you do not share them, that you shudder at them, that you loathe them, and that you would repeat with us, shame upon those doctrines! for, as you know, we are not of those who pass from camp to camp, according to the caprices of victory. We plant our banner on the broad ground of country. We

wish liberty, not in phrases but in things ; not in the lies of a Charter, but in the realities of political life ; not in the privileges of some, but in the equality of all. We cannot believe that truth is condemned to covenant with error, that the eternal laws of justice and morality have ceased to govern the world, that principles are reduced to beg favors from necessity, that the insolence of the fact ought to prevail over the right, or that the sovereignty of the people can pass away.

## GUIZOT.

M. Guizot is of a low and slender figure, but his aspect is expressive, the eye fine, and his gaze is singularly full of fire. In his gesture and mien there is something severe and pedantic, as you see in all professors, and especially those of the Doctrinarian sect, the sect, that is, of pride. His voice is full, sonorous and affirmative; it does not obey flexibly the varying emotions of the soul, but it rarely fails of being clear and audible. He wears an exterior of remarkable austerity, and everything about him is grave, even to his smile. This severity of manners, of deportment, of maxims, of language is by no means displeasing, particularly to foreigners; perhaps because of its contrast with the levity of the French character.

He is a pedagogue in his chair, with whom the ferrule is ever peering from under his robe. He is a Calvinist in his pulpit, cold, sententious, morose, who inculcates the fear rather than the love of God.

M. Guizot is accomplished in literature, a distinguished historian, and holds the highest place among the publicists of the English school. He is particularly well-versed in the languages ancient and modern. He has not the imposing manner of M. Royer-Collard; but he has a greater abundance of ideas; he is more comprehensive, more practical, more positive. You perceive at once that he has mingled more in the management of men's affairs.

Like all the preachers of the Genevese school, of that school characterized by its acrimony and harshness, he proceeds, in method as in manner, dogmatically. He neglects the ornaments of diction. He lacks variety imagination

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and liveliness, but not energy. His passion discovers itself in the brilliancy of his eyes and transpires upon the marbly paleness of his countenance, which it colors and tints of a sudden. But it is absorbed as quickly, and is in general more concentrated than exterior. He looks the Opposition in the face with front erect. He points at them with a haughty gesture, and hurls against them those pregnant sarcasms which leave rankling in the wound their venomous darts.

M. Guizot treats political questions from a certain elevated point of view. It was the manner of his master, M. Royer-Collard. He selects an idea, formulizes it into an axiom, and erects around this axiom the scaffolding of his reasonings. He reverts to it incessantly; he makes this idea the sole object of view, he draws to it, he rivets upon it, the spectator's attention. His oration is but the development of a theme. If the idea be true, the whole discourse is true; if the idea be false, the whole discourse is false. But the deputies of the partisan majority to whom he addresses himself never allow that the thesis is false, and so M. Guizot retains in their estimation all the advantages of his method.

These advantages are considerable in deliberative assemblies. For it is not with a multiplicity of ideas that you can best sway an auditory more or less inattentive, but with a simple idea, skilfully chosen, elaborated, dogmatized and presented under all possible forms. Accordingly this is the usual method of professors, and we must not forget that M. Guizot and Royer-Collard have filled the professorial chair. A professor who should not repeat himself, would not be understood; no more would he be comprehended, were he to formulize before his auditors a long string of axioms, for their attention would thus be distracted. The professors then from necessity all embrace this method; they carry it with them, through instinct and habit, from the chair to the tribune.

M. Guizot speaks at inordinate length, like all professors: he argues scholastically in the manner of the theologian.

He is monotonous like the former, opinionative like the latter. He loves to deal in abstractions, and does not scruple the employment of equivocal terms, such as "middle classes," "quasi-legitimacy," "legal country," "armed peace;" and when he falls upon one of these formulas, he fastens upon it, drops the fact, loses sight of land and soars into the region of generalities, where it happens to him not unoften to dissolve away and evaporate.

M. Guizot would have acted excellently the part of high priest of the Druids, in the sacred groves of our ancestors. He would have perfectly intoned in Celtic hemistiches their enigmatical oracles. His respectful disciples would not dare, at that day, to penetrate the tabernacle of his genius. They would have to prostrate themselves aloof, and adore him at a distance.

M. Guizot is fond of abstract theory in politics and philosophy. But as he has not sensibility of soul enough to believe vividly, nor logic enough in the intellect to deduce rigorously, he but too often leaves the question at the point where he took it up, without having carried it a step beyond.

His Eclectic doctrines beset him, overmaster and buffet him on every side with their changing billows. He spreads his sail to the four winds; and it must be that he raises some terrible tempests in his mind. In politics, he is a believer neither in the legitimacy of the right divine, nor in the sovereignty of the people. In religion, he is neither Jew, nor Mahomedan, nor Protestant, nor Catholic, nor Atheist. In philosophy, he is neither for Des Cartes, nor for Aristotle, nor for Kant, nor for Voltaire. Is he a professor of religion however? Yes, but of what creed and worship? Is he a Deist? How shall I tell you? I know nothing of the matter—and he himself, does he know more? Is he a philosopher? Yes, but of what sect? Is he a liberal? Yes, but of what party? No matter, he will set himself, by a mere play upon logical forms, in all these things to amalgamate the contraries. Thus, will he blend the purity

of democratic principles with the corruptions of his monarchy. He would have the two adverse religions, not only tolerate one another in the matter of their co-existence, but farther accommodate each other in the matter of their mysteries, and make their Easter communions together at the same altar.

His admirers, amid the darkness wherein M. Guizot has enveloped them, feel but a void, grasp but shadows without flesh or bone, and yet you hear them cry: We hold them! You hold what? truths! I defy you to bring them forth from the clouds of your phrases and show them in open day.

Alas! for twenty years back, your disastrous, your fatal school of Eclecticism has swayed our youth, of whom it has depraved the generous instincts, of whom confused the sprightly and pure intelligence. Look around you! That school has produced but sophisticated understandings, but hearts without faith, without fire, without patriotism, hearts which the nobler sentiments have never expanded, which the thirst of selfish and brutal pleasures consumes, which the anguish of doubt is wasting away, hearts extinct, dying, dead!

Ah! I can overlook M. Guizot's faults of statesmanship. In the space of three days, a government, a dynasty, a constitution may be overthrown, as M. Guizot, the conservative, who has overthrown them, knows better than I do: a less time than this were sufficient to repair a ten years' career of error and shame.

But this moral and systematic poisoning of the soul, this perversion of the lettered generations, this hideous leprosy, this intellectual gangrene, this distemper never known to our fathers and which will bow the degenerate impotence of our children beneath the sword of some usurping despot—this malady, who will cure it? Is it your disciples nipped with a precocious and lingering consumption who could be adequate to the manly struggles of liberty? Is it those intellects petrified by your doctrines who could be expected to advance boldly in the progressive march of the human

mind ? Is it those enervated arms, those dastard spirits who could serve for bulwarks to our independence, or even for instruments to a glorious despotism ? And yet you are astonished that the priests endeavor to rescue from your guidance those remnants of souls whom you have failed to save !

Yes, the fathers of the modern school, with their misty importations from Geneva, Berlin and Scotland, have spoiled our philosophy, our youth and our language. If it be the fate of this beautiful French dialect to pass one day into the state of a dead language, we give notice to posterity that Messrs. Guizot, Jouffroy, and Cousin, these three chiefs of the public instruction, these three professors of quintessential metaphysics, will to them be untranslatable, since to us, their contemporaries, they are unintelligible.

M. Guizot, to express ideas which are not ideas, has made himself a language which is not a language ; a language all inflated with false propositions, all bristling with barren and indefinite terms ; a language elaborate without profundity, affirmative without certainty, ratiocinative without logic, dogmatical without conclusion and without proof, dull to move, inspissated with saliva, and which moistens scarcely the parched and bloodless lips.

But when M. Guizot quits the pen and mounts the tribune, his thought flows freely and clearly, without losing anything of its breadth or its gravity ; it becomes colored without being overcharged with ornament ; it acquires body from being nourished with facts and examples ; it proportions itself to the common comprehension ; it develops itself and advances in an order at the same time natural and erudite.

How are we to explain this contrast in the man and this strange transformation of the manner of thinking ? Might it be that the writer, in his cabinet, is within his own control, that he retains all his individuality, that his uniformity of thought is unbroken by external influences, whereas an audience with its passions, its ideas, its language even, will always force itself upon the recognition and modify the discourse of the orator ?

It is certain that when once M. Guizot descends from his cloudy theories and enters the region of practical affairs, he is distinguished by a lucidity of idea and expression which has not been duly appreciated. He goes directly to the point and says only what is necessary, and says that well. As an agent for the government, he has been the most remarkable of all the agents we have heard these twenty years. As a minister, he has defended his administration with more precision, science and ability than any other minister.

His elocution, with little of vehemence or coloring, is pure and chastened. He is perhaps the only one of our extempore speakers whose reported discourses are supportable in print. The reason is that he is the most philological and lettered amongst them.

M. Guizot never surrenders ; he is mailed all over, and has not a flaw in his armor through which the shaft of objection may penetrate and wound. But no more is he endued with those happy ebullitions of passion, those boundings of the heart, those flights of imagination, those touching thoughts, those animated turns which flash forth from the genuine, the great orator, which ravish himself beyond himself, transport him by his own emotion and transfuse him into the souls and the very vitals of the auditory. M. Guizot is not what is called eloquent. He has however been so once, when, in a rapture of admiration for the Constitutionalists of 1789, he exclaimed : " I cannot doubt that, in their unknown abode, these noble spirits who have labored so much and honestly for the weal of humanity, must glow with a profound delight in beholding us steer clear to-day of those shoals upon which so many of their own benignant and beautiful hopes have been wrecked."

I believe, for my part, these great souls, in their unknown abode, are better employed than in the enjoyment of beholding France so honorably governed by M. Guizot and his troop. But the oratorical movement was beautiful.

M. Guizot was not less eloquent, when in the Coalition he battled with impetuous energy against the murmurs, the

clamors and stampings of the two Centres. In proportion as the storm rose in its rage, he stood the firmer, he clung to the tribune ; momentarily he grew paler and paler with anger. His eye shot the flashes and the bolts of the thunder, and environed by enemies, he attacked them like a huge eagle, tearing off their flesh and plucking out their eyes.

And recently, in the debate upon Foreign Affairs, he has sustained on that boisterous sea, with an eloquence that rose with the emergency, the onset of the furious and congregated lances of the Opposition. We have never observed his elocution clearer, his attitude more firm, his gesture more noble, and his language more assured and decisive.

M. Guizot passes in the Opposition for being of a cruel disposition. His flaming eyes, his pallid aspect, his shrivelled lips, give him the appearance of an inquisitor. He is said to be the author of the famous saying : " Show no mercy ;" a frightful phrase, if it had indeed been uttered !

But such is not the fact. M. Guizot gives me rather the impression of a sectary than a terrorist. He has more audacity of head than resoluteness of heart and hand. The profound esteem, the imperturbable self-complacency, the high admiration which he entertains for himself, occupy so fully his whole soul as to leave no place in it for any other sentiments. He would plunge head-foremost into the ocean, denying the while that he was drowning himself, and he believes in his own infallibility with a violent and desperate faith.

He resembles those angels of pride who braved the wrath of the living God, and who, with wings reversed, were hurled into the depths of the abyss.

Wherefore should I not mention, in my solicitude to be sincere, that M. Guizot, in his private relations, is a man of strict and pure morals, and that he deserves, by the lofty integrity of his life and his sentiments, the distinguished esteem of the virtuous ? I have witnessed his paternal grief, and I have admired the serenity of his stoicism. There is certainly great firmness in that soul.

I do not write here as a party man, to flatter the passions of my friends, but as a man of truth and sobriety, to prepare the judgment of posterity. Let the contemporaries of M. Guizot, who would roll him anew in the mire of the past and who reproach him with his early absolutism, descend themselves within their consciences and tell us what their opinions on the subject of government were twenty-six years ago! Made with entire truth, this would be a curious confession. Such an one to-day a red-hot radical or a republican would be found swimming along with the broad current of despotism, at a time when M. Guizot was meditating, professing, aye and practising liberty. He had been an instructor in it to all of us, because he understood it much more thoroughly.

Moreover, M. Guizot is a man himself to render homage to the sincerity of an adversary. But imbued with the antiquated doctrines of the English oligarchy, he imagines his form to be the beau-ideal of government, and persuades himself that it is much more favorable to progress than the most advanced democracies. We wish him joy of his notion.

The true government for him, is the aristocratic form, the aristocracy of the nobility, which he would like well enough had he been born a noble, the aristocracy of the burgess class which he desires, because he belongs to this class.

M. Guizot has a sort of dictatorial stateliness which always imposes both upon his own party and upon his adversaries. Legislative bodies, and especially governing majorities who need, when they have none of their own, that a will be formed for them, are much taken with men of deliberation; they love to be led, and feel themselves discharged in this way of the trouble of conducting themselves. M. Guizot has that peremptory air of disdain which does not make him amiable to the majority of the Chamber, but which renders him necessary. Seizing the critical moment, he states succinctly the question and challenges his opponents to the contest. This manœuvre, which throws the

Opposition into the hands of a man whose courage, has always sustained him, and he has had the good fortune to have a large following, at the head of the procession, and the men of talent unopposed, and they were left in determination, who were left him nearly at the village of the ...

We are not to think, however, that Guizot is a man of dexterity; that shrewdness which is quite plain upon his face, is the head of his party, and of the ... and his adroitness at fawning, but ... pride. Whenever he sees ... to stimulate, he feigns to be ... their person and especially ... they prize above all else ... wrought up gradually ... bravely that they had served ... under their feet the ignominious ... won the esteem of every ... throughout entire Europe, ... little, if indeed anything ... which is a very agreeable ...

Some have pretended that M. Guizot has a species of political courage; whether it proceed from the larynx, or from the larynx, like the voice of certain singers, it is said, this courage. How can I know, and how should I say? I have never seen him put it to the test, either in the tribune or through the press.

In fact, he assumes in our public Chambers the attitude of a suppresser of Insurrection. He and his party, M. Guizot is not ignorant, however, that in those victories, the odds have never been less than a hundred to one, and that, moreover, neither he, nor one individual of his parliamentary grenadiers, has burned a single printing. But he hopes his co-victors may have bad memories. He knows perfectly what sort of people he is addressing. He knows that by

telling men of obscure origin that were there to be a new revolution, they would be persecuted, and by thus assigning them the importance of victims, he at once flatters and frightens them, and that in this way he places them under his protecting wing—and this, it must be owned, is cleverly contrived.

But much as he may desire to enhance himself in the eyes of the majority, I am unwilling that he should vaunt so loudly of the perils which he has personally incurred, and the violence which he has undergone for its sake. The electoral enfeoffment of his college, one hundred thousand francs annual salary, with lodging, fuelling and lighting free, the grand-cross of the Legion of honor, three chairs at the Institute, the places of minister of the Interior and Foreign Affairs, the presidency of the University and the embassy to London, such within eleven years, are the horrible violences which M. Guizot has submitted to and the dangers he has braved—and not a single pin-scratch!

Grave in his public department, pertinacious of his object rather than his means, ambitious by system and temperament, laborious and peremptory, M. Guizot possesses all the qualities and all the defects of a Doctrinarian leader.

Victorious and a minister, M. Guizot does not retire to the voluptuous pleasures of Capua. He pursues you in your flight, sets his foot upon your head, and crushes you irrecoverably. Vanquished, and by the Opposition, he supplies the deficiency of his numbers by the dexterity of his tactics. He calculates his forces, counts the days of battle. He keeps a watchful eye upon his band, and harangues them by voice and gesture, gives the word and takes his own position on the confines of the field, to stop the deserters and rally the wavering. His squadron moves in solid column under this skilful and resolute chieftan. It is not numerous, but it is composed rather of officers than soldiers: a troop golden-armed, veteran, independent, presumptuous, furious upon occasion, supple in its evolutions and who are ready to work at sapping and ruining, night and day, until they

deem the time come to erect the scaling-ladders and mount the breach. M. Guizot's troopers must, every one, keep constantly the knapsack on his back, and the capsule on the battery, ready to fire, while he himself, posted upon an elevation, and his spy-glass directed in the fashion of an emperor, indicates the positions which are to be seized.

But what is all this, if it is not war? Accordingly may it be truly said, that during the eleven years that he has been in public life, M. Guizot has been conducting not a government but a campaign. He has encamped power in a fortress bastioned, serrated, pierced with port-holes, provided with trusty *gendarmes* to keep sentinel on the ramparts, and unerring cannons, to fire, at any moment, upon any passer-by.

He has been wasting a powerful intellect, extraordinary faculties, a consummate experience, an unflinching heart in the service of a principle so false that he would himself permit me to say it is false, but would not permit me to prove it so.

The continued humiliation of France, the timidity and baseness of our diplomacy, the prostitution of the press, the violence of our riots, the blood shed upon the scaffolds, the anarchy of opinions, the enormity of our standing army, the excess of taxation, the disorder of the finances, the animosity of parties—all this does not proceed from M. Guizot, but from his principle. True to France, he might have led her by a silken thread. False to her, he holds her chained down by a hundred iron cables, which she will one day burst from around her.

With all that is necessary besides, for the government of a state, M. Guizot lacks sensibility and genius, and he would be fitter to direct the senate of a Protestant republic, than to lead the great kingdom of France.

I am not clear whether it would be better for any ruling cabinet to have M. Guizot's friendship than his hostility; for his alliances cost more dearly than his hatreds. If he consents to tow at his chariot-wheels a minister who falls into a swoon, the latter must suffer himself to be manacled, and

must follow him, his heart swollen with shame and sobs, in the manner of the kings vanquished by the Romans. He drags him behind by his torn toga, and after having covered him with insulting mockery, he will deign perhaps to leave him his crown and his life. But what a life, and what a crown!

M. Guizot would be but the chief of a handful of sectaries, had he planted his batteries only in the halls of the parliament. But he has had the skill to erect citadels without, detached forts, from which he sweeps down the scattered and disordered troops of the adversary.

He has sagaciously perceived, that in a form of government where it is ideas, not a man or men, that rule, the first step to take was to monopolize and secure the manufacturers of ideas. The ministerial journals, even when he is not minister, are full of the creatures of M. Guizot, who, every morning, chant his praises and do his work. So completely has he taken possession of all the avenues to the academy, that there is now no obtaining a place there without his will and pleasure. Three-fourths of the sub-prefects, of the prefects and of the procurator-generals, are Doctrinarians prompted by him, and who merely repeat his lessons. All the pedants in *us* and in *i* of Germanic and Scythian Europe, fall in prostrate ecstasy before the incomprehensible profundity of his genius, and the ambassadors of the Holy Alliance, whose purposes he so well subserves, recommend him in their secret notes. He has re-peopled the Council of State, he has recruited the Chamber of Peers, he has sentinelled the wardrobe, the anti-chambers, and perhaps the kitchens of the Palace, with Doctrinarians of all sorts of sex, in petticoats, in linen caps, and in epaulets.

Minister or not, M. Guizot reigns in the under apartments of the Court, as well as in his lecture-hall. The Court is Doctrinarian, doctrinarian with a very limited intelligence, I know well, with a prolixity of weak and intemperate phraseology, and some poverty—not of gold assuredly, but of idea.

Accordingly, am I far from saying that M. Guizot is not greatly superior to the Court in understanding, in character and in speech. But though the *Pere Lachese* was more learned than Lewis XIV., Lewis XIV. was not for this the less a jesuit: so from the fact that the Court is not a match for M. Guizot, it does not follow that the Court is any the less a good and frank Doctrinarian, who glories in the creed, and has willed with its master in pedagogism, the electoral monopoly, a hereditary peerage, the intimidations of September, the Disjunction law, large budgets, doweries, dotations, bastiles, the armed peace and other inventions and discoveries legislative and governmental, of the same character and tendency. So that it may be said that the Court and M. Guizot, M. Guizot and the Court govern France in partnership, and here is the eleventh year, as we see, that she is so governed. M.M. Casimir-Perier, Mortier, Broglie, Molé, Soult and Thiers have been first ministers of the system, but they were not the system. Legitimists, Third-partyists, Dynastics, Anti-dynastics, vainly will they all of them together in that Chamber, bustle and busy themselves; the Doctrinarians will prevail with or without office, unless the Court change, or it should be M. Guizot.

It is not with the Court that I have here to do: but M. Guizot (to confine myself to him) how can he have brought himself to lend his fine intellect to such vile purposes? How is it that he, an honorable man, has not felt ill at ease these ten years back, amid that servile and depraved multitude? He, who has seen intimately the recesses of so many false hearts, of so many profligate consciences, of so many venal or vain-glorious corruptions, how does he not blush to the eyelids, for the villainous traffic he is driving? He a Calvinist, he persecuted in his ancestors for the freedom of religious discussion, he born and brought up in the full liberty of political discussion, how can he have interdicted to so many manipulators of Charters, of oaths and of kings, the right of examination? How could he, an advocate for abolishing capital punishment, have proposed to

condemn political writers to the punishment, a thousand times more cruel of transportation to the uninhabitable wilds of a distant island, and beneath a tropical sun? How can he, who is a man of art as well as of intellect, have come to place the material concerns of society, so brutal and stupefying, above its moral interests, above the sacred love of country and liberty, above all those noble aspirations which are the life, the charm and the true greatness of civilized nations? God has permitted that he should be the author of so much evil in punishment of his pride.

M. Guizot has so indoctrinated the "country gentlemen" in his selfish, perverse, impious, anti-christian maxims; he has so repeatedly assured them, that they were the sovereigns of science, of eloquence and of thought; that they were the absolute masters of the soil and the industrial interests; that all appertained to them by right of social supremacy, and that the rest of the nation were but a horde of helots and barbarians,—*that* the "country-gentlemen" have been observed to conduct themselves accordingly; have plunged into all the beastly and carnal sensualities of materialism; have distributed amongst themselves all the offices in the National, in the Departmental Councils, in the magistracy, in the army, in the legislative bodies, in the several departments of administration; have supported with acclamation the laws respecting electoral monopolies, the jury, the enlistment, civil lists the most monstrous, doweries, dotations, corn-laws, abuses of dukes and princes, and in short the squanderings of the public money by town and Court, and have attached and tied down the nation all alive to a sort of feudal vassalage, more unendurable perhaps than the serfdom of the middle ages.

M. Guizot, instead of following the age in its undulations, in its successive transformations, and in its career of progress, has determined to construct a sort of fiction,—half English, half Doctrinarian,—which should move with mechanical uniformity, and which will pass away without leaving a trace of it behind, for it is a work against nature.

But at length, the nation, that nation of thirty-four millions of freemen, will demand what all this means, and will compel its thoughtless and wasteful stewards to render their accounts. Then will be heard some terrible cracking of that edifice built upon sand and buffeted on every side by the furious tempest; and the strife will be who, in this universal quaking of the earth, will decamp the speediest; and M. Guizot, this pretended conservatist, will perhaps be the first to raise the cry of *sauve qui peut*.

M. Guizot would be but half portrayed unless he was compared with M. Thiers; I shall therefore close with their parallel.

M. Guizot and M. Thiers are the two most eminent men that the boiling cauldron of July has thrown to the surface of political affairs.

Born both of them of the press, they have strangled their mother, on leaving their cradle, after sucking her breast-milk to the blood.

Both, like inquisitors, have kindled the flames of the September fire, around those who exercised the privilege of free thought, saying to them:—Believe or burn!

Both represent in the government, the one the constitutional burgess class of legitimacy, the other the dynastic burgess class of the actual revolution.

Both are not bigoted to the person of the king, and royalists unconditionally. They are no more for the younger branch than for the elder, or any other. They are actuated but by ambition of fortune or by attachment to a system, and would readily treat Louis Philippe, be assured, the occasion offering, after the fashion in which they treated Charles X.

Unfortunately these ten years, unskilful and timid helmsmen, they have done but turn their little bark, in their little archipelago, around the same shoals. They lurk in the creeks. They do not venture into the open sea.

France, in spite of the obstacles from monopoly and taxation, has moved of herself along in a flourishing career of

agriculture and industry, and they imagine this to be the effect of their policy. France counterpoised Europe with the influence of one hundred millions of revenue and thirty-four millions of men, and they imagine that they, Thiers or Guizot, by putting their little finger in the scale, may incline the balance.

Parliamentary government may be distinguished into the bastard and the legitimate. The bastard springs from the copulation of monopoly and corruption. The legitimate is born of the marriage of nationality and law. May it please Messrs. Guizot and Thiers to tell us whether they are bastards or lawfully-begotten—in the order, of course I mean, of political filiation?

For the rest, Thiers and Guizot are almost complete opposites to each other, in character, in opinion and in talent: the one pliant, talkative, familiar, cunning and coaxing; the other imperious, austere and pompous. The one, whom the old reminiscences of youth are constantly drawing in their wake towards the Left; the other, whom the sudden impulses of legitimism bear about towards the Right.

M. Guizot, by dint of learning and gravity, may, among the nobles of diplomacy, pass for an aristocrat. M. Thiers, in spite of the confidence and extraordinary brilliance of his mind, will never rise, in their eyes, above the rank of a parvenue.

The ambassadors of the Holy Alliance will see in M. Guizot the conservatist, a semblance of the legitimist. In M. Thiers they will always see but the revolutionist, even when he would sweeten his voice, lower his tone, and sheathe his talons. The aristocracies are sisters like the democracies. Confidences would be committed to M. Molé and M. de Broglie which would not be vouchsafed to M. Thiers. It would be otherwise under a government truly national, which derives its efficacy from principles not men. The thing is not without grounds in an exceptional government, whose force proceeds neither from the people nor from itself.

M. Guizot is cautious in action, M. Thiers bold in speech.

M. Guizot looks softly, and M. Thiers fiercely at the powers of Europe, who laugh at both the one and the other.

M. Guizot places France upon an easy couch, for fear of rupturing an aneurism. M. Thiers would dash her through the immensity of space like a hairy comet.

From the moment M. Guizot gets into power, you are sure that the press, great and small, will be tracked like a wild beast, into all its dens. If M. Thiers be raised to power, you are sure it will break into a universal mattering of war. They are both in our domestic and our foreign affairs, our two good angels, the guardian angels of peace and of liberty!

M. Thiers would sway the press rather by seduction, M. Guizot, rather by terror. After all, what is the liberty of the press, such as Guizot and Thiers have made it? A liberty of the press which is not allowed to discuss the principle of the government! Is not this in truth a ludicrous liberty? A potter, who is not allowed to perforate with his finger the pitcher for which he has just tempered the clay! What sort of potter can such an one be? What sort of pitcher?

M. Guizot the eclectic, and M. Thiers the fatalist, will not condemn to fire everlasting a person who should discuss the attributes or the existence of God. But they will condemn to the punishment of Salazie the man who would dare to discuss the king. It is that God, the great God of earth and heaven, in their opinion, does not exist. But does the king exist? These gentlemen, the better to assure themselves of it, put a hand upon their red portfolio and exclaim: The king does exist!

M. Guizot disserts by maxims, M. Thiers by sallies.

Guizot, in soaring into the gloomy regions of philosophical abstraction, encounters some vivid gleams of light. Thiers is better pleased not to elevate himself as far as the clouds.

than to lose himself in their mist. He is rather gifted with legs than with wings.

M. Guizot does not throw upon the parliamentary table too many motions at a time. M. Thiers, on the contrary, empties his dice-box ; he plays at hazard, and risks his all.

M. Thiers is more favorable to the popular sovereignty ; M. Guizot to the parliamentary. The starting point of the one is the Revolution (English) of 1688, that of the other, the Revolution of 1793. The one is more of a philanthropist, the other more of a patriot.

M. Guizot has more faith in ideas, M. Thiers, in the edge of the sword ; M. Guizot in the resistant inertness of the middle class, M. Thiers in the insurrectionary activity of the masses.

M. Guizot puts up for chief of the conservatives—conservatives of what ? M. Thiers for leader of the progressists ; a new term, if not a new thing.

M. Guizot is constantly flattering the majority ; he broods upon them with his dark eye, lest they should disband, and takes all occasions to vaunt the unswerving constancy, the firm union and the heroic courage of the aforesaid majority, although he knows in his heart what estimate to set upon these three matters, quite as well as you or I. M. Thiers, if the majority show impatience or disorder, would rather compel it by an application of the lash, and as he prefers the quality to the quantity, he casts his most caressing looks towards the extremities of the Chamber.

M. Guizot and M. Thiers do not treat their respective majorities in the same manner and with the same air. May I say that the one is more insolent to it, the other more impertinent ?

M. Guizot and M. Thiers have still two other modes of treating their majority, which are worth knowing. The one sounds the tocsin, beats the drum, and tolls the *generale*. The other pricks the excitable fibre of self-interest. It is with the support of his salaried deputies that M. Guizot ekes out the number one-half more one, and, revolting to his

philosophic pride though it may be, the most transcendent of his arguments will always be, with this majority, the argument of making-the-pot-boil.

M. Guizot is too presumptuous not to despise insult, and M. Thiers too thoughtless to bear it long in memory.

Out of place, M. Guizot avails himself of the parliamentary authority to compel the influence of individuals to his purpose ; in place, he avails himself of individual influence to harass and reduce the parliamentary power. Out of place or member of the Opposition, M. Thiers plants his batteries against the minister on the ground of internal abuses, and annoys him with the small warfare of tripping him up (*crocs-en-jambe* ;) in place, and minister, he transfers the debate into the field of Foreign Relations, because he is there at liberty to act at large and almost without control, and of being as reserved as he pleases.

M. Guizot overcomes objections by his pertinacity ; M. Thiers eludes them by his suppleness. He slips through your fingers like a slimy eel ; you must take him with the teeth to hold him.

M. Guizot affirms or denies ; M. Thiers says neither yes nor no.

M. Guizot, urged, interrogated, goaded, wraps himself in the disdain of a dry and arrogant denial, or in the haughtiness of his silence ; M. Thiers defends too tediously, like a lawyer, the minutest details of his ancient ministries, and as other orators try to imitate him, without having his intellect, the legislative debates are apt to degenerate into drivelling.

The one, more a spiritualist, addicts himself rather to the principle. The other, more a materialist, is attached rather to the facts. The one believes in a sort of morality, the other believes very little in anything.

M Guizot has boldness in a conflict with persons, then he is courageous through pride. But when he has to do only with affairs, then his pride is worth him nothing. And this explains why he shows so much resoluteness, in the tri

bune, against parliamentary minorities, and so little in the cabinet against the insolencies of a foreign power.

M. Thiers has reason to desire a large army and a stout budget, because he has made himself the advocate of monopoly, and that a government of monopoly cannot dispense with these expedients. If he had been content to remain a national man, he might have been able to do with half an army and half a budget; we would thus be better off and he too. This we say, and, be assured of it, this he thinks.

M. Guizot, minister or not, lives but in the atmosphere of politics. He has the force, the resolution, the obstinacy, the experience of a man who thinks, every moment of the day, but upon the same thing. With him, power is a matter of temperament almost as much a of ambition.

M. Thiers does not live exclusively for government and politics. Is he displaced from the ministry, he turns artist, puts on steam, is off to Naples, digs for mummies and writes histories.

M. Guizot's intellect has more generality; M. Thiers's more breadth and activity.

M. Thiers, like phosphor, blazes and goes out. M. Guizot, like a tomb-lamp, sheds only a sombre light, but burns forever.

M. Guizot sometimes takes obscurity for profundity, and big words for great things. M. Thiers, sometimes also takes tinsel for gold, and bluster for glory.

M. Guizot is always a philosopher, M. Thiers is always an artist. The one seems to imagine himself always lecturing in his chair, the other to think himself conversing in a drawing-room.

Both are perhaps the first journalists of their times. But M. Guizot cultivates rather the dogmatism of the press, Thiers rather its running polemics. The one delights to listen to the sound of his hollow theories. The other groups the facts and occurrences of each day, around his system. He insinuates himself by some imperceptible inlets into the outworks of the Opposition, and while they are asleep, he fires the cannons.

As a political writer, M Guizot is better liked in foreign countries than with us, where the graces of form are preferred to the solidity of the matter, and where the style makes the whole man. For the rest, it must be allowed that the laborious commentators of this publicist, spend a vast deal of effort to divine his meaning. They succeed in penetrating him nearly as well as we do the Apocalypse. Genius, however, is light ; that which is not clear is not French.

M. Thiers, and this will not displease him, is, in his histories, rather the statesman than the writer. He excels neither in the plan, nor the arrangement, nor the coloring, nor the profundity, nor the concision. But he is singularly remarkable for his high intelligence of events, the ability of his narrative and the perfect lucidity of his style. He writes much as he speaks, with a picturesque abundance and charm.

No French writer has equalled him in the description of battles, or the exposition of financial crises. He has related, in the history the most popular and widely-read of our day, the great wars of the Revolution, its Assemblies, its constitutions, its negotiations and its laws. It is for him now to present us Napoleon upon the scene of the Consulate and the Empire, in the garb he is to wear to posterity.

M. Thiers, however, belongs to the fatalist school, to that barren school which excuses the faults and the crimes even of governments by the plea of necessity, which recognizes no rule of right either in the nation or between nations, which stifles free will and plunges virtue into despair. Of what consequence to us would be the history of past facts, without the moral significance of these facts for the instruction of the present and future generations ?

M. Guizot has more method in his improvisations and his discourses ; M. Thiers more freedom and natural ease. M. Guizot is the more eloquent in anger ; M. Thiers in enthusiasm.

Nothing can be more grave than the diction of M. Guizot ;

nothing more charming than the sprightly fluency of M. Thiers. At the end of a quarter-hour's speaking, M. Guizot fatigues me; at the end of two hours, M. Thiers interests me. You feel no solicitude for M. Guizot, because he has his theme prepared, and you know he will not wander from it a hair's-breadth. You feel none for M. Thiers, because you know he will come off happily from the excursions the most distant, and the passes the most difficult.

If the peril of the situation be imminent, M. Guizot will pull the selfish fibres of the burgess deputy. In such a case, M. Thiers will sound his trumpet and you will see him appear at the extremity of the defile, a tri-colored flag in his hand. It is Bonaparte on the bridge of Arcola.

Both, to recapitulate, will have been found unequal to the task they have assumed, because they have been unequal even to their own principles, which are not principles. Both, under the official gilding of a Court costume, have put too often forgotten even the sentiment of their own dignity. Both, a pitiful spectacle! tear one another, like two dogs, for the bones of power, and after this edifying combat, the victor comes humbly to lick the feet of his master.

Men of petty warfare and of petty peace, they have failed even to bring to an end either the Bedouin skirmishing of Algeria, or the abortion of their parliamentary sovereignty.

Will they say, they who were, by their intrepid coalition, to drive back into the palace kitchens the encroachments of despotic government, will they say with the great Chatham: "I have been called to the ministry by the voice of the people, and it is to the people alone that I owe an account of my actions?"

Will they say—they, responsible ministers, who had sworn to wear worthily the sceptre of the 7th of August—will they say with Napoleon, after the battle of Austerlitz: "Frenchmen! when you set upon my head the imperial crown, I made oath to maintain it untarnished in that proud

effulgence of glory which alone could give it value in my eyes." Alas ! alas ! France, that noble France, astonished to-day to find herself desolate, surveys herself, seeks herself, interrogates herself, and can no more comprehend herself what she is, or recognize herself what she has been !

Incapable of making her a queen, they have made her a huckstress, and after the day's work, retired within the recess of her shop—she who was wont to wield the sabre and the sword—there she sits, occupied in counting her receipts and piling up her coppers in portable packages !

## M. THIERS.

M. THIERS has not been dandled, in his infancy, on the lap of a duchess. Born poor, he lacked a fortune; born obscure, he was without a name. Having failed at the bar, he turned literateur and went body and soul into the liberal party, rather from necessity than conviction. There he betook him to admiring Danton and the leaders of the "Mountain," and carried to extravagance the calculating enthusiasm of his hyperboles. Devoured by a thousand wants, like all persons of vivid imagination, he owed the beginning of his competency to M. Lafitte, and his reputation to his own talents. Meanwhile, were it not for the Revolution of 1830, M. Thiers would be perhaps to-day neither elector, nor eligible, nor deputy, nor minister, nor so much as Academician: he might have grown gray in the literary esteem of a coterie.

Since, M. Thiers has changed his part: he has become author—champion and panegyrist of dynasties—supporter of privileges—issuer and executor of oppressive ordinances; he has irreparably attached his name to the besiegement of Paris, to the bombardment of Lyons, to the magnificent exploits of *Transnotran* street, to the transportations of Mount St. Michael, and the imprisonments, to the laws against associations, public hawkers, courts of assize, and the journals: to all in short which has chained down liberty, to all which has stigmatized the Press, to all which has perverted the trial by Jury, to all which has decimated the patriots, to all which has demoralized the nation, to all which has trampled in the dust the pure and generous Revolution of July.

His friends—Dupont de l'Eure, Carrel, Lafitte—he has deserted; his liberal principles he has repudiated; he began by serving the dynasty as tool of all work, one of those instruments which bow but never break, which will bend to the contact of both ends, and fly back—so supple are they—with the resilience of an arrow.

Doubtless your aristocratical ministers are more courteous in speech; but they are more obstinate in character. They are more expert at bowing with grace the head and spine. They will stoop to the earth to take up their master's hat, but they will resume their upright posture with a haughty brow. Their intercourse with kings is that of one gentleman with another. They look upon the place of minister as beneath them. Accordingly, by instinct of domination, kings prefer to take their ministers from among the lower classes than from the nobility. They know the latter will serve them but in quality of servants, while the former almost always may be employed as domestics.

If then it happens that, in a monarchy, a man of low birth, but of some talent, has received an education more literary than moral, and that, borne on the arm of fortune, he has crept to the summit of power, his elevation will speedily turn his head. As he finds himself isolated upon the heights he has gained, and knows not where to lean for support—having neither personal nor family consideration, being no longer, nor wishing to be, one of the people, and unable, whatever he may wish or do, to be one of the nobility—he will place himself at the feet of his king, will clasp them, will lick them, will be at a loss to know by what contorsions of servility, by what caresses of supplication, by what simulations of devotedness, by what genuflexions, by what kiss-foot cringings to manifest the abjectness of his humility and the prostration of his worship. The personages of this description are like the predestined of Ghehenna who make a compact with the devil. They are marked with his nail, and if they but turn aside the head, burst a link of their chain, make a single step, the infernal owner

to whom their body has been delivered and their soul has been sold, cries out to them : " Stir not, thou art mine ! "

Run on, my pencil ; I have here no need of either nicely spread canvass or of compass, run on at thy own fantasy ! I have to paint M. Thiers just as he speaks—less well, no doubt, than he speaks ; I wish to sit to the public as M. Thiers sits to me, by commencing with the chin, ending with the eyes ; and, that the portrait may be the more faithful, to pass off from the subject, cross and re-cross in a thousand curvatures of digression, then return, lose my way, recover it, lose it again, and make M. Thiers exactly after his own image.

M. Thiers, taken in detail, has a large and intelligent forehead, lively eyes, a smile delicate and intellectual. But in his general aspect, he is chubby, negligent, vulgar. He has in his prattle something of the merchant, in his gait something of the apprentice. His nasal voice rends the ear. The front of the tribune reaches to his shoulder and hides him almost from the auditory. It must be added that no one puts any confidence in him, not even he himself—especially himself ! Physical disadvantages, distrust on the part alike of enemies and friends, he has everything against him ; and yet as soon as this little man gets possession of the tribune, he ensconces himself in it so at ease, he has such a flow of intelligence, such a flow of mind, that you allow yourself to be carried away by the pleasure of hearing him.

He droops, from habit, his head upon the chin, while going to the tribune ; but once mounted and speaking, he erects it so well and lifts himself so jauntily a-tiptoe, that he out-tops the whole assembly.

Although he begins almost every paragraph of his speeches with this formula : *Permit me, Gentlemen*, or : *I ask your pardon*, he very freely dispenses with the permission and thinks himself far above the pardon of any man. But there is so much vanity in a French Chamber ! You must appear so humble in addressing it ! With this little precau-

tion, you may venture, and say, what you please. It is the passport of many an impertinence.

M. Thiers cannot be said to proceed by fitful sallies like Dupin, nor to have the impressive delivery of Odil on-Barrot, nor the scoffing sarcasm of Mauguin, nor the billowy eloquence of Sauzet, nor the superior reasoning power of Guizot: his talent is of a peculiar sort, and resembles, neither nearly nor remotely, that of any other person.

His speaking, I grant you, is not oration, it is chat, but chat at once vivid, brilliant, airy, voluble, lively, studded with snatches of history, with anecdotes, and keen reflections; and all this loquacity unwinds its endless thread, now cut, now broken, then tied, then loosed, again knotted, with an incomparable dexterity of language. The thought springs so quickly in that head, so instantaneously, that you would imagine it uttered before it had been conceived. The vast lungs of a giant would be insufficient to expectorate the flood of words of this gifted pigmy. Nature, ever attentive and compassionate in her compensations, seems in him to have concentrated all the might of manhood in the fragile organs of the larynx.

His allusions fly and flap like the bat's wing, and pierce you so quickly that one feels wounded without knowing whence proceeded the dart. You would find in his discourses a thousand contradictions to criticise, but he leaves you neither place nor time for it. He envelopes you in the labyrinth of his argumentations where a thousand routs intersect each other in all directions, and of which he alone holds the clue. He takes a view entirely overlooked of the question, which seemed exhausted, and presents it in a new light by the most ingenious reasonings. He is never found unprepared upon any subject: as prolific, as prompt in defence as in attack, in reply as in exposition. I know not if his reply be always the most solid, but it is always the most specious. He stops sometimes suddenly to retort upon the interrupters, and pops off his repartee with an adroitness of aim which completely stuns the

If a theory have several aspects, some false, some true, he groups them, he mixes them, he makes them play and radiate before you with a hand so invisibly agile that you have not time to seize the sophism on its passage. I do not know whether the disorder of his improvisations, the incoherent huddling of such a mass of heterogeneous propositions, the odd jumble of all those ideas and all those tones, be design and the effect of his art ; but he is of all orators the most easily refuted when you read him, the most difficult to refute when you only listen. He is certainly the most amusing of our political profligates, the sharpest of our sophists, the subtlest and most undetectable of our thimble-riggers. He is the Bosco of the tribune.

He is ever praying and beseeching that he be allowed to speak the truth. Ah ! my God ! do not talk so much about your intention to speak it, but speak it.

He is rash and timid by turns. He now precipitates himself into action, and then flinches and retires—in the consciousness of his power if you take his own word for it. He sees all the points of the difficulty, but does not solve one of them. He takes a globe between his hands—the ballot-urn would answer his purpose as well—and delivers a course of geography. He depresses the circles, the equator, the solstices. He elevates the coasts, sounds the gulfs, nears and signalizes the promontories, the shoals, the ports, the cities, the mountains, the mouths of rivers. He makes the circuit of the world, and returns home, after having seen much, talked much, travelled much, but walked little. given much lecture but little instruction.

Were he to be offered the command of an army he would not refuse it ; and for my part, I am by no means sure, on the faith of Timon, that he would not gain the battle. I vow to you I have heard with my own ears generals so taken with him as to declare they would willingly serve under his command.

You smile, but no, I speak quite seriously ; and were he only four inches taller and had learned the sudden charge,

he might have been "little corporal" and a bit of a Napoleon.

Wake him not, I pray you, from his illusion, when in the tribune he lays his plans, manœuvres his troops, and expatiates in his strategical evolutions. For then he imagines himself really and truly general, not alone of a single army, but generalissimo, and in case of need an admiral; and admiral, too, so accomplished, that in order to sail from Greece into Egypt he would bring back the fleet to Toulon, for the purpose of bringing it within the field of his spy-glass, in the manner of Bonaparte. Another time, he would go direct to Soult, and tell him bravely that he did not go out of Genoa with his army by the French, but by the Italian, gate; and if Soult has been wounded at the battle of Salamanca, he will maintain, amidst the applause of the Chamber, that it was in the left leg and not in the right, as Soult himself had thought hitherto, and he will prove it so plausibly that the old general, the better to assure himself, will involuntarily put his finger in the cavity of his wound.

Sometimes, he turns to bewailing his own lot, and no one then knows better how to act the victim. Anon, he assumes the tone of a misanthropic Cato, and emits a deep and doleful sigh for the perversities of opinion. He can also play the amiable to perfection, and when you think he is caressing you, he grips you like a cat. Ah! the little traitor!

He loves power; not for its own sake, but for the well-being which it procures. While M. Guizot has its pride, M. Thiers has its sensualism. This comes of the circumstance that, for two-thirds of his life, he has been precluded from the enjoyments of fortune: he now stuffs himself with the voracity and selfishness of a starveling.

M. Thiers is a demon of mind. He is full of it, I believe, to the extremities of the lips and even along to the tips of the nails. His organization resembles Voltaire's:—frail delicate, variable, impressionable.

He has the whims and frowardness of a child, with the pretensions to gravity of a philosopher.

He is more a man of letters than a statesman, more an artist than a man of letters. He would passionately interest himself about an Etruscan vase ; very little, for liberty. He has a statesman's conception of great designs, and a woman's audacity in small things.

His courage is rather that of nervous people, a sort of feverish and fitful courage, which ends in convulsions and fainting. These weaknesses are excusable only upon a sofa. There should be no swooning in politics.

A great orator, a wavering minister, action cools and paralyzes him. Speaking, on the contrary, warms and transports him.

His enthusiasm of other days for our revolutionary heroes was but the enthusiasm of a school-boy, with which was mixed, unconsciously to him, the spite of being nobody then, together with the vague hope of becoming one day a personage. But the abuse of the ministerial luxuries soon effeminated his temperament, and he descended four by four the stair-steps from the garret to the drawing-room, installing himself, on the beautiful gold-fringed ottomans, just as if he had never sat upon his pallet of straw ; a gentleman by instinct, as others are by birth and habit.

Minister or not, in France or out of it, this ostentatious taste never quits him. In the meantime, he might perhaps abstain from publishing and posting up his movements to the whole world, when he travels in quality of a private man, for his own pleasure or for ours. Good taste requires that announcements of this sort should be left to the exhibitors of wild beasts, to play-actors, and princesses.

Formerly, the mayors and provosts used to present to the Dukes of Montbazon and Montmorency the keys of the cities on plates of gold. In our day, vessels are freighted, cannons fired, telegraphs worked for the Montbazons of the desk and the Montmorencys of the attorney's office. There is wanting to the resemblance but that they be attended by

a retinue of squires with falcons on their fists, of gentlemen-of-honor and pages.

A sceptic from mere heedlessness, in morals, in religion, in politics, in literature, there are no truths which take deep hold on M. Thiers, no sincere and thorough devotion to the cause of the people which does not provoke his laughter. He resembles a lustrous silk which ever varies its hue and reflects to the sunlight all sorts of colors, without having any of its own, and through whose loose tissue you may see the light.

Ask him not for firm convictions, he cannot form any ; for evidences of virility, his temperament is incapable of it. You dislike his bantering, but what, if all things appear to him laughable ! You complain that he ridicules you, but he ridicules himself as well !

Intrust him, if you please, with the ministry of the Marine, of War, of the Interior, of Justice, of Foreign Affairs ; but take care how you place at his disposal millions and especially hundreds of millions, for they would pass like water through the riddle of his fingers. To this facility of his of squandering money, he joins a certain mode of accounting for it, which is not that of all the world, and this he calls, quite ingeniously, the art of grouping figures.

It would not be easy to gauge exactly the capacity of his political appetite. This only can be affirmed, that he has been, and would be again a thousand times more, in case of opportunity, an immense consumer of men, of horses, of vessels of war, of munitions and of money. You would not say, to look at this manikin, that he has a bigger stomach than another. But like Garagantua, he would swallow, at a mouthful, the largest budget.

At once pliant and tenacious, indifferent and determined, he retracts but to return, he grants but to resume ; he leaves you but the alternative, which you cannot avoid offering him, and tagged to all his concessions you may find something to this effect : "Do the one thing or the other, pro-

vided you do the other :” “ Give us either this or that, we care not, if only you give us that which we ask.”

I like, after all, this natural, lively, free-and-easy discourser. He converses with me, and never declaims. He does not psalmodize everlastingly on the same tone, like the brother preachers of the Doctrine. It is true, indeed, he too ends, at the long run, by wearying me with his prattle. But it is a sort of warbling which is still a recreation from the oratorical monotony, that eternal bore, the most unbearable of bores to a parliamentary martyr, condemned to suffer it from noon along to six in the evening.

He does more than move, more than convince ; he interests, he amuses that people, which of all others, likes the most to be amused, to be amused still, to be amused always, even in matters of the greatest gravity.

M. Thiers meditates without effort, and produces without exhaustion. He is insusceptible of fatigue, and the most rapid traveller of ideas that I know. Times and events pass before his memory in their due order and according to their dates, and nature, which others have to search for, presents herself to him uncalled, in all the pomp of her majesty and all the graces of her smile. Have you observed on board the steamboats which plough our rivers, that glass suspended against the cabin-wall wherein the shore is reflected ? It exhibits in rapid passage by you the beautiful villages, the tall-spired churches, the verdant meadows, the wood-crowned mountains, the swelling sails of vessels, the yellow corn-fields, the flocks of the valley, the clouds of the air, the animals and the men. Such is M. Thiers—a sort of parliamentary mirror, he reflects the passions of others, but has none himself ; he weeps, but he has not a tear in his eyes ; he stabs himself with a dagger which does not draw a drop of blood. Pure acting all this, but what acting and what an actor ! What naturalness, what versatility ! what fertility of imitation ! what surprising inflexions of tone ! what transparence and lucidity in that style ! what graceful negligence in that diction !—but no, you are de-

ceiving me, comedian, and you mean to deceive. You play your part admirably, but it is no more than a part ; all this I know, and yet I suffer myself to be carried away by your allurements ; I cannot resist so long as you speak, being under the influence of the charm, and I almost prefer hearing even error from your lips, to the truth from the lips of another !

For example, how consummate he was in the play of the Bastiles ! I have witnessed all the best exhibitions in the dramatic line, grand opera, comic opera, vaudeville and farce, which have appeared in the theatre of the Palais-Bourbon. But I must own that the fortifications of Paris are the most astonishing of the mystifications and other whirligigs which I have seen. Never did better comedian play poorer play. He dropped himself with such art, he attitudinized in that part with such an ingenuity of fantasy, he so animated the scene and produced so complete an illusion in all the spectators that they were unable to refrain, even those who came to hiss him, from exclaiming : “ Bravo ! perfectly played ! admirably done ! ”—and at the conclusion, so happy was his sleight-of-hand, that he placed the Chamber under his goblet, and then lifted it, but there was no Chamber, and the feat was complete !

M. Thiers has often given me the idea of a woman without a beard, an educated and intellectual woman—not standing, but sitting, in the tribune—and knitting a chit-chat about a thousand topics, jumping from one to another with a light gracefulness, and with no appearance of the slightest mental exertion upon her ever-moving lips.

He is suppler than the most attenuated steel spring. He bends himself, he relaxes himself, he sinks or rises with his subject. He turns himself spirally around the question, from the trunk along to the top. He mounts, descends, re-mounts, suspends himself from the branches, hides in the thickest of the foliage, appears, disappears, and performs a thousand tricks, with the pretty agility of a squirrel.

He would extract money from a rock. Where others do but glean, he reaps a harvest.

He claps the wing, he basks in the sun. He takes the tints by turns, of purple, of gold and of azure. He does not speak, he coos; he does not coo, he whistles; he does not whistle, he warbles, and is so enchanting both in color and melody, that one knows not which to admire the most, his voice or his plumage.

M. Thiers can make you a speech of three hours long, upon architecture, poetry, law, naval affairs, military strategy, although neither poet, nor architect, nor jurist, nor sailor, nor soldier, provided he is allowed an afternoon's preparation. He must have astounded his oldest chiefs of division when he used to dissert to them on the subject of administration. To hear him talk of curves, arches, abutments, hydraulic mortar, you would have thought him a mason, if not an architect. He would dispute upon chemistry with Gay-Lussac, and teach Arago how to point his telescope upon Venus or Jupiter.

His discourse on the state of Belgium is a masterpiece of historical exposition. In the affair of Ancona, he explained strategical positions, bastions, polygons, counterscarps, redoubts, to the astonishment of officers of genius. He was taken for one of the trade, for a man of learning.

Fine arts, canals, rail-roads, finance, commerce, history, journalism, transcendental politics, street-regulations, theatres, war, literature, religion, municipalities, morals, amusements, great things, middling things, small things, what matters it to him? He is at home in all. He is prepared upon all subjects, because he is prepared upon none. He does not speak like other orators, because he speaks like all the world. Other orators premeditate more or less, but he extemporizes. Other orators perorate, but he converses; and how are you to be on your guard against a man who talks like you, like me, better than you, than I, than any other person. Other orators, behind the scenes, betray some glimpse of the buskin, and by the reflection of the mirror you may see their wav-

ing plumes. They are ready laced, attired, and the foot pointed forward. They wait but the rise of the curtain to advance upon the stage. On the contrary, you seize M. Thiers as he dismounts from his horse, and you say to him: Come, hasten, the hall is full and the public await you impatiently; take your mask and play what character you choose, a minister, a general, an artist, a puritan, but act. M. Thiers will not allow himself the time to wipe the perspiration from his brow and drink a glass of sugared water. He does not even unboot himself; he enters upon the stage, he bows, he attitudinizes, he grimaces before the spectators, he improvisates the characters, arranges the dialogue, unravels the plots and learns his part in playing it. He plays sometimes two of them, turns about, doffs his mask, puts on another; and always the same he is always different, always in his element, always a consummate actor.

I have however to reproach him with smiling sometimes at his success as he descends from the tribune. A good comedian who would maintain the illusion of the public respecting the reality of his part, ought never to laugh at the farce he has just been playing. In this respect, I admit it, M. Thiers has still some progress to make.

If M. Thiers spoke less quickly, he would be less listened to. But he precipitates his phraseology with so much volubility, that the apprehension of the Chamber can neither precede nor even follow it. In this point of view, his defect is an advantage, and he is more of an artist than he intends. He ends sometimes, it is true, by losing himself in the details, and rambles, from right to left, so far from the subject that he breaks off without concluding. Might not this also be, in case of need, an effect, rather than a defect, of his art?

Once started, he would gallop on, without stopping, from matins to vespers.

It rarely happens that these great talkers are great politicians. Often they chance to say what were better omitted, and omit what ought to be said. They are, ordinarily, vain.

giddy, peremptory, presumptuous. By getting them to speak, a thing always easy, you lead them into the snare of their indiscretion. More reserve is requisite for the conduct of state affairs.

I am almost tempted to think that M. Thiers has too much intellect for a minister. Distrust, for the purposes of government, those men who talk too much, and above all those who talk too well !

Each form of government has its defects. In representative governments the orators alone lead the majorities, and the majorities alone make the ministers. Every minister to have influence must be an orator, and every minister who is an orator may not be a statesman. Colbert and Sully were not orators ; they could not have been minister in our time. J. J. Rousseau could not put together two phrases in public. Talleyrand\* would have stopped short at the end of a quarter-hour's parliamentary conversation. Chateaubriand hesitates, and Montesquieu would probably have been discomfited in a wordy contest by the lowest clerk of the lowest attorney of Brives-la-Gaillarde.

Certainly, M. Dupin presides, makes orations, brings in requisitions to a wonder ; yet placed at the ministerial table, he would not have two ideas at the tail of one another, and would change his opinion forty-five times in forty-five minutes. M. Thiers has more stability, he is less unequal, less caustic, less versatile. He does not put his maxims into epigrams. He will not kill his colleagues with a bon-mot. But has he the spirit of sequence, of direction, of perseverance, of wisdom, indispensable to great affairs ? Does he not yield too easily to the dominion of a system, to the caprice of an idea ? Is he not too irresolute, too wavering, then too precipitate, too decisive ? Has he not more fire than judgment ? Does not his imagination of artist transport him into devious excursions ? Does he not allow himself to be dazzled and determined by the grandeur of things rather

\* So, too with Franklin, and several others of the like mental character.

than by their utility, by the adventurous rather than by the practicable? He has no faith in the devotion of virtue, nor in the miracles of honor; he believes firmly but in the power of gold; this gold he would squander by the ton to build a triumphal arch upon some foolish conquest. He seems unconscious that the public money is the chyle and blood of the people; that this blood is precious and ought to be husbanded; that economy is the first of public virtues, and that the best of governments is, on the whole, that which costs the least. M. Guizot and his school have dried up our souls. M. Thiers and his school would empty our pockets. The one would deprive us of the small remnant of our virtue, the other of the remaining pittance of our money. They have both succeeded so well, with the aid of the *Camarilla*, that there is no longer amongst us any political probity, that we have ceased to have faith in anything or upon anything; and I do not think I calumniate my country in saying that, thanks to these gentlemen, the office-holders of France are the most spiritless, the most passive, the most servile, and the most corrupt of all Europe.

Reader, have you chanced to see M. Thiers rise to speak in the Chamber? Have you not admired the resourceful fertility of that brilliant and ingenious intellect? Have you seen him contending against M. de Salvandy on the Spanish question? It was the combat of the lively, nimble and daring matadore with a colossal and unwieldy ox. M. de Salvandy, caparisoned all over, perspired and puffed in his laborious argumentation. Thiers laid on him about the ears and the loins, inflicting a thousand wounds. At last, he took him by the horns, and prostrated him in the arena amid the laughter of the spectators.

The clowns mounted on the horses of Franconi create an illusion to the eyes of the multitude, when they wave in their hands several small parti-colored banners. What the clowns do in the circus, M. Thiers does in the tribune.

When he perceives his conversation languish and the audience begin to vawn, he turns suddenly to the Right, which

is entirely unprepared for such a sally, and launches directly towards it some stirring phrases which he keeps in reserve, about the victory of Jemmape and the tri-color standard. This quasi-revolutionary tirade never fails of its effect, and the sabre-bearers pick up the unhorsed orator who hastens to resume his saddle.

On another occasion, the point will be, whether M. Thiers has been able to create several additional regiments by a simple ordinance, without the intervention of the Chambers and without law. This will be the whole question. Very well! M. Thiers will pass over that constitutional consideration, and launch eccentrically into an eulogy on the heroism of the officers of the army, to win the applause of their fellows of the Chamber. This device will be laughed at. Laugh on, gentlemen, laugh as much as you please. Laugh especially at yourselves and your expenses, for he has gained his cause which is very far from being yours!

His broken voice sinks, softens and fills as it were with tears when he comes to speak of his king, the virtues of his king, of his worthy ministers, of their noble and paternal administration. What think you, by the way, of that noble and paternal administration which has strangled freedom of discussion and inflicted upon us the amiable laws of September? M. Thiers must have a pretty laugh at all this in the evening, seated in his snug little opera-box; and how he must think us a good sort of people!

He unites so much ministerial talent with so much political inconsistency, and so much oratorical fertility with so much giddiness of conduct, that he can scarcely be either employed or dispensed with. M. Thiers is an aid which will always be an embarrassment.

To-day in the garb of reformer, to-morrow replaced in the ministry, he will be able, from time to time, to command the parliamentary forces. But he will never have soldiers of his own, like Guizot, Berryer, and Odillon-Barrot; for he is not to be recognized either by the form of his tent—

which he pitches now in one place, then in another—nor by the color of his banner, which has a little of red, a little blue, and a little white, but which is neither red, nor blue, nor white.

Men without political morality are wonderfully well calculated to govern Assemblies without principle. Besides, in France, all things are excused in people of mind, even the changing their principles. It is only the blockheads who are not allowed to be inconstant.

I was mistaken—and who would not have made the same mistake—when I once said, that, notwithstanding his talent, M. Thiers would never reach the first post in the state, because he lacked all sorts of consideration. Consideration is the fruit of an elevated probity, like that of M. Dupont de l'Eure ; or of a political character which has never belied itself, like that of General Lafayette ; or of an immense fortune acquired by long toil, like that of Casimir-Perier ; or of a patronage of long standing and a princely generosity, like that of M. Lafitte ; or of high dignity and even (it must be owned, under the prejudice of our weak notions) of high birth, like that of the Duke de Broglie ; or of military rank and the splendor of victories, and services rendered by a life of glory, like that of Marshal Gerard ; or of illustrious ancestry and personal gravity, like that of M. Molé ; or of a dignified and modest life, like that of Royer-Collard ; or it sometimes proceeds from grace of manner and a polished affability of address, like that of M. de Talleyrand—and this is a quality not to be disdained in a country where the immovable master sends his orders to the Cabinet, and the ministers are nothing more than clerks and factors. But, to which of these several kinds of consideration does M. Thiers pretend ? We should be much at a loss to say—and so would he himself.

And yet M. Thiers has been twice prime minister, although wanting this consideration ; and what is still more extraordinary, he has fallen into disgrace, and he has not been

## M. THIERS.

M. THIERS has not been dandled, in his infancy, on the lap of a duchess. Born poor, he lacked a fortune; born obscure, he was without a name. Having failed at the bar, he turned literateur and went body and soul into the liberal party, rather from necessity than conviction. There he betook him to admiring Danton and the leaders of the "Mountain," and carried to extravagance the calculating enthusiasm of his hyperboles. Devoured by a thousand wants, like all persons of vivid imagination, he owed the beginning of his competency to M. Lafitte, and his reputation to his own talents. Meanwhile, were it not for the Revolution of 1830, M. Thiers would be perhaps to-day neither elector, nor eligible, nor deputy, nor minister, nor so much as Academician: he might have grown gray in the literary esteem of a coterie.

Since, M. Thiers has changed his part: he has become author—champion and panegyrist of dynasties—supporter of privileges—issuer and executor of oppressive ordinances; he has irreparably attached his name to the besiegement of Paris, to the bombardment of Lyons, to the magnificent exploits of *Transnotran* street, to the transportations of Mount St. Michael, and the imprisonments, to the laws against associations, public hawkers, courts of assize, and the journals: to all in short which has chained down liberty, to all which has stigmatized the Press, to all which has perverted the trial by Jury, to all which has decimated the patriots, to all which has demoralized the nation, to all which has trampled in the dust the pure and generous Revolution of July.

His friends—Dupont de l'Eure, Carrel, Lafitte—he has deserted; his liberal principles he has repudiated; he began by serving the dynasty as tool of all work, one of those instruments which bow but never break, which will bend to the contact of both ends, and fly back—so supple are they!—with the resilience of an arrow.

Doubtless your aristocratical ministers are more courteous in speech; but they are more obstinate in character. They are more expert at bowing with grace the head and spine. They will stoop to the earth to take up their master's hat, but they will resume their upright posture with a haughty brow. Their intercourse with kings is that of one gentleman with another. They look upon the place of minister as beneath them. Accordingly, by instinct of domination, kings prefer to take their ministers from among the lower classes than from the nobility. They know the latter will serve them but in quality of servants, while the former almost always may be employed as domestics.

If then it happens that, in a monarchy, a man of low birth, but of some talent, has received an education more literary than moral, and that, borne on the arm of fortune, he has crept to the summit of power, his elevation will speedily turn his head. As he finds himself isolated upon the heights he has gained, and knows not where to lean for support—having neither personal nor family consideration, being no longer, nor wishing to be, one of the people, and unable, whatever he may wish or do, to be one of the nobility—he will place himself at the feet of his king, will clasp them, will lick them, will be at a loss to know by what contorsions of servility, by what caresses of supplication, by what simulations of devotedness, by what genuflexions, by what kiss-foot cringings to manifest the abjectness of his humility and the prostration of his worship. The personages of this description are like the predestined of Ghehenna who make a compact with the devil. They are marked with his nail, and if they but turn aside the head, burst a link of their chain, make a single step, the infernal owner

to whom their body has been delivered and their soul has been sold, cries out to them : " Stir not, thou art mine ! "

Run on, my pencil ; I have here no need of either nicely spread canvass or of compass, run on at thy own fantasy ! I have to paint M. Thiers just as he speaks—less well, no doubt, than he speaks ; I wish to sit to the public as M. Thiers sits to me, by commencing with the chin, ending with the eyes ; and, that the portrait may be the more faithful, to pass off from the subject, cross and re-cross in a thousand curvatures of digression, then return, lose my way, recover it, lose it again, and make M. Thiers exactly after his own image.

M. Thiers, taken in detail, has a large and intelligent forehead, lively eyes, a smile delicate and intellectual. But in his general aspect, he is chubby, negligent, vulgar. He has in his prattle something of the merchant, in his gait something of the apprentice. His nasal voice rends the ear. The front of the tribune reaches to his shoulder and hides him almost from the auditory. It must be added that no one puts any confidence in him, not even he himself—especially himself ! Physical disadvantages, distrust on the part alike of enemies and friends, he has everything against him ; and yet as soon as this little man gets possession of the tribune, he ensconces himself in it so at ease, he has such a flow of intelligence, such a flow of mind, that you allow yourself to be carried away by the pleasure of hearing him.

He droops, from habit, his head upon the chin, while going to the tribune ; but once mounted and speaking, he erects it so well and lifts himself so jauntily a-tiptoe, that he out-tops the whole assembly.

Although he begins almost every paragraph of his speeches with this formula : *Permit me, Gentlemen, or : I ask your pardon*, he very freely dispenses with the permission and thinks himself far above the pardon of any man. But there is so much vanity in a French Chamber ! You must appear so humble in addressing it ! With this little precau-

tion, you may venture, and say, what you please. It is the passport of many an impertinence.

M. Thiers cannot be said to proceed by fitful sallies like Dupin, nor to have the impressive delivery of Odilobarrot, nor the scoffing sarcasm of Mauguin, nor the billowy eloquence of Sauzet, nor the superior reasoning power of Guizot: his talent is of a peculiar sort, and resembles, neither nearly nor remotely, that of any other person.

His speaking, I grant you, is not oration, it is chat, but chat at once vivid, brilliant, airy, voluble, lively, studded with snatches of history, with anecdotes, and keen reflections; and all this loquacity unwinds its endless thread, now cut, now broken, then tied, then loosed, again knotted, with an incomparable dexterity of language. The thought springs so quickly in that head, so instantaneously, that you would imagine it uttered before it had been conceived. The vast lungs of a giant would be insufficient to expectorate the flood of words of this gifted pigmy. Nature, ever attentive and compassionate in her compensations, seems in him to have concentrated all the might of manhood in the fragile organs of the larynx.

His allusions fly and flap like the bat's wing, and pierce you so quickly that one feels wounded without knowing whence proceeded the dart. You would find in his discourses a thousand contradictions to criticise, but he leaves you neither place nor time for it. He envelopes you in the labyrinth of his argumentations where a thousand routs intersect each other in all directions, and of which he alone holds the clue. He takes a view entirely overlooked of the question, which seemed exhausted, and presents it in a new light by the most ingenious reasonings. He is never found unprepared upon any subject: as prolific, as prompt in defence as in attack, in reply as in exposition. I know not if his reply be always the most solid, but it is always the most specious. He stops sometimes suddenly to retort upon the interrupters, and pops off his repartee with an adroitness of aim which completely stuns the

If a theory have several aspects, some false, some true, he groups them, he mixes them, he makes them play and radiate before you with a hand so invisibly agile that you have not time to seize the sophism on its passage. I do not know whether the disorder of his improvisations, the incoherent huddling of such a mass of heterogeneous propositions, the odd jumble of all those ideas and all those tones, be design and the effect of his art; but he is of all orators the most easily refuted when you read him, the most difficult to refute when you only listen. He is certainly the most amusing of our political profligates, the sharpest of our sophists, the subtlest and most undetectable of our thimble-riggers. He is the Bosco of the tribune.

He is ever praying and beseeching that he be allowed to speak the truth. Ah! my God! do not talk so much about your intention to speak it, but speak it.

He is rash and timid by turns. He now precipitates himself into action, and then flinches and retires—in the consciousness of his power if you take his own word for it. He sees all the points of the difficulty, but does not solve one of them. He takes a globe between his hands—the ballot-urn would answer his purpose as well—and delivers a course of geography. He depresses the circles, the equator, the solstices. He elevates the coasts, sounds the gulfs, nears and signalizes the promontories, the shoals, the ports, the cities, the mountains, the mouths of rivers. He makes the circuit of the world, and returns home, after having seen much, talked much, travelled much, but walked little, given much lecture but little instruction.

Were he to be offered the command of an army he would not refuse it; and for my part, I am by no means sure, on the faith of Timon, that he would not gain the battle. I vow to you I have heard with my own ears generals so taken with him as to declare they would willingly serve under his command.

You smile, but no, I speak quite seriously; and were he only four inches taller and had learned the sudden charge,

he might have been "little corporal and a bit of a Napoleon.

Wake him not, I pray you, from his illusion, when in the tribune he lays his plans, manœuvres his troops, and expatiates in his strategical evolutions. For then he imagines himself really and truly general, not alone of a single army, but generalissimo, and in case of need an admiral; and admiral, too, so accomplished, that in order to sail from Greece into Egypt he would bring back the fleet to Toulon, for the purpose of bringing it within the field of his spy-glass, in the manner of Bonaparte. Another time, he would go direct to Soult, and tell him bravely that he did not go out of Genoa with his army by the French, but by the Italian, gate; and if Soult has been wounded at the battle of Salamanca, he will maintain, amidst the applause of the Chamber, that it was in the left leg and not in the right, as Soult himself had thought hitherto, and he will prove it so plausibly that the old general, the better to assure himself, will involuntarily put his finger in the cavity of his wound.

Sometimes, he turns to bewailing his own lot, and no one then knows better how to act the victim. Anon, he assumes the tone of a misanthropic Cato, and emits a deep and doleful sigh for the perversities of opinion. He can also play the amiable to perfection, and when you think he is caressing you, he grips you like a cat. Ah! the little traitor!

He loves power; not for its own sake, but for the well-being which it procures. While M. Guizot has its pride, M. Thiers has its sensualism. This comes of the circumstance that, for two-thirds of his life, he has been precluded from the enjoyments of fortune: he now stuffs himself with the voracity and selfishness of a starveling.

M. Thiers is a demon of mind. He is full of it, I believe, to the extremities of the lips and even along to the tips of the nails. His organization resembles Voltaire's:—frail delicate, variable, impressionable.

He has the whims and frowardness of a child, with the pretensions to gravity of a philosopher.

He is more a man of letters than a statesman, more an artist than a man of letters. He would passionately interest himself about an Etruscan vase ; very little, for liberty. He has a statesman's conception of great designs, and a woman's audacity in small things.

His courage is rather that of nervous people, a sort of feverish and fitful courage, which ends in convulsions and fainting. These weaknesses are excusable only upon a sofa. There should be no swooning in politics.

A great orator, a wavering minister, action cools and paralyzes him. Speaking, on the contrary, warms and transports him.

His enthusiasm of other days for our revolutionary heroes was but the enthusiasm of a school-boy, with which was mixed, unconsciously to him, the spite of being nobody then, together with the vague hope of becoming one day a personage. But the abuse of the ministerial luxuries soon effeminated his temperament, and he descended four by four the stair-steps from the garret to the drawing-room, installing himself, on the beautiful gold-fringed ottomans, just as if he had never sat upon his pallet of straw ; a gentleman by instinct, as others are by birth and habit.

Minister or not, in France or out of it, this ostentatious taste never quits him. In the meantime, he might perhaps abstain from publishing and posting up his movements to the whole world, when he travels in quality of a private man, for his own pleasure or for ours. Good taste requires that announcements of this sort should be left to the exhibitors of wild beasts, to play-actors, and princesses.

Formerly, the mayors and provosts used to present to the Dukes of Montbazon and Montmorency the keys of the cities on plates of gold. In our day, vessels are freighted, cannons fired, telegraphs worked for the Montbazons of the desk and the Montmorencys of the attorney's office. There is wanting to the resemblance but that they be attended by

a retinue of squires with falcons on their fists, of gentlemen-of-honor and pages.

A sceptic from mere heedlessness, in morals, in religion, in politics, in literature, there are no truths which take deep hold on M. Thiers, no sincere and thorough devotion to the cause of the people which does not provoke his laughter. He resembles a lustrous silk which ever varies its hue and reflects to the sunlight all sorts of colors, without having any of its own, and through whose loose tissue you may see the light.

Ask him not for firm convictions, he cannot form any ; for evidences of virility, his temperament is incapable of it. You dislike his bantering, but what, if all things appear to him laughable ! You complain that he ridicules you, but he ridicules himself as well !

Intrust him, if you please, with the ministry of the Marine, of War, of the Interior, of Justice, of Foreign Affairs ; but take care how you place at his disposal millions and especially hundreds of millions, for they would pass like water through the riddle of his fingers. To this facility of his of squandering money, he joins a certain mode of accounting for it, which is not that of all the world, and this he calls, quite ingeniously, the art of grouping figures.

It would not be easy to gauge exactly the capacity of his political appetite. This only can be affirmed, that he has been, and would be again a thousand times more, in case of opportunity, an immense consumer of men, of horses, of vessels of war, of munitions and of money. You would not say, to look at this manikin, that he has a bigger stomach than another. But like Garagantua, he would swallow, at a mouthful, the largest budget.

At once pliant and tenacious, indifferent and determined, he retracts but to return, he grants but to resume ; he leaves you but the alternative, which you cannot avoid offering him, and tagged to all his concessions you may find something to this effect : " Do the one thing or the other, pro-

vided you do the other :” “ Give us either this or that, we care not, if only you give us that which we ask.”

I like, after all, this natural, lively, free-and-easy discourser. He converses with me, and never declaims. He does not psalmodize everlastingly on the same tone, like the brother preachers of the Doctrine. It is true, indeed, he too ends, at the long run, by wearying me with his prattle. But it is a sort of warbling which is still a recreation from the oratorical monotony, that eternal bore, the most unbearable of bores to a parliamentary martyr, condemned to suffer it from noon along to six in the evening.

He does more than move, more than convince ; he interests, he amuses that people, which of all others, likes the most to be amused, to be amused still, to be amused always, even in matters of the greatest gravity.

M. Thiers meditates without effort, and produces without exhaustion. He is insusceptible of fatigue, and the most rapid traveller of ideas that I know. Times and events pass before his memory in their due order and according to their dates, and nature, which others have to search for, presents herself to him uncalled, in all the pomp of her majesty and all the graces of her smile. Have you observed on board the steamboats which plough our rivers, that glass suspended against the cabin-wall wherein the shore is reflected ? It exhibits in rapid passage by you the beautiful villages, the tall-spired churches, the verdant meadows, the wood-crowned mountains, the swelling sails of vessels, the yellow corn-fields, the flocks of the valley, the clouds of the air, the animals and the men. Such is M. Thiers—a sort of parliamentary mirror, he reflects the passions of others, but has none himself ; he weeps, but he has not a tear in his eyes ; he stabs himself with a dagger which does not draw a drop of blood. Pure acting all this, but what acting and what an actor ! What naturalness, what versatility ! what fertility of imitation ! what surprising inflexions of tone ! what transparence and lucidity in that style ! what graceful negligence in that diction !—but no, you are de-

ceiving me, comedian, and you mean to deceive. You play your part admirably, but it is no more than a part ; all this I know, and yet I suffer myself to be carried away by your allurements ; I cannot resist so long as you speak, being under the influence of the charm, and I almost prefer hearing even error from your lips, to the truth from the lips of another !

For example, how consummate he was in the play of the Bastiles ! I have witnessed all the best exhibitions in the dramatic line, grand opera, comic opera, vaudeville and farce, which have appeared in the theatre of the Palais-Bourbon. But I must own that the fortifications of Paris are the most astonishing of the mystifications and other whirligigs which I have seen. Never did better comedian play poorer play. He dropped himself with such art, he attitudinized in that part with such an ingenuity of fantasy, he so animated the scene and produced so complete an illusion in all the spectators that they were unable to refrain, even those who came to hiss him, from exclaiming : “ Bravo ! perfectly played ! admirably done ! ”—and at the conclusion, so happy was his sleight-of-hand, that he placed the Chamber under his goblet, and then lifted it, but there was no Chamber, and the feat was complete !

M. Thiers has often given me the idea of a woman without a beard, an educated and intellectual woman—not standing, but sitting, in the tribune—and knitting a chit-chat about a thousand topics, jumping from one to another with a light gracefulness, and with no appearance of the slightest mental exertion upon her ever-moving lips.

He is suppler than the most attenuated steel spring. He bends himself, he relaxes himself, he sinks or rises with his subject. He turns himself spirally around the question, from the trunk along to the top. He mounts, descends, remounts, suspends himself from the branches, hides in the thickest of the foliage, appears, disappears, and performs a thousand tricks, with the pretty agility of a squirrel.

He would extract money from a rock. Where others do but glean, he reaps a harvest.

He claps the wing, he basks in the sun. He takes the tints by turns, of purple, of gold and of azure. He does not speak, he coos; he does not coo, he whistles; he does not whistle, he warbles, and is so enchanting both in color and melody, that one knows not which to admire the most, his voice or his plumage.

M. Thiers can make you a speech of three hours long, upon architecture, poetry, law, naval affairs, military strategy, although neither poet, nor architect, nor jurist, nor sailor, nor soldier, provided he is allowed an afternoon's preparation. He must have astounded his oldest chiefs of division when he used to dissert to them on the subject of administration. To hear him talk of curves, arches, abutments, hydraulic mortar, you would have thought him a mason, if not an architect. He would dispute upon chemistry with Gay-Lussac, and teach Arago how to point his telescope upon Venus or Jupiter.

His discourse on the state of Belgium is a masterpiece of historical exposition. In the affair of Ancona, he explained strategical positions, bastions, polygons, counterscarps, redoubts, to the astonishment of officers of genius. He was taken for one of the trade, for a man of learning.

Fine arts, canals, rail-roads, finance, commerce, history, journalism, transcendental politics, street-regulations, theatres, war, literature, religion, municipalities, morals, amusements, great things, middling things, small things, what matters it to him? He is at home in all. He is prepared upon all subjects, because he is prepared upon none. He does not speak like other orators, because he speaks like all the world. Other orators premeditate more or less, but he extemporizes. Other orators perorate, but he converses; and how are you to be on your guard against a man who talks like you, like me, better than you, than I, than any other person. Other orators, behind the scenes, betray some glimpse of the buskin, and by the reflection of the mirror you may see their wav-

ing plumes. They are ready laced, armed, and the foot pointed forward. They wait out the rise of the curtain to advance upon the stage. On the contrary, you seize M. Thiers as he dismounts from his horse, and you say to him: Come, hasten, the hall is full and the public await you impatiently; take your mask and play what character you choose, a minister, a general, an artist, a politician, but act. M. Thiers will not allow himself the time to wipe the perspiration from his brow and drink a glass of sugared water. He does not even unboot himself; he enters upon the stage, he bows, he attitudinizes, he grimaces before the spectators, he improvisates the characters, arranges the dialogue, unravels the plots and learns his part in playing it. He plays sometimes two of them, turns about, dobs his mask, puts on another; and always the same he is always different, always in his element, always a consummate actor.

I have however to reproach him with smiling sometimes at his success as he descends from the tribune. A good comedian who would maintain the illusion of the public respecting the reality of his part, ought never to laugh at the farce he has just been playing. In this respect, I admit it, M. Thiers has still some progress to make.

If M. Thiers spoke less quickly, he would be less listened to. But he precipitates his phraseology with so much volubility, that the apprehension of the Chamber can neither precede nor even follow it. In this point of view, his defect is an advantage, and he is more of an artist than he intends. He ends sometimes, it is true, by losing himself in the details, and rambles, from right to left, so far from the subject that he breaks off without concluding. Might not this also be, in case of need, an effect, rather than a defect, of his art?

Once started, he would gallop on, without stopping, from matins to vespers.

It rarely happens that these great talkers are great politicians. Often they chance to say what were better omitted, and omit what ought to be said. They are, ordinarily, vain,

giddy, peremptory, presumptuous. By getting them to speak, a thing always easy, you lead them into the snare of their indiscretion. More reserve is requisite for the conduct of state affairs.

I am almost tempted to think that M. Thiers has too much intellect for a minister. Distrust, for the purposes of government, those men who talk too much, and above all those who talk too well!

Each form of government has its defects. In representative governments the orators alone lead the majorities, and the majorities alone make the ministers. Every minister to have influence must be an orator, and every minister who is an orator may not be a statesman. Colbert and Sully were not orators; they could not have been minister in our time. J. J. Rousseau could not put together two phrases in public. Talleyrand\* would have stopped short at the end of a quarter-hour's parliamentary conversation. Chateaubriand hesitates, and Montesquieu would probably have been discomfited in a wordy contest by the lowest clerk of the lowest attorney of Brives-la-Gaillarde.

Certainly, M. Dupin presides, makes orations, brings in requisitions to a wonder; yet placed at the ministerial table, he would not have two ideas at the tail of one another, and would change his opinion forty-five times in forty-five minutes. M. Thiers has more stability, he is less unequal, less caustic, less versatile. He does not put his maxims into epigrams. He will not kill his colleagues with a bon-mot. But has he the spirit of sequence, of direction, of perseverance, of wisdom, indispensable to great affairs? Does he not yield too easily to the dominion of a system, to the caprice of an idea? Is he not too irresolute, too wavering, then too precipitate, too decisive? Has he not more fire than judgment? Does not his imagination of artist transport him into devious excursions? Does he not allow himself to be dazzled and determined by the grandeur of things rather

\* So, too with Franklin, and several others of the like mental character.

than by their utility, by the adventurous rather than by the practicable? He has no faith in the devotion of virtue, nor in the miracles of honor; he believes firmly but in the power of gold; this gold he would squander by the ton to build a triumphal arch upon some foolish conquest. He seems unconscious that the public money is the chyle and blood of the people; that this blood is precious and ought to be husbanded; that economy is the first of public virtues, and that the best of governments is, on the whole, that which costs the least. M. Guizot and his school have dried up our souls. M. Thiers and his school would empty our pockets. The one would deprive us of the small remnant of our virtue, the other of the remaining pittance of our money. They have both succeeded so well, with the aid of the *Camarilla*, that there is no longer amongst us any political probity, that we have ceased to have faith in anything or upon anything; and I do not think I calumniate my country in saying that, thanks to these gentlemen, the office-holders of France are the most spiritless, the most passive, the most servile, and the most corrupt of all Europe.

Reader, have you chanced to see M. Thiers rise to speak in the Chamber? Have you not admired the resourceful fertility of that brilliant and ingenious intellect? Have you seen him contending against M. de Salvandy on the Spanish question? It was the combat of the lively, nimble and daring matadore with a colossal and unwieldy ox. M. de Salvandy, caparisoned all over, perspired and puffed in his laborious argumentation. Thiers laid on him about the ears and the loins, inflicting a thousand wounds. At last, he took him by the horns, and prostrated him in the arena amid the laughter of the spectators.

The clowns mounted on the horses of Franconi create an illusion to the eyes of the multitude, when they wave in their hands several small parti-colored banners. What the clowns do in the circus, M. Thiers does in the tribune.

When he perceives his conversation languish and the audience begin to yawn, he turns suddenly to the Right, which

is entirely unprepared for such a sally, and launches directly towards it some stirring phrases which he keeps in reserve, about the victory of Jemmapes and the tri-color standard. This quasi-revolutionary tirade never fails of its effect, and the sabre-bearers pick up the unhorsed orator who hastens to resume his saddle.

On another occasion, the point will be, whether M. Thiers has been able to create several additional regiments by a simple ordinance, without the intervention of the Chambers and without law. This will be the whole question. Very well! M. Thiers will pass over that constitutional consideration, and launch eccentrically into an eulogy on the heroism of the officers of the army, to win the applause of their fellows of the Chamber. This device will be laughed at. Laugh on, gentlemen, laugh as much as you please. Laugh especially at yourselves and your expenses, for he has gained his cause which is very far from being yours!

His broken voice sinks, softens and fills as it were with tears when he comes to speak of his king, the virtues of his king, of his worthy ministers, of their noble and paternal administration. What think you, by the way, of that noble and paternal administration which has strangled freedom of discussion and inflicted upon us the amiable laws of September? M. Thiers must have a pretty laugh at all this in the evening, seated in his snug little opera-box; and how he must think us a good sort of people!

He unites so much ministerial talent with so much political inconsistency, and so much oratorical fertility with so much giddiness of conduct, that he can scarcely be either employed or dispensed with. M. Thiers is an aid which will always be an embarrassment.

To-day in the garb of reformer, to-morrow replaced in the ministry, he will be able, from time to time, to command the parliamentary forces. But he will never have soldiers of his own, like Guizot, Berryer, and Odillon-Barrot; for he is not to be recognized either by the form of his tent—

Which he pitches now in one place, then in another—not by the color of his banner, which has a tinge of red, a little blue, and a little white, but which is neither red, nor blue, nor white.

Men without political morality are wonderfully well calculated to govern Assemblies without principles. Besides, in France, all things are excused in people of mind, even the changing their principles. It is only the successheads who are not allowed to be inconstant.

I was mistaken—and who would not have made the same mistake—when I once said, that, notwithstanding his talent, M. Thiers would never reach the first post in the state, because he lacked all sorts of consideration. Consideration is the fruit of an elevated probity, like that of M. Dupont de l'Éure; or of a political character which has never belied itself, like that of General Lafayette; or of an immense fortune acquired by long toil, like that of Casimir-Périer; or of a patronage of long standing and a princely generosity, like that of M. Lafitte; or of high dignity and even (it must be owned, under the prejudice of our weak notions) of high birth, like that of the Duke de Broglie; or of military rank and the splendor of victories, and services rendered by a life of glory, like that of Marshal Gérard; or of illustrious ancestry and personal gravity, like that of M. Molé; or of a dignified and modest life, like that of Royer-Collard; or it sometimes proceeds from grace of manner and a polished affability of address, like that of M. de Talleyrand—and this is a quality not to be disdained in a country where the immovable master sends his orders to the Cabinet, and the ministers are nothing more than clerks and factors. But, to which of these several kinds of consideration does M. Thiers pretend? We should be much at a loss to say—and so would he himself.

And yet M. Thiers has been twice prime minister, although wanting this consideration; and what is still more extraordinary, he has fallen into disgrace, and he has not been

sent, for the amusement of the sultan, an ambassador to the grand seignior !

The Doctrinarian party too, who in the early days of the Restoration had taken him into their pay, had never taken him into their esteem. All in patting him on the back to flatter him, they dreaded his cat-like springs and claws. They never seated him by them on the sofa. They kept him at a distance. They regarded him as a man without consistency or principle, linked to them by complicity in the same misdeeds, but who could never rise to the height of their axioms, and whose coat, well-brushed though it was, always betrayed, amidst the embroidery, certain stains of revolutionary mire.

M. Thiers, on his part, bore their haughty yoke with impatience. He bent, he writhed, he stooped to the earth, before them ; but it was for the purpose of taking by the legs. Hidden in his hole, he burrowed their ruin. He worked with hands and feet to sap the edifice of their greatness. He was the mole of the ministry.

M. Thiers made, about this time, some very remarkable progress in religion. The sole topics at court and in the tribune were God and his angels, paradise, the blessed Virgin, the Holy Catholic Church, the holy benedictions of Heaven, the holy martyrs, the holy miracles, and the application of Providence to politics. In the mouths of the strange characters who uttered these words, this was a sort of blasphemy. The philosophers of Grenelle-street knelt humbly on cushions of gold and purple, and Atheism became devotee. How is it to be supposed that with this state of things the dynasty should not have been preserved ?

For the rest, M. Thiers, without being quite a holy man, is not a naturally bad one ; he has not the force either to love or to hate. He may be pushed to excesses, but he will not commit them unprovoked. If he is light in character and impudent in manners, these defects are to be ascribed to his bad education : where could he have learned the pro-

prieties of demeanor. For he is not a man to do evil for evil's sake.

Nor do I think him a man to give money for its own sake; and it is great credit to me, I should suppose, in any way. For I had been for a long time persuaded of the contrary.

I must also say, that M. Thiers sought no place for reasons which were *honest, not even open, unadorned* in his point of view; that *in general, indeed, he showed* dignity and disinterestedness, *and that indeed he did* M. Guizot, on retiring from office, *with almost those shabby personages whom we have seen lately* of a man whose ever was not too hot of the party.

In fine, I hold M. Thiers, I repeat it, to be a man of wonderful mind, a mind of great *breadth of knowledge, of versatility, of clearness, of address, of resource, and at the same time of a naturalness and grace which were not to be contrasted the more with the artificial magnificence of the tribune.*

But also what affection to *the memory of his party!* What cruel and detestable irony to *recall his fidelity to the Revolution of July, he who has so wisely betrayed it!*—the admirer of the Convention, who *tagged himself to the tail of a quasi-legitimist majority!* he, a son of the people, who yet advocated a hereditary peerage! he, the panegyrist of the republican Danton, who afterwards *tried to place himself on both knees to play with his king's slow buckles,* and who made himself the intimate *confidant of the delicate secrets of the wardrobe!* he, who, beyond all others, should have kept his place at the tribune, and who preferred to shut himself up in suspicious supervision of the secret funds and the telegraphs!

M. Thiers thought that a Court parvenu, a mushroom forced into rapid growth by revolutionary dung, might gain the height of an oak and protect eternally the Tuileries with its shade. But as soon as the tempest is over, the mushrooms sink back into the earth. Kings avail themselves of

people of this low description, but when they are pressingly in need of them, or when they are afraid. Monarchies assimilate but with aristocracies. These are the branches and foliage of the same tree: both have together but the same life, and draw from the same soil their same and common nutriment. This M. Thiers has not observed, a circumstance which does little credit to his judgment.

After his first dismissal, M. Thiers rowed between Scylla and Charybdis with an incredible dexterity of tugging, avoiding the left without making the right; you see plainly that he has passed through the straits of the ministry of Foreign Affairs. His speeches of that period, prepared in advance and extremely elaborated, are little master-pieces for the use of ministerial aspirants. He there intimates to the dynastic Opposition, with a caressing kindness, the price of his new friendship. He assures, merely in passing, M. Molé that he may half-reckon upon his disdainful protection, and he overwhelms Guizot with mockery of his defeat; but all this with a cat's pace, in muffled words. To good hearers, the meaning was that each of the two parties would be too happy to have recourse to him. But, an ally too uncertain of the one, an ally too recent of the other, M. Thiers was not enough of a revolutionist for the Opposition, and not enough of a royalist for the Doctrinarians.

Contrary to my habits, I lengthen, I lengthen a little this portrait. But, reader, it is indispensable; I have to do with the most long-winded of our speech-makers, and I promised to give you a good likeness. If, however, I begin to weary you, you have but to say so, and I will lay down my pen. But I do not think the painter, or rather his subject, fatigues you yet, and I am going to profit of the ministerial inter-reign, the point at which I am now arrived, to sum up the personage.

Ready for all things, to labor, to banquet, to converse, to idle, to keep awake, to fall asleep—fit for all things, for statistics, for finance, for history and geography, for military strategy, for belles-lettres, for the fine arts, for the

practica. sciences, for social economy, for the public works, for political scheming—not doubting of anything, if it be not sometimes of himself—unable to dispense with others, who in turn cannot do without him—neither too constitutional to give alarm to the Court, nor too monarchical to displease the Constitutionals—a man of circumstance in a country of circumstance, a man of the moment in our governments of the moment—believing in nothing in a society where nothing is believed in, and perfectly formed after its image and likeness—the ablest of all the writers and statesmen who have ever mounted upon their flying cars the artillery of the press—a plausible speaker, universal and interminable—an artist in business, beyond all other artists—disdainful of charters and laws for having with impunity violated them—disdainful of men, for having, I was going to say corrupted, but it will be more polite to say seduced, them—veering his bark of fortune to the wind of all systems, and setting all her sail at once, though she were to be dashed the next instant against a thousand shoals—presumptuous and fastidious, daring and timid—entering upon the course with intention to outstrip space itself, and stopping at the obstacle of a grain of sand—a vagabond of ideas, a projector of plans, a seeker of expedients, an undertaker of adventures, a bastard of principles like the cause he serves—so embroiled in, so intermingled with all the coteries, all the state secrets, all the movements, all the windings, all the weaknesses, all the fears, all the littlenesses, all the domesticities of this régime, and so adherent, so glued to its loins and its very bones, like the shirt of Nessus, that he cannot be detached without tearing away some fragments of his flesh—in fine, a veritable Frenchman—Frenchman of our age—such as we are told he ought to be and as it would perhaps be impossible that he were not, M. Thiers, whether minister, deputy, or citizen, will always be, under the species of monarchy in which we live, amongst the most considerable men, nay, the most considerable of all; the word is written and I maintain it.

I could wish, for my part, M. Thiers did not make so many passages back and forth across his slop-pool of first presidencies, wherein I with difficulty see my way ; and I leave you to think what the task would be to classify, compare, enumerate, define, admire the positions and merits of the secondary counsellors of the cabinet. Verily, it would be to lose one's self in a chaos ; and to increase the confusion when the company of M. Thiers comes to fail, piles of account books at once encumber the bureau of the Chamber. Ministers, directors, chiefs, clerks, and down to the runners, all hasten to obtain their examination and discharge at the tribune, in the newspapers and at the treasury. M. Thiers, the examiner-in-chief, rises to speak some twenty-five times in succession, ergotizes like an attorney upon every item, affects more than the scrupulousness of Bareme, masks an expenditure, skips a cipher, and disputes a sous. And then erecting the head by slow degrees, he extends his little arms, and threatens with the wrath of the gods and the contempt of mankind, whosoever should find anything to censure in so much financial genius and so much intrepid retrenchment.

Following his example, each of the associates self-styled responsible, of this fulminant Agamemnon, prattles and battles for his little fraction of the ministry. He imagines France has her eyes upon him, and that posterity is already in anxiety about his official conduct. Go back to your shops, ye word-peddlars, get you gone ! the parliamentary curfew has tolled, let each of you go to bed ! Good night !

How, I ask you, will posterity view these miserable ministerial quarrels, between the *although* and the *because*, between M. Peter and M. Paul, between Mr. this and Mr. that ? To signalize these great ministers to the admiration of futurity, to elevate them beacons along the shores of time, every day of the Gregorian calendar has been exhausted. It is the *2nd November*, the *15th March*, the *22nd February*, the *6th September*, the *29th October*, . . . the, I know not what other date, of what other month, of all the months which God has made. It is fortunate that all these persons

have not taken it into their heads to call themselves the ministry of St. Polycarp, of St. Nicholas, of St. Pacomius, St. Bonaventure; otherwise, as things go, all the saints of Paradise would end with having this ministerial appendage.

For the rest, names, dates, principles, systems, persons are of little concern to M. Thiers; that is not what he is about. When out of office, whether by resignation or dismissal, he is always in pursuit of the ministry, even when he appears to be aiming at nothing, and he holds himself in the leash of the Chamber, in full readiness to pounce upon his prey. It is in this way that for the second time—and I have to share the blame—he slipped into power between two conflicting ballots.

But his antecedents have pitilessly shackled him, and he has been weak because he had been so before; inconstant, because he had been already inconstant; rambling, in his foreign policy, from England to Russia and from Russia to England, and, in the interior, from the people to the Court and from the Court to the people, without being once able to choose or to decide.

It is also in some degree the fault of Parliament. Who can conceive the empire of phraseology in the French Chambers? They are deluded, they are excited, and they forget all the faults, all the anterior facts, all the crimes even, of the speaker. They can withstand examples, figures, experience, logic. But they find it impossible to resist the elaborate artifices of speech-makers and sophists. These are the favorites in representative governments. A man of forty years is made a diplomatist, merely because his tongue is well-strung to the palate and that he can spout empty phrases by the thousand: but what diplomatists!

M. Thiers was mistaken like a child, and upon almost every subject. He did not comprehend that there could exist between despotic and constitutional governments, but a varnished peace and mendacious alliances. He did not comprehend that if the regiments of Europe were retained under arms, it is that a volcano of liberty mutters and

rumbles underneath the thrones of absolute kings. But there is a sort of mutual insurance between these kings. Fear is stronger in them than ambition. They, no doubt, prefer usurpation to anarchy, but they prefer legitimacy to usurpation.

Principles alone make revolutions and revolutionizers. Principles alone make monarchies, aristocracies, republics, parliaments. Principles alone make morality and religion, peace and war. Principles lead the world.

True, M. Thiers affirms that there are no principles ; which means that M. Thiers has none. This is all.

He was also mistaken in 1837 respecting Spain, who was not able, he said, to defend herself against the Carlists, and in 1840, respecting Syria, who would, he said, defend herself all alone against the English.

It was yet summer, and he intended making war not till the ensuing spring ; but Egypt would have been conquered, Mehemet beheaded, Algiers blockaded, and France invaded, by autumn. The last street-runner of the Foreign Office would have foreseen this, but not M. Thiers.

It had besides been expedient to oppose ideas to the cannon. But M. Thiers had neither ideas nor cannon. At last, imagining that he made Louis Philippe obnoxious and Europe afraid, he hid the parliamentary government behind the personal, and France behind a little grotto of shell-work. Was not this a grand and judicious policy !

M. Thiers assures us that his responsibility does not suffer him to sleep. So much the worse, and that is the evil. A minister after midnight ought always to sleep. Alexander, Condé, and Napoleon, had to be awaked from a heavy sleep the morning of the battles of Arbala, Rocroy, and Austerlitz. M. Thiers, it is true, has not, that I know, as yet gained any battles of this kind.

A minister ought to survey every peril of the state without panic or precipitation, and with an elevated and steady glance ; it is for this that he is minister. Say not that M. Thiers was ruled by the Court. A bad excuse ! He had

but two courses to take, either to surmount the occult power which trod him down, or to send in his resignation. Unfortunately, it is always but after the event that M. Thiers comes to know that he should have done what he has not done, and omitted what he has. He starts always too soon, but to arrive too late.

In fine, he has, in his last ministry, been more considerate towards his adversaries than serviceable to his friends. He was content with a majority of personal property and rent-roll, instead of a majority of sympathy and of principle. He had neither the sense to avoid the snares laid by his subordinates, nor to fly the deceitful caresses of his master; neither to dissolve the Chamber nor to convoke it; neither to enter into the alliance nor to relinquish it; to advance in time the fleet, nor to recall it; neither to employ that temperate and courteous language which assuages, nor take those sudden and decisive steps which intimidate—neither to negotiate, nor to conquer, nor to govern.

He, who was to break up the quadruple alliance, to open with his lance the barriers of the Rhine, to cut down to the level of a ferry-boat the frigates of the British squadron, hoist the tri-colored flag on the forts of Alexandria, cruise triumphantly upon the French lake of the Mediterranean, and, from his ministerial horn, pour torrents of riches and prosperities over his country; what has he in fact done? Why, bequeathed us for whole legacy the miserable disdain and ridicule of the Cossacks and Pandours of Constantinople and St. Petersburg, and of the cockneys and bullies of London, the resurrection of personal government, the revival of the laws of September, five hundred millions of public debt, the wasteful and devouring poltrooneries of the "armed peace," and the embastillement of Paris—stupid enough to allow its incarceration, still more infatuated to applaud it!

When M. Thiers jumps into the ministerial car, it is very necessary to beware of his Phaeton-like driving; and I confess, for my part, that I never feel quite at ease, and am al-

ways ready to cry out: Farmers, hoard your grain, the tax is about to be doubled. Fathers, embrace your sons for the last time perhaps, they are to be called away from you. Capitalists, sell your scrip, the funds are falling. Soldiers, draw your cutlasses, the blood is going to flow. King, what die of fortune is there at the bottom of your box? And you, Liberty, be armed and on your guard!

Since the most intellectual of our men of intellect (*esprit*) has brought us to this pitch, I every night offer a prayer to God, that he may give us to be governed to a downright blockhead. If our state be nothing the less bad for it, it will at least be different.

And yet, M. Thiers not only has all the capacity which it is possible to have, but is also as true a Frenchman as any citizen of this country. He has a sentiment of nationality, so deep, so generous, so genuine, that I feel the reproach of his faults, in spite of me, expire upon my lips. But France, so basely treated—France, who expected from his incomparable talents the exterior triumph of her arms and the parliamentary restoration of her liberty—France, more severe than I, rises in accusation against him, and I hear her address him and his fellows in these words:

“Men of July, you whom I have raised from obscurity, you whom I have taken by the hand and borne from step to step to the summit of power, what have you done with my honor? Wherefore am I become the laughing-stock of Europe? Wherefore is it that, when the outraged nations look their oppressors in the face, I am present no longer to their hopes, or even their memory? Wherefore does my name no more recur to their lips, when they murmur the sacred accents of liberty? Have I then shed my best blood only to expiate the triumph of my principle, by the bitter mockery of its present consequences? Independence, liberty, country, honor, virtue, you have bartered them all for gold. You have infected with your cowardly terrors those Assemblies who, formerly, launched our fourteen armies upon the enemy; that peasantry whence emanated the he-

roes of our great wars ; those deluded operatives who will not have learned to understand you, until after you have robbed and ruined them. You have been to the extremity of Europe to beseech a petty king to have the goodness to accept the money of our citizens and our laborers, and you have been seen to cross the Atlantic, tribute in hand, to beg at the knees of wily America, the pardon of General Jackson, and the oblivion of our victories ! Continue to degrade your establishment. Trick it off in the magnificent tinsel of police order and stock-jobbing. Act the dressing-room valets to your string of little princes. Act the marquis of l'Œil-de-Bœuf with hob-nailed shoes and tavern oaths. Assume the air of heroes and conquerors to the priests of the Prophet and the soldiers of the Pope, while the lance of an Austrian pandour shall freeze you with terror. Let fear be your principle in all things and upon all occasions. Cast into the limbo of the future, parliamentary reform, equality of suffrage, retrenchment of taxation, and the organization of industry. Marshal your governmental theories under guard of your police constables. Suspend over our heads the gloomy and latent terrors of your confiscations and exilements. Violate the sanctity and the modesty of our domestic hearths. Calculate at the price currents upon the arm of your sofas, what may be the cost of the conscience of some concocter of Charters or government stipendiary ; but respect for the virtue of the people ! do not exhibit to its view the puppet-show of your apostasies and the corruption of your examples !

“ Away ! the love of Liberty, which, beneath your impure breath, now fades and expires in the soul, will not be slow to take new life when the time shall come ; and whatever you may do to brutalize this noble people, there will remain enough of intelligence to comprehend all the evil you had done, and justice enough to punish the perpetrators !”

No, France, do not talk of punishing, for they are already sufficiently punished ! That logic which they have violated

recoils upon them with the weight of a mountain—the ministerial bench has been to them a bench of thorns and of troubles—those official carousals of power have quickly cloyed them—those cups of political drunkenness which they emptied at a draught, have left upon their lips but the sediment of sorrow—those ill-omened days around the Council table have been marked but by disappointments, rivalries and intrigues—those sleepless nights passed beneath the golden ceilings of their palaces, would be well exchanged for the nights of the poor man in his cabin—those slippery majorities have slipped through their fingers—those false friends have betrayed them—that prince of whom they adored the foot-prints has left them forever—that people whom they have oppressed, repudiates them—that press which they have crushed to the earth, is now turning upon them with the sting of the scorpion.

No, France, do not say that they are not sufficiently punished! Is it not to be so sufficiently, to behold thee so humble and insignificant, thee in other days so grand and so glorious! so limping in gait and so straggling in pace, thee who used to march like a queen in the vanguard of nations! so timorous, so squat, so crouching in thine eyry of bastilles, thee who used to bear aloft in thy eagle talons, the European thunder-bolt of battles!

No, doubtless, they misconceive thy character! No, doubtless, they did not imbue themselves with thy lofty spirit and thy manly genius! But no more have they ever, in the wildest of their errors, despaired of thy fortunes. Their souls are full, like ours, with the sentiment of thy independence and greatness. Old France, cradle of our forefathers, land of liberty, native country, country, that eternal vision of our hearts, they love thee, I attest it, as we love thee, as thou oughtest to be loved, as we love our sons, as we love our mothers, as the worthy, as the holy object of our pure, of our undying affection! They would lay down their property and lives as we would lay down our property and our lives, to serve, and to save thee! Ah! thou shouldst for-

give much to those who shall have much loved thee ! Suffer us, therefore, to offer thee in expiation of their past career, both our sorrow and their sacrifices, both our hopes and their regrets. Clasp them with us, I conjure thee, to thy maternal bosom ; they will return to thee, they loved thee, they are thy children, do not curse them !

27

## O'CONNELL.\*

SCARCE had the brilliant Mirabeau, of a sudden veiled by the vapors of the tomb, gone down in the full splendor of his meridian, than a new luminary was seen to rise upon the horizon of Ireland.

Mirabeau, O'Connell! towering beacons, planted at the two extremities of the revolutionary cycle, as if to open and to close its ever memorable scenes.

If my design was to consider O'Connell but as a parliamentary orator, I might compare the British nation with ours, and our tribune with the British; I might say that the latter has more country-gentlemen of eccentric and inveterate prejudices, and the former contains more special pleaders and pretentious judges; that the English deputy does everything for his party, the French deputy everything for himself; that the one is an aristocrat even in his democracy, and the other democratic even in his aristocracy; that the one is more proud of great things, the other more boastful of small; that the one is always systematic in his opposition, and the other almost always individual; that the one is more sensible to interest, to calculation, to expediency, to reason, and the other to imagery, to eloquence, to the surprises and adventures of political tactics; that the one is more sarcastic and more harsh, and the other more inclined to personality of the keen and scoffing kind; that the one is more grave and more religious, and the other more volatile

\* This is the only foreigner who has been honored with a place in the Gallery. He was probably intended to exemplify principally the author's idea of the species of oratory which he terms popular.—(TR.'S N.)

and more unbelieving; that the one stuffs his harangues with citations\* from Virgil, Homer, the Bible, Shakspeare, Milton, and that the other could not mention the names and events of his own national history without making the members yawn, or exciting the laughter of both the spectators and the parliament; that the one acts but with effort, slowly, upon heads of much solidity but massive and heavy, while the other is divined by the intelligence prompt and penetrative of his auditors, before the phrase has quite left his lips; that the one constructs leisurely the scaffolding of his lengthy periods of indefinite argumentations, bristling with science, jurisprudence and literature, whilst the other would shock the simple and delicate taste of our nation, by a heap of metaphors, however beautiful, and would fatigue our intellect by a contexture too strong and stringent of his reasonings.

\* This is a reproach which I am sorry to think more applicable to the speaking in our own Congress than to the oratory of Great Britain, at least of the present day. It is painful, indeed, to good taste, and even to good sense—of which, in truth, taste is but the fine flower—to witness the unclassical frequency of classical quotations by even those who are considered among the most respectable of our debaters, and really not illiterate men. But worse still than the frequency is its commonplace crudity: you see the material quite raw from Plutarch's Lives, or Lempriere's Dictionary, or some other of the school books, and in fact worked up like a school-boy's exercise, and no very ripe school-boy's. If I remember, it was no less a personage than Mr. Benton who found or forced occasion to turn into a speech on the "Oregon question" the contents of entire pages of Homer's *Odyssey*—what translation did not appear. Nor is this primitive passion to deck their nakedness with scraps of finery confined to our orators of the less cultivated party. One, perhaps two, of the Boston representatives, I believe, are remarkable in this way. Probably they deem it called for by the character of the "Athens of America." But that this is not exactly the atticism of the Athens of Attica, they could hardly have failed to know had they really read to any purpose what they so freely quote to quite as little.

Do we find anything of this sort in the severely simple style of Webster? Yet Webster has more classical literature in his mere memory than any dozen of those who are most profuse of it probably ever saw in the original. (Tr.'s N.)

I might add that the English nation has more force, and the French more grace. There more genius, here more intellect. There more character, here more imagination. There more political prudence, here more impulsive generosity. There, more forecast, here more actuality. There, more profundity of philosophical speculation and more respect for the dignity of the human species, here more propensity to contemplate one's self coquettishly, in the glass of his oratory, without taking account of the merits and perfections of others. The one in fine of these nations more jealous of liberty, the other of equality. The one more proud, the other more vain. The one besotted with bigotry, the other sceptical in almost all things. The one capable of preparing and awaiting the triumph of its cause, the other precipitating the occasion and impatient to vanquish, no matter under what leaders. The one retiring into some sequestered corner to indulge its dumps, the other capering about and at the first preludings of the fiddle, mixing in all sorts of quadrilles. The Englishman computing how much his blood should bring him of territory and influence, and his money of interest, the Frenchman squandering the one without knowing where, and the other without knowing why.\*

\* I do not assent to the justice, in all respects, of this elaborate parallel. The writer seems to me to view the English through the prejudices of his nation, and the French through the prejudices of his party. Not that, in this instance, the error is unfavorable to the English, but the contrary. I allude particularly to the superiority assigned them in point of philosophical profundity. The French are generally underrated, sometimes even by their own writers, in this respect; owing, I think, to the character of comprehensiveness, of method, of completeness, of rotundity, so to speak, of the national intellect. There is an illusory affinity between irregularity and magnitude. Of figures containing equal areas, the more regular appear the smallest. A circle is smaller to the vulgar eye than a scalene triangle of scarce three-fourths its dimensions. There is in reference to the execution too, perhaps, a confirmative illusion of sentiment; what is gracefully regular, (the circle for example,) suggests *ease*; what is grandly eccentric, (the triangle,) *effect*. But the fact is well known to be immeasurably the other way.—(Ta.'s N.)

I should say, in conclusion, that both, in spite of their defects and their vices, are the expression of a great people, and that so long as the English tribune shall rise amid the seas in its proud and illustrious island, and so long as the French tribune shall remain erect amid the rubbish of aristocracy and despotism, the liberty of the world is in no danger of perishing.

But it is not the parliamentary orator that I am here to draw ; it is not Demosthenes pleading his own cause in the oligarchical forum of Athens ; it is not Mirabeau throwing off the splendors of his magnificent language in the hall of Versailles, before the three orders, of clergy, nobility, and commons ; it is not Burke, Pitt, Fox, Brougham, Canning, shivering the glass-work of Whitehall with the thunders of their academical eloquence : it is another kind of eloquence, an eloquence without name, prodigious, transporting, spontaneous, and the like of which has been never heard by the ancients or the moderns ; it is O'Connell, the great O'Connell, erect upon the soil of his country, with the heavens for dome, the boundless plain for tribune, a whole people for auditory, and for subject that people, incessantly that people, and for echo the universal acclamations of the multitude, resembling the hollow-toned mutterings of the tempest, or the dashing of the billows against the rock-barred beach of the ocean.

Never, in any age or any country, has any man obtained over his nation an empire so sovereign, so absolute, so entire. Ireland impersonates herself in O'Connell. He is, in some sort, himself alone, her army, her parliament, her ambassador, her prince, her liberator, her apostle, her god. His ancestors, descendants of the Kings of Ireland, wore at their side the falchion of battles. He, a tribune of the people, carries likewise the falchion of other battles, the falchion of eloquence, more redoubtable than the sword.

Behold O'Connell with his people, for they are veritably his : he lives in their life, he smiles in their joys, he bleeds in their wounds, he weeps in their sorrows. He transports them from fear to hope, from servitude to liberty, from the

fact to the law, from law to duty, from supplication to invective, and from anger to mercy and commiseration. He orders this whole people to kneel down upon the earth and pray, and instantly they kneel and pray ; to lift their eyes to heaven, and they lift them ; to execrate their tyrants, and they execrate ; to chant hymns to liberty, and they chant them ; to sign petitions for the reform of abuses, to unite their forces, to forget their feuds, to embrace their brothers, to pardon their enemies, and they sign, unite, forget, embrace, pardon !

Our Berryer dwells but in the upper regions of politics. He breathes but the air of aristocracy. His name has not descended into the workshop and the cottage. He has not drank of the cup of equality. He has never handled the rough implements of the mechanics. He has never interchanged his words with their words. He has never felt the grasp of their horny hands. He has never applied his heart to their heart, and felt its beatings ! But O'Connell, how cordially popular ! how entirely Irish ! What magnificent stature ! what athletic form ! what vigor of lungs ! what expansion of heart in that animated and blooming countenance ! what sweetness in those large blue eyes ! what joviality ! what inspiration ! what wit-flashings inexhaustible ! How nobly he bears his head upon that muscular neck, his head tossed backward and exhibiting in every lineament his proud independence !

What renders him incomparable with the orators of his own country as well as of ours, is, that without pre-meditation, and by the sole impetuosity, the mere energy of his powerful and victorious nature, he enters body and soul into his subject, and appears to be rather possessed by it himself than to possess it. His heart runs over, it moves by bounds, by plunges, until the spectator can almost reckon its every pulsation.

Like a full-blooded courser suddenly checked upon his sinewy and trembling haunches, so O'Connell can stop short in the unbridled career of his eloquence, turn sharply round

and resume it. So much has his genius of presence, of elasticity and of vigor!

You would think at first that he falters and is going to sink beneath the weight of the internal god by whom he is agitated. Presently, he recovers himself, a halo around his brow and his eye full of flame, and his voice, which has nothing of mortal, begins to reverberate through the air and to fill all space.

How explain, how define that extraordinary genius which finds no repose in a body forever in motion, and which is equal to the dispatch of a large professional business, civil and criminal, to the laborious investigation of the laws, to the immense correspondence of the Association, to the agitation nightly and daily of seven millions of men—that soul of fire which heats O'Connell without consuming him—that intellect of so incredible an agility, which touches every subject without tarnishing it, which never tires and which amplifies itself by all the space it has traversed, which does not divide but multiply itself by diffusion, which draws new vigor and force from its very exhaustion, which wastes constantly without the necessity of repairing itself, which surrenders and abandons itself to the impetuosity of passion without losing for an instant its self-possession,—that phenomenon of an old age so green and so vigorous, that puissant life which has the vitality of several others, that inexhaustible efflux of an exceptional nature without parallel and without precedent.

Had O'Connell marched, his claymore in hand, to the encounter of despotism, he would have been crushed beneath the forces of the British aristocracy; but he intrenched and fortified himself behind the bulwark of the law as in an impregnable fortress. He is bold, but he is perhaps still more adroit than bold. He advances, but he retires. He will go to the utmost limits of his rights, but not an inch beyond. He mails himself in the buckler of chicanery and battles upon this ground, foot to foot, by means of captious interpretations and a network of subtleties which he casts

around his adversaries, who no more can extricate themselves from its entangling meshes. Scholastic, hair-splitting, wily, shiftful, a keen attorney, he snatches by trick whatever he cannot wrest by force. Where others would sink, he saves himself. His skill defends him from his impetuosity.

Meanwhile the specialty of his end does not divert his attention from the general interests of humanity. He desires economy in the public expenditures, because it is the duty of every government. He desires freedom of worship, because it is the will of the human conscience. He wishes the triumph of ideas because it is the only triumph which sheds no blood, the only one which rests upon opinion and justice, and above all the only one which endures.\*

He is poetical to lyrical sublimity, or familiar to conversational simplicity. He attracts to him his auditory and transports it upon the platform of the theatre, or at times descends himself and mingles with the spectators. He does not leave the stage for a moment without action or recitation. He distributes to each his part. He seats himself in judgment. He questions and he condemns. The people ratify, lift hands and imagine themselves in a court-house.

Sometimes O'Connell brings the internal drama of the family to subserve the external drama of public affairs. He introduces his aged father, his ancestors and the ancestry of the people. He expedites his orders; he commands the audience to sit, to stand, or to prostrate itself; he assumes the direction of the debates, and the police of the assemblage; he presides, he reads, he reports, he offers motions, petitions, requisitions; he arranges, he improvisates narrations, monologues, dialogues, prosopopeias, interludes, plots

\* The allusion is, as the reader perceives, to the celebrated "moral-force doctrine" of O'Connell; a doctrine which constitutes his strongest title to the general gratitude of posterity. What it asserts is, in principle, the subordination of the physical and brutal to the spiritual and rational in human nature. The principle itself may have been enunciated long before O'Connell; but the real benefactor in such cases, is he who gives to the barren abstraction an actuality of some sort, in popular opinion, if not in political institution.—T.R.'s N.

and counterplots. He knows that the Irishman is at once mirthful and melancholy, that he likes at the same time the figurative, the brilliant and the sarcastic, and so he breaks the laughter by tears, the sublime by the ridiculous. He assails in a body the Lords of parliament, and, chasing them from their aristocratic covert, he tracks them one by one as the hunter does the wild beast. He rallies them unmercifully, abuses them, travesties and delivers them over, stuck with horns and ludicrous gibbosities, to the hootings and hisses of the crowd. If interpellated by any of the auditors, he stops, grapples his interrupter, floors him, and returns briskly to his speech. It is thus that with marvellous suppleness, he follows the undulations of that popular sea, now agitated and obstreperous beneath the strokes of his trident, now ruffled by the breath of the gentle breeze, now placid, lucent and golden with the sunbeams, like a bath of the luxurious sirens.

O'Connell is neither Whig, nor Tory, nor Radical in the English sense. Accordingly Whigs, Tories and Radicals bear him that inveterate hatred and that haughty scorn of a conquering people for the subject of the conquered, of an Englishman for the Irishman, of a Protestant for the Catholic. But this hatred, this scorn, these insolences cannot daunt him. Unlike our orators, so sentimental and so fastidious, because they are without conviction, without heart and without faith, O'Connell never doubts of the triumph of his cause, and even in the House of Commons, looking his adversaries firmly in the face, he exclaims :

“ I will never be guilty of the crime of despairing of my country ; and to-day, after two centuries of suffering, here I stand amidst you in this hall, repeating the same complaints, demanding the same justice which was claimed by our fathers ; but no longer with the humble voice of the suppliant, but with the sentiment of our force and the conviction that Ireland will henceforth find means to do, without you, what you shall have refused to do for her ! I make no compromise with you ; I want the same rights for us that

you enjoy, the same municipal system for Ireland as for England and Scotland: otherwise, what is a union with you? A union upon parchment! Well, we will tear this parchment to pieces, and the Empire will be sundered!"

This is high-toned, and a man must feel himself almost a king to hold such language!

Speak not to this man of a different subject. His patriotic soul, all capacious as it is, can contain no other. He is not, even in London and in the parliament of the three Kingdoms, a member of parliament. He is but an Irishman. He has but Ireland, all Ireland in his heart, in his thought, in his memory, on his lips, in his ear.

"I hear," says he, "day after day the plaintive voice of Ireland, crying, Am I to be kept forever waiting and forever suffering? No, fellow countrymen, you will be left to suffer no longer: you will not have in vain asked justice from a people of brothers. England is no longer that country of prejudices where the mere name of popery excited every breast and impelled to iniquitous cruelties. The representatives of Ireland have carried the Reform bill, which has enlarged the franchises of the English people; they will be heard with favor in asking their colleagues to render justice to Ireland. But should it prove otherwise, should parliament still continue deaf to our prayer, then we will appeal to the English nation, and if the nation too should suffer itself to be blinded by its prejudices, we will enter the fastnesses of our mountains and take counsel but of our energy, our courage and our despair."

It is impossible to invoke in terms more forcible and touching the reason, the conscience and the gratitude of the English people, and to mingle more artfully supplication with menace, than in this beautiful passage.

But you feel that this gigantic orator is straitened, is stifled under this cupola of the English Parliament, like a huge vegetable under a bell-glass. That his breast may distend, his stature tower and his voice thunder, he must have the air, the sun and the soil of Ireland. It is only on touching

that sacred land, that land of his country, that he respires and unfolds himself. It is but there, in presence of his people, that his revolutionary eloquence, his defying eloquence, launches aloft, unbinds and radiates its thousand splendors like the immense sheaves of a fire-work. It is but then that he pours out the boiling torrents of that prodigious irony which avenges the slave and desolates the tyrant!

Not that his raillery is keen; it does not pierce like a needle. Like the ancient sacrificer, he lifts his axe, he strikes the victim between the two horns, just in the middle of the forehead: the animal emits a long groan and drops.

He should be seen mustering his indignation and his energies, when he recounts the long history of his country's misfortunes, her oppressions, her woes; when he wakes from the tombs, those generous heroes, those unswerving citizens, who have ensanguined with their blood the scaffolds of Ireland, its plains and its lakes; when he is exhibiting to his brave adherents the lamentable spectacle of their liberty lacerated by the sword of England; the soil of their fathers in the hands of those tyrants, the government instituted by them and for them, for them alone; the tribunals of justice crammed with their creatures; the parliaments sold, the laws written in blood, the soldiers turned into executioners, the prisons full; the peasantry ground by taxation, brutalized by ignorance, emaciated by sickness and famine, haggard, bowed to the earth, and extended on a litter of fetid straw; the hovels hard by the palaces; the insolence of the aristocracy; idleness without charge and without pity; labor without remuneration and without respite; martial law re-established; *habeas corpus* suspended; the administration overrun with strangers; nationality proscribed; religion incapacitating for either judges, or juries, or witnesses, or landholders, or school-teachers, or even constables, under penalty of radical nullity and even capital punishment; the Catholic churches empty, bare, without ornaments; their priests beggars, wanderers, outlaws: the Anglican church, the while, with joyous brow and heart, hav-

ing her hands stuck deep in her sacks and coffers of gold. Then roll down the tears from every eye, amid a solemn and fearful silence, and that whole people, overwhelmed, heart-broken with its sobbings, revolves in its heaving bosom the direful day of vengeance.

Meanwhile let England, from the elevation of her palaces, and upon her beds of purple and down, give trembling ear to the moanings of that Enceladus who mutters beneath the mountain which holds him imprisoned. He traverses its subterranean recesses, he mounts upon his legs, he upheaves with his back the kindling furnaces of democracy; and in the terror of an approaching eruption, England is stricken with dismay, the fiery flood is already upon her feet, and she retires precipitately lest the volcano burst and blow her into the air.

What cares this turbulent orator, this savage child of the mountains, for Aristotle and rhetoric, for drawing-room politeness, for the proprieties of grammar, or the urbanity of language! He is the people, he speaks like the people. He has the same prejudices, the same religion, the same passions, the same thought, the same heart, a heart that beats through every pulse for his beloved Ireland, a heart that hates with all its energies the tyrannical Albion. See you not how he penetrates, how he merges himself into the very vitals of his cherished countrymen, in order to feel and to palpitate, as they palpitate and feel. How he puts himself in their shackles, how he binds around him the irons of their servitude, that he may the better blush with them for their bondage, and the better burst its chain. How he plunges into the glories of their by-gone days! Then, leads them back to their living sores, their desolation, their political helotism, their social misery, their destitution, their degradation! How he reanimates again, how he refreshes them with the religious breathings of his hopes! How he cheers them with the proud accents of liberty and overwhelms them so effectually with his voice, his exclamations, his denunciations, his soul, his arms and his whole body, that at the end of the discourse,

this orator and this entire audience of fifty thousand men have but one body, one soul, one cry of—"Old Ireland forever!"

Yes, it is Ireland, his best-beloved Ireland that he has set as upon an altar, in the centre of all his hopes, of all his affections. He sees but her, he hears but her, in Parliament, in church, at the bar, at the domestic fireside, in the club-room, at the banquet-table, amid his triumphal orations, absent, present, in all places, at all times! He reverts to her unceasingly by a thousand avenues, routes bordered with abysses and precipices, lofty mountains and lovely lakes, and fertile plains and winding meadows. Yes, thou it is, green Erin, emerald of the seas, whose cincture he unbinds upon the sands of the beach. Thou who appearest to him seated on the spiral summit of the temples of Catholicism, thou whom he hears in the murmurings of the storm, thou whom he respire in the perfumed breeze of the zephyrs! Thou whom anon he imagines drawing against the Saxon thy formidable claymore, to the sound of the thunder of battles! Thou whom he prefers, poor beggar though thou art, with thy rags, thy shrivelled body, and thy straw-covered hovels, to the glittering palaces of aristocracy, to insolent England, to the queen of the ocean! Thou of whom he contemplates, with respectful pity, the languishing graces and the hollow and faded cheeks, because thou art the tomb of his ancestors, the cradle of his sons, the glory of his life, the immortality of his name, the palm-tree blossomed with his eloquence, because thou lovest thy children and lovest him, the greatest of them; because thou sufferest for them, for him, because thou art Ireland, because thou art his country!

Our French parliamentary speakers do not succeed in drawing a single vote in the wake of their orations. They have witnessed so many revolutions, served so many governments, subverted so many ministries, that they have ceased to put faith in either liberty or power. They are neither Saintsimonians, nor Christians, nor Turks, nor Ana-

baptists, nor Vaudois, nor Albigenses, they believe in no religion, absolutely none. But for O'Connell, he has a firm faith in the wondrous prestiges of his art; he believes undoubtingly in the future emancipation of Ireland. He believes in the God of the Christians, and it is because he believes, because he hopes, that this eagle sustains his flight sublime in the upper regions of eloquence, upon pinions already frozen with the ice of so many winters. He never separates the triumph of religion from the triumph of liberty! He thrills with delight, he is transported, rapt in his magnificent visions of the future, and his inspired words have something of the grandeur of the firmament which over-canopies him, of the air and space which surround him, and of the popular waves which pour along in his footsteps, when he exclaims after the Clare election:

“In presence of my God, and with the most profound sentiment of the responsibility attached to the solemn and awful duties which you have twice imposed upon me, fellow-countrymen, I accept them! and I find the assurance of duly discharging them, not in myself, but in you. The men of Clare well know that the only basis of liberty is religion. They have triumphed, because the voice which was raised for the country, had first been breathed in prayer to the Lord. Now, hymns of liberty are heard throughout the land; they play around the hills, they fill the vales, they murmur in our streams, and the torrents with voice of thunder re-echo back to the mountains: ‘Ireland is free!’”

## BIOGRAPHICAL ADDENDA.

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### MIRABEAU.

HONORÉ GABRIEL RIQUETTI, COMTE DE MIRABEAU, was born at Bignon, near Nemours, on the 9th of March, 1749. His father, Victor Riquetti, was a French marquis of an ancient and honorable house, which counted among its supporters of its line, many characters of remarkable virtue and wisdom. The family name, Riquetti, or Arrighetti, was of "Florentine origin. In 1257 and 1258, during one of those revolutions, to which the constant struggles between the Empire and the Papacy gave rise, the family of the Arrighetti, conspicuous in the party of the Guelphs, were driven from Florence. The act of proscription mentions the names of nine individuals of this family, and among others, *Azzucius Arrighetti, Filius Goerardi, et omnes masculi descendentes ex eis.*" This Azzucius retired, upon his banishment, into Provence,\* and the filiation continued from him, in a direct line, down to the subject of the present notice. "The Arrighetti appeared in Provence, with the rank and spirit of the high nobles of those days. They carefully preserved the pre-eminence of their order, purchased fiefs, held military commissions, founded hospitals, and endowed religious houses. Their motto was "*Jurat Pietas.*"

"Ever since I can remember," says Mirabeau, in his Life of his grandfather, John Antony, Marquis of Mirabeau, "I have seen my father and uncle celebrate and

\* Country of the Rhone River, South-eastern wine country of France.

honor the memory of our ancestors, several of whom were illustrious, not through courtly favor, or the wages of servility, but by many virtues, and services rendered to their country, the true and only source of real fame.”\*

The history of this family is a proof against all hypotheses, that virtues may be transmitted by inheritance; and that by judicious marriages, and the maintaining a proper pride of ancestry, an illustrious house may perpetuate itself through every vicissitude of fortune.

It is remarkable that, during a period of nearly six hundred years, but one of this family entered holy orders; and even this one against his proper nature and inclination. The vocation of the race was at first commerce, then war, and finally literature, and politics; none of them attained to great commands in the army, more through want of certain courtier-like qualities, than of those of a great commander.

Peter, the son of the first who arrived from Florence, settled in the confines of France, on the summit of a mountain, in Seyne, a border town among the Alps. He founded a hospital immediately on his arrival; and in the course of the following centuries, various other religious houses were founded by his descendants. Peter married Sibilla of Fos, whose beauty and accomplishments were celebrated by the Troubadours; a fact which shows the great estimation in which the family were held.

Honorius, the first of that name, settled in Marseilles, where the Riquetti engaged in commerce. “Those days,” continues Mirabeau, “did not resemble the periods when power and the curb of obedience being concentrated in the sovereign authority, a few metropolitan cities, from the increased means of communication, and the great influx of precious metals from the mines of the new world, reduced every other city to the rank and denomination of second-rate towns. In those days a republican spirit pervaded every town, more especially the prosperous commercial

\* See Memoirs of Mirabeau.

cities." Marseilles, the principal entrepôt of the Mediterranean commerce, though subject to the monarchy, retained its republican privileges. "Trade," says Mirabeau, "which assumes the name of commerce in maritime towns, is naturally inclined towards republicanism. The lodge, the exchange, the bank—all those different assemblies of merchants, form a kind of democratic senate." In such circumstances, the energy of the Riquettis did not fail to seize upon the true means of popularity and influence. They offered themselves for public offices, and were soon the leading family in the city. They engaged in commerce, and accumulated great wealth. A certain bishop having, in a public document, named John de Riquetti, "a trader of Marseilles," as though despising his occupation, John replied: "With regard to the title of trader of Marseilles, which would be derogatory to no one, since our kings have even invited nobles to become participators in the commerce of this city, I am, or was a police merchant, in the same manner that the bishop is a vender of holy water. It will be remembered, that I was first consul of Marseilles, in 1562; and every one knows, that to fill this office, a man must be of noble lineage." It must not be forgotten that, though John de Riquetti was a stanch Catholic, the respect for popes and bishops was not strong in Provence; and these were the times of the Reformation, when, if it had not been for Spanish bigotry, and the power of the Empire, the cities of Europe would have thrown off Catholicism at once, and together. In a history of Provence, the Sieur de Mirabeau, "enjoying an honorable rank in Marseilles," is named "one of the richest merchants in the city."

This family, under their leader, John de Riquetti, rendered Marseilles to Henry IV., when he became King of France. "Thus," says Mirabeau, commenting on the troubled life of his ancestor, "a long existence, however eventful, always brings consolation to virtue. Times of discord and anarchy have one advantage among a thousand evils: men are formed and put to the test; numerous

families become a positive good, if it be only as rallying points; the turbulent activity of youth finds useful employment; and old age is revered, consulted, believed, and obeyed." And in another place he observes: "We cannot suppose that any one will question the fact, that in all countries, and at all times, there live and die, remote from the bustle of public affairs, a number of men very superior to those who play a part on the world's stage, though often the mark of public scorn."

Nothing is more remarkable in the history of this family, than their adherence and unanimity. It is said of Honorius, who died in 1622, that he was the "only one of the family, after whose death an inventory was found: a proof of the praiseworthy union, which cemented their domestic confidence."—*Mirabeau*.

Of the third Honorius, a person of extraordinary character, who, upon the death of his father, in 1672, became the chief of the house, and whose economy was the means of saving it from ruin, "was called, for his wisdom, the Solomon of the country." He was also a soldier, and a man of vast personal authority. He intended to have written a history of his domestic troubles at Marseilles. "A history of this description, written by the wisest man of his time, (for such was his reputation,) a man whose only books, after those of Holy Writ,\* were Thucydides, Tacitus, Machiavel, and some other historians—a man also of weight and authority, entirely broken into public business, would no doubt have been extremely valuable, notwithstanding the apparently small importance of the subject, when compared with that of other histories."—*Ibid*.

Of the spirit of some of the women of these times, some estimate may be formed, by the following anecdote of Anne of Ponteves de Bous, the wife of a Riquetti. Being one day outrageously insulted by the Chevalier de Griasque, a well-known bully, "Scoundrel!" she exclaimed, placing

\* The Bible was a Catholic, as well as Protestant book, in those days!

the muzzle of a pistol to his head, "I would blow your brains out, but that I have children who will avenge me in a more honorable manner." Accordingly, her son Francis, then not seventeen years of age, hastened home from Malta, and instantly challenged and killed the bully.

Bruno de Riquetti, another son of this spirited house, was the companion of Louis XIV., in his youth. He would never flatter the young king, by being intentionally inferior to him in athletic sports. His temper, like that of the rest of this family, was that of a madman; nor did his property restrain it. A great number of anecdotes show him to have been a man of the most brilliant character.

But it is chiefly on the character of his grandfather, John Antony Riquetti, that Mirabeau takes a pleasure in dwelling. "His reputation, (as a soldier, he had not his equal in the grand army of Louis XIV., if not for the wisdom, yet for the more brilliant qualities of a commander,) his services, his commanding figure, his rapid eloquence, his haughty demeanor, his virtues, and even his defects, inspired all around him with a certain awe. In spite of the urbanity of his manner, his quick and touchy temper made him feared. It was impossible to become familiar with him. Even his children dared not, in his presence, yield to the impulse of filial affection."—*Mirabeau*.

The memoirs of this truly heroical, if not truly great character, forms one of the completest military portraits in existence.

Through a lack of those qualities which are necessary to favor at court, this formidable soldier and complete gentleman never rose above the rank of colonel in the French army, though his services placed him on an equal footing with the best commanders of his time. He possessed every quality that insures respect, united with a desperate valor, and a great love of authority. No man was better known, or had more personal regard in his time. It was impossible for his inferiors in age or position, not to obey him.

The sons of John Antony inherited his intelligence and

urbanity, together with his temper and imaginative qualities. The first was the chevalier, afterwards Bailli of Mirabeau, (born 1717,) a very witty and sensible man, well informed, virtuous, kind, and feeling; but austere, profoundly religious, proud, and of an inflexible firmness. The Marchioness of Pompadour, having remarked to him, in a conversation of the most courtly and elegant kind, which he knew well how to support, that it was a pity the Mirabeaus were all such hot-brained men; the chevalier, who was at that time a naval officer of great distinction, immediately resumed all the roughness of the sailor, and retorted, says Mirabeau, in these remarkable words:—"It is true, madam, that such is the title of legitimacy in our house; but wise and cool brains have been guilty of so many follies, and have ruined so many kingdoms, that it would not be, perhaps, very imprudent to make trial of hot brains. At all events, they certainly could not do worse."

The life of a courtier inspired him with an aversion half feudal, half republican, which amounted almost to a mania; and after rendering important services in the navy, and in those distant employments to which the able tactics of men in power wished to confine him, and which, fatiguing and unproductive as they were, (he was at one time governor of Guadaloupe,) ruined his health without increasing his fortune; he retired from public service, and soon after became bailli, or chief-judge of Mirabeau. In his retirement he devoted himself to letters, and had a library of six thousand volumes. His life was passed in acts of private beneficence and public benefit. Being a knight of Malta, it was proposed at one time to raise him to the presidency, or grand-mastership, but he declined the honor.

Victor, the eldest of the three sons of John Antony, and who inherited the title of marquis, was born at Perthuis in Provence, on the 15th of October, 1715. He became a knight of Malta, like many of his ancestors, at an early age. At the age of fourteen he entered the army as ensign—soon after became captain of grenadiers, in the regi-

ment of Duras. He distinguished himself in several sieges—made the campaign of Bavaria in 1742, and received the cross of St. Louis in 1743.

At the age of twenty-one he became the head of the family; and having no taste for a military life, retired upon his estates, where he devoted himself to the study of political economy, and to general literature. Soon after, wishing to put himself at the head of the new sect of political economists, he removed to Paris with his family. He had, in 1743, married Mary Genevieve of Vassau, a lady more recommendable by advantages of birth and fortune, than by beauty of person. This was the mother of the famous Mirabeau. The literary and didactic inclinations of Victor, made their appearance in great strength, at a very early age. Before two and twenty he had written volumes on political economy, and even traced out for his children, that were to be, "plans, injunctions, and instructions," as curious for the same dogmatical spirit, which he displayed all his life after, as for the bombast and singularity of the style in which they were enunciated. His familiar letters, on the contrary, were remarkable for copiousness and ease of expression.

He had also a passion for bad bargains in estates, by which he greatly impaired his fortune.

For fifteen years he lived peaceably with his wife, who brought him eleven children. In 1760 the growth of a new affection for another woman, who came to reside at Bignon, where he had lived since his marriage, put an end to the fair hopes of his family. The despotic character of Victor appeared in all the relations of life. He seems to have both imitated and inherited from his father, a vehement haughtiness and obstinacy; which, assisted by a wrong-headedness peculiarly his own, and an imagination inflated by political and metaphysical speculations, placed him completely beyond reach of advice or melioration. In his family he became an odious despot—in his relation to the world, a pompous dogmatist, and a very ambitious fanatic. His love of power seems to have been intense, and his abuse of

it a matter of certainty ; not from any principle of dishonesty, for from that his great pride prevented him, but from a secret delight in the pre-eminence of his own conceptions.

His influence as a political writer was considerable, and for one treatise, his *Théorie de l'Impôt*, the government saw fit to consider him dangerous, and even worthy of a few days' imprisonment. In the number of his adherents were many illustrious persons,—the Margrave of Baden ; Leopold of Tuscany ; the King of Poland ; Gustavus III., King of Sweden, and others, of the higher ranks. It was even said that the Dauphin, son of Louis XV., out of affection for a work of his, called the "Friend of Man," termed it "the breviary of honest men."

His literary habits were singularly exact. "I have always kept a memorandum of everything," he writes to his brother the bailli, between whom and himself there passed a correspondence of several thousand letters, "and given an account of everything. At twenty I spoke and wrote already to those who will succeed me." He left at his death, exclusive of completed works, more than four hundred folio volumes of copied correspondence, memoranda, &c.

He embraced the theories of Dr. Quesnay, who was his contemporary. This economist founded the physiocratic school, which taught that the agricultural is the only producing class, and that all others are unproductive ; that trade should be free, and all power founded in landed possession ; a principle essentially feudal and aristocratic, and therefore agreeable to a Mirabeau. The marquis even became the successor of Quesnay, and led the sect. "My principles," he wrote, in answer to a proposition from the Dauphin, to make him under-tutor to his sons, "are, that in public affairs, determination is necessary. *Aut Cesar, aut nihil*"—an answer which agrees perfectly with every action of his life. In all things he showed the despot.

"The Marquis of Mirabeau," says his biographer, "accustomed himself early to place upon those under his control, the heavy yoke of marital and paternal despotism ;—

the yoke of the husband, as he had seen it borne by his mother, whom he idolized;\* the paternal yoke, for never was son more submissive; and even at the age of fifty-four, did this haughty man kneel every evening, and bow his head, to receive his mother's blessing. As a nobleman, affable; as a husband, imperious; popular and obliging among his tenantry; formal and haughty with his family; naturally gay, and yet almost always in his family circle wearing a covering of stern and gloomy moroseness; possessing sensibility, and yet striving at all times to disguise the feelings of his heart; sincerely religious, but without humility, without indulgence, and never forgiving; disdainful persuasion, and irritated by resistance; sincerely a philanthropist in speculative theory, but hard-hearted and inflexible in the practice of domestic discipline; an ardent apostle of legality, yet governing his family by imprisoning his refractory children:" an unfaithful husband, a jealous and terrible parent, "economical, and even penurious, in regard to himself and others; and adopting all possible order in dissipating his fortune in adventurous undertakings; wise, yet committing errors without number, through excessive confidence in theory;—he suffered much, and made others suffer with him; he had little of serenity, less of joy; and he precipitated his nearest of kin into countless misfortunes, and what is worse, into faults which have been represented as crimes." Such was the father of Mirabeau; and a knowledge of the character of the father is absolutely necessary to an understanding of that of the son.

He is reported to have hated his son for the apparent freedom of character which he saw in him. Accustomed, himself, to submit to the paternal will, he required, but could not exact the same, in his own children:—with great pride, he had not a strong will; and sought to govern by terror, rather than justice. "All my misfortunes," says Mirabeau, "derive their origin from having offended

\* One of the most admirable women of her time, for qualities proper to her sex, and the reverse of those of her husband and son.

my father, to whom, ten years since, with the ingenuousness and imprudence of youth, I uttered those touching, and too keenly-felt words, which, to my misfortune, he will never forget: Alas! sir, if you had only self-love, would not my success belong to you?\*" "Yet," says the partial biographer, "the marquis felt neither hatred nor jealousy for his son, though he persecuted him from childhood to manhood, with the (apparent!) rancor of a mortal enemy."† Yet Mirabeau himself says of him, "My father is as much my superior in genius as he is in age, and by being my parent." The marquis seems to have striven all his life to attain the pitch of authority which he felt in his father, John Antony, whose superior nature and military education gave him a great advantage;—but for severity and justice, he would find nothing in his own nature but tyranny and self-opinionated pride. The slightest hesitation, the least doubt of himself, could never reach his mind; his impressions, his opinions, his convictions, his duties, such as he conceived them—his conscience, "which he exaggerated and displaced," had, in his eyes, an authority to which everything must yield. He showed himself a blind fanatic—a slave, who would be a Brutus.

His quarrel with his wife, who seems to have wanted art, and to have been of a temper not less unforgiving and passionate than her husband, threw the greater number of their children into a career of life attended with unlimited danger, disorder, wanderings, and misfortunes. Acts of odious despotism on his part, under the influence of another woman, whose youth and beauty gave her a superior influence, were all the answers to the vehement, but just complaints of his wife. "Her rage knew no bounds; a furious enmity, and a scandalous lawsuit were the consequences, during fifteen years afterwards; which poisoned the remainder of their lives, broke up a highly respectable family, and rendered their children in a manner orphans. "Gabriel Honoré, since so celebrated, under the name of the

\* Memoirs of Mirabeau, Vol. I. p. 235.

† Ibid

Count of Mirabeau, was the fifth child of the marquis, and was born on the 9th of March, 1749, at Bignon. The period of gestation was alarming, and during delivery, the size of the child's head placed the mother in extreme danger. Destined to be the most turbulent and active of youths, as well as the most eloquent of men, Gabriel was born with one foot twisted, and his tongue tied; in addition to which his strength and size were extraordinary, and already were two teeth formed in his jaw.'

"His father had observed certain Shandean precautions, recommended by his friend, the Duke of Nivernois, to whose advice he attributed more than was due."\*

The aristocratic importance of the marquis on his estate, is apparent from the following extract from a letter, to the above-named nobleman, on this event. "You know now that I have a son who owes his existence to you,"—in a Shandean sense, of course. "This has given me an opportunity of knowing, that to do good, or at least to seem to do so, attracts a kindly regard. I am pretty charitable in word and deed, and I employ all the poor who offer themselves. My wife is so, likewise; she dresses, with constitutional heroism, the most hideous ulcers, has various recipes, and gives five sous to each of those whose sores she has dressed. These trifles succeed: And being stopped by a sort of superstition, as there was a village festival on the birth of my first child, I intended to have forbidden all village rejoicings. But the country people from the neighboring parishes were assembled, and testified a joy which I did not expect from them; saying, that if he resembled his father, they should not, for a long time to come, eat acorns, as their neighbors of Egreville had done"—(through bad management of the estate?)—"the year before." Again, from a letter dated in 1763: "I have nothing to say about my enormous son, only that he beats his nurse, who does not fail to return it, and they try which shall strike hardest." Again: "The hale and robust farrier's

\* *Memoirs of Mirabeau*, p. 240.

wife, of whom you speak, is the same that nursed my son. She is a mistress woman, who has well brought up two coveys of children. She kept a forge, though a widow ; for having had two husbands, and finding that they did not last, she refused to take a third. She has paid her husband's debts, and brought up her sons, who have married in obedience to her wishes. She has reared flocks of geese that would do the Prussian exercise, and turkeys capable of passing a decree on inoculation,—all the while striking upon the anvil, as a pastime, under the impression, as she says, 'that it lengthens the arms.' This is much better than winnowing oats, as Dulcinea did at the audience she gave the ambassador, Sancho."\*

When three years old, Gabriel had the confluent small-pox. A hasty application upon the tumefied face of some injudicious prescription, caused the boy's countenance to be deeply furrowed and scarred. The marquis wrote some time after to the Bailli :—"Your nephew is as ugly as the nephew of Satan." As all the other children were gifted with remarkable beauty, this accident may have been the cause of a secret aversion in the parent ; it certainly had a great effect on others.

His private tutor, Poisson, an intelligent and meritorious person, took every pains to develop his mind, which showed early the signs of great power. From his fourth year, Gabriel was curious, inquisitive, and fond of reading. He possessed himself of all papers that came in his way.

His uncle, then the Chevalier Mirabeau, and Governor of Gaudaloupe, discovered from the first great interest in him ; inquires about him, in his constant correspondence with the marquis, and afterwards used a great influence in the formation of the young man's character. He seems to have regarded him as the true representative of the family. In Paris, (1754,) the father writes to the uncle : "Your nephew is fat and strong. He is not forgotten, and his education is excellent ; for that is the only thing to prevent

\* *Memoirs of Mirabeau*, p. 241.

the smoke of the heart from drifting in a wrong direction. All Paris talks of his precocity; nevertheless, as he is your child, as well as mine, I must tell you that his acquirements are not very extensive at present. He has little vices, except mechanical inequality, if it were permitted to break forth. He has not much sensitiveness, and is as porous\* as a bed of sand; but he is only five years old." And again: "May he (Poisson) make him an honest man, and a courageous citizen. This is all that is necessary. With these qualities he will make that race of pigmies tremble before him, who play the great men at court. I repeat, with sincerity, the prayer which Joad made on behalf of Eliakim. May God hear my prayer!"

At the age of seven he was confirmed by the cardinal. "It was at the grand supper which succeeded this ceremony, that he made the singular distinction related by himself. 'They explained to me that God could not make contradictions: for instance, a stick that had but one end. I inquired whether a miracle was not a stick which had but one end. My grandmother never forgave me.'"

The boy became in after time almost ungovernable, and was subjected to perpetual chastisement. His precocity of mind, and even of body, was a cause of perpetual anxiety and trouble. His father, who really doated on him at this age, describes him humorously thus: "This child, though turbulent, is mild and easily controlled, but of a temper tending to indolence. As he does not ill-resemble Punch, being all belly and posterior, he appears to me very well qualified for the manœuvres of the tortoise: he presents his shell, and allows you to strike."

In reply to his mother, who reproached him with talking too much, he answered, "Mamma, I think the mind is like the hand; be it handsome or ugly, it is made for use, and not for show." But this, and other anecdotes, show only the apt disposition of his mind, which easily took impressions

\* *I. e.* Great memory.

and sentences from others ; the same belongs to him in after-life, for he was a notorious plagiarist.

Traits of generosity and honor were more original with him ; though for these a great deal must be attributed to instruction. The age was sentimental, the tradition of nobleness was in his family, and belonged to him of right.

His father's aversion for him began to appear about his twelfth year, and strengthened with his growth. The marquis writes thus : " He has an elevated mind, under the frock of a babe. This shows a strange instinct of pride. Noble, nevertheless ; it is an embryo of a bloated bully, who will eat every man alive before he is twelve years old."

The whole of the extraordinary anecdotes related of this unpaternal jealousy, show it to have originated in a fear of the parent, lest the son should prove too powerful a nature for himself to control ; a fear sufficient, and more than sufficient, to have caused the long animosity and separation which ensued. The old eagle feared the young one's beak, and would fain drive it from the nest. Yet, there seems to have been no malice nor ferocity in the boy, only a natural disrespect for authority ; the more painful, as it was united with a mature generosity and courage, and a precocious disposition to animal vices.

" He is a type," writes the father, " deeply stamped in meanness and absolute baseness, and of that rough and dirty character of the caterpillar, which cannot be rubbed off." Again : " He possesses intelligence, a memory, and a capacity, which strikes, amazes, and terrifies." Again : " He is a nothing set off with trifles, which will excite the admiration of silly gossips, but will never be but the fourth part of a man, if, perchance, he becomes anything." Further, he says, writing to the Bailli : " I see that the continuation of your kindness towards your nephew, has reference to the talents and capacity in which you know he is not deficient ; but I know, from the physical cut of such characters, that you must give it up whether you will or not. They are always known by their brutal appetites, which

emanate from themselves. Indulgence in such appetites leads to excess, which is gross intemperance; and, as self-love, which abandons no one, even upon the wheel, becomes cowardly with cowards, vain with the vain, ferocious with the ferocious, their ambition is to surpass swine. There are dregs in every race.”\*

Finding it impossible to govern his son at home, the marquis sent him to a military school at Paris, where he was subjected to a severe discipline, under the care of a judicious master, who subdued his temper, and so far excited his ambition, that he began soon to learn with great rapidity; and excelled all others of his age. His memory, always powerful, became stored with a prodigious variety of knowledge. He mastered the Greek and Latin tongues, became familiar with English, Italian, German, and Spanish, with which he had been early acquainted in some degree; applied passionately to mathematics, music, and drawing; with all of which he became thoroughly acquainted. Manly exercises were equally to his taste; and in riding, dancing, fencing, and other exercises, he distinguished himself above his equals in age.

His mother, who loved him, supplied him secretly with money; a measure, whose discovery greatly widened the breach between herself and her husband. Gabriel was consequently cut off from all correspondence with his mother; a deprivation by no means favorable to the softening of his disposition.

His father, meanwhile, through the malevolent suggestions of Madame de Pailly, and others, became a prey to gloomy suspicions, and seemed more and more estranged from his son. He placed him in the army to get him as far as possible out of sight. His feelings were certainly monomaniacal, for he looked upon his boy as the curse of his life, notwithstanding his great promise. In 1767, Gabriel joined the army, and behaved well in his new situation; but did not fail of losing some money at play, and otherwise ex

\* *Memoirs of Mirabeau.*—Vol. I. p. 256.

citing the anger of his father—who now conceived a new species of hatred against him, as promising to be a spend-thrift. He threatens him with imprisonment, calls him, in a letter to the bailli, a “scoundrel,” and intimates that he has no more affection for him left. A love affair, foolish enough, but not without danger, caused him to quit his regiment, and go to Paris; for which his father had him imprisoned by a *lettre de cachet*—a customary remedy granted by the king to noblemen, for the government of their refractory sons. He was then but eighteen years of age, full of honor, of courage, of sentiment, and even of deference for the father, who feared, and therefore, hated him. This was the beginning of a series, of which our limits forbid the detail, of groundless persecutions, charges, recriminations, ending in the final extinction of all affection between the child and parent. Gabriel was repeatedly imprisoned, involved in law-suits, reduced to beggary; and finally, at the age of thirty, thrown upon the world, to live by literary labor, and at last, to become the leader and first spirit of the Revolution. His quarrels gave him the art of self-command, his recriminations and defences made him an orator, his solitary wretchedness taught him to sympathize with human misery, his compulsory independence, to be fearless of all obstacles and of the future.

Nor was his life without fault. On the contrary, with the manly virtues, the pride, courage, generosity, and ambition of his family, he inherited, and did not fail constantly to discover, their habitual neglect of social morality, and of common prudence. His habits, excepting in the article of wine, were habitually loose and intemperate. He was even a lover of obscenity, and delighted in the description, if not in the practice, of the basest vices. How much of this is to be attributed to education, and how much to nature and circumstances, it is impossible to decide. Enough, that the Revolution found him, with all his faults, a fit head and master.

“At this period,” says his biographer, “Mirabeau’s frank-

ness and generosity, rather than any superiority of mind, gave him an influence over all who were near him; and, perhaps, no man carried it to a greater extent. The most grievous injustice, which youth feels so strongly and repulses with so much vigor, did not spoil his excellent temper: he was easily appeased—a single demonstration could move, a word affect him.”

Being with the army at Corsica, he wrote an account of that brave people, probably descendants of the ancient Spartans. and of whom a Roman general said, “they were incorrigible, not fit even to be slaves.” The Genoese had overrun their island, and committed great havoc. Mirabeau, hating all injustice and despotic violence, wrote his account to excite the sympathy of the world. It was a bold and spirited work. But he says of it himself, that his father would never allow it to be published, “notwithstanding the wish of all Corsica.” “This work was, no doubt, very incorrect, but full of fire and truth; and it contained true views and facts relative to a country of which no correct account had ever been given, because mercenary writers, (the Germanès,) or fanatical enthusiasts, (the Boswells,) had alone undertaken the task.”\* This work was written during a military campaign, and in his twentieth year—a proof of great energy. About this time his uncle writes: “I assure you, I found him very repentant of his past misdeeds. He appears to me to have a feeling heart; as for wit, I have already mentioned that: he would cast the very devil into the shade. I tell you once more, either he is the cleverest and ablest banterer in the universe, or he will be the best subject in Europe to become either general, admiral, &c. For my own part, the lad cuts open my bosom, &c.” Here follows the true secret, in a letter of his father’s. “In St. John’s name, do not trust to his excuses, or he will mould you with his hand. He knows how to appear as tame as a pet canary bird; his head is like a wind-mill, and a fire-mill at the same time.

\* Mirabeau’s account. *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 313.

His imperturbable impudence will make his fortune, when once he becomes steady ; but I had rather not have a taste of it, and you will not, therefore, take it amiss, if I proceed more cautiously. I can never approve of fathers and sons being hail-fellow, well met.\* In 1780, Mirabeau writes to his sister : " What I am more especially destined to by nature, if I am not much mistaken, is to be a soldier ; for it is in battle only that I am cool, calm, and lively, without impetuosity. I then feel that I become taller." He was at this time composing a treatise on war, and had collected extracts from three hundred authors on that subject, which were in his uncle's library.

In his father's political-economical theory he discovered no faith ; which the more widened the breach. Living now with his uncle, he showed vast literary diligence. The bailli became his firm friend and protector for many years. He says of him : " This head of his is a mill for reflections and ideas." And again : " He perfectly understands reason ; he listens to nothing else."

At this time he devoted himself to an examination of his uncle's estate, and showed the greatest sense and understanding in the economy of agriculture and management. Yet, even in his notes on these topics, an occasional sally discovers his natural hatred of arbitrary power.†

Very early he aimed at eloquence. A friend took him by surprise one day in his chamber, while he was declaiming with great heat and energy. " What ! are you playing the Demosthenes ?"—" And why not ?" replied Mirabeau ; " perhaps a day may come, when the States-General will exist in France !"

In his twenty-third year, while at Aix, in Provence, Mirabeau became acquainted with Mademoiselle Emilie de Marignane, the heiress of an extremely opulent family, and a young and very beautiful woman. The obstacle of a rival, who had the good will of her parents, prevented the

\* Mirabeau's account. *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 319.

† See *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 330.

marriage. To force them to a conclusion in his favor, Mirabeau ingratiated himself with one of the young lady's women, through whom he gained access to the house, and frequently passed the night there. He contrived to have it rumored about that the honor of the young lady herself was perilled by these visits; a scandal which caused a withdrawal of his rival, and brought the parents themselves rather suddenly to terms.\*

This union failed to satisfy him, as might be expected. The young lady's income did not meet his hopes, being less than three hundred pounds sterling a year; no great matter for a man of his habits. His wife, notwithstanding the dishonorable stratagem of her husband to obtain her hand, seems to have been, in some measure, attached to him; for she followed him into his retirement, whither he went in consequence of debts—his father refusing, of course, all relief. Here he found reason to quarrel with his wife, who was in some manner unfaithful to him. Soon after, having quitted his place of exile, he went secretly to visit his sister, and was discovered and again imprisoned by his father. In the château d'If he employed himself in reading Tacitus and Rousseau, and thereupon wrote his *Essai sur le Despotisme*, while smarting under his father's severity.

In 1775, he was transferred to the fortress of Joux, near Pontarlier. He had been there only a short time when, by his agreeable and fascinating manners, he obtained the governor's permission to reside in the town. Here he became acquainted with Sophie de Ruffey, the young and beautiful wife of the Marquis de Monnier, ex-president of the Chamber of Commerce at Dôle, a man upwards of sixty years of age. Mirabeau instantly became enamored. A liason ensued, and subsequently a law-suit and a sea of troubles. He gained his suit by a burst of the most splendid eloquence, and fled from his father's anger, with Sophie, to Switzerland, and afterwards to Amsterdam, where he lived concealed—earning one gold louis a day by translating, and

\* Mirabeau's Letters, Vol. 1. p. 33.

other literary labor. In Holland, Mirabeau wrote certain memoirs against his father, in a spirit of revenge, of which it is certain he afterwards repented. About this time he conceived the design of embarking for America, but failed of accomplishing it. A new order from the government, obtained by his father, placed him, after eight months' absence, in the castle of Vincennes, where he nearly died from the severity of his imprisonment.

In this imprisonment he wrote various licentious books, translated and compiled;—Boccacio, *Johannes Secundus*, *L'Erotica Biblion*, a collection of obscenities, from the Scripture and Calmet's Commentaries, and various ancient authors. In 1784, he went to England, being now released from imprisonment, carrying with him a new mistress, Henrietta Von Haren, with whom he became acquainted in Holland. This was a love attachment, the woman herself being an amiable person of the most winning manners, and of a respectable family. Upon some pretence, he sent her over to Paris; and finally deserted her for a Parisian woman called Le Jay, of profligate character, but who knew how to manage Mirabeau. She was flattering, artful, and voluptuous—qualities very sure to overcome him.

In England Mirabeau matured his notions of liberty, and studied the forms of a limited monarchy, which he deemed most favorable to its preservation. His letters show a profound admiration for the English character and government.\* He published in London, various political works. His first was, "The Cincinnati," an account of a projected society in the United States of America, which, however, had been written by him at Paris, with the assistance of Dr. Franklin and Champfort. His brain teemed with literary projects. His pen was his support. As an orator he made Chatham his model, and became acquainted with Wilkes, and other celebrated persons of the day. No man had greater facility in making and keeping friends. He had "the terrible power of familiarity;" and was as easily af-

\* *Mirabeau's Letters*, 2 vols. London, 1832.—TRANS.

fectured by the passions of others as an infant—but was never broken or overcome by any degree of severity or arrogance. A trial of his own servant, Hardy, for robbing him, made him acquainted with the forms of the English law, and trial by jury. He proposed, thereupon, to reform the French system of jurisprudence upon the English model.

In 1786 he appeared at Berlin, as has been supposed, on a secret mission from his government, to observe the Prussian court. Here he was admitted to an interview with Frederic the Great, and enjoyed a conversation with that monarch, then in his last illness. He addressed two letters to his successor, entitled, “Counsel to a young Prince, who means to reform his own Education.” They are distinguished by precision of style, depth of thought, and dignity of precept.

While in Berlin, he joined the society of Illuminati, and published an essay on that institution, professing to disclose its secrets—but so singular in its details, it is by some supposed to be a hoax. He also ridiculed Lavater, and the impostor Cagliostro, in letters publicly addressed to them. At Berlin he collected materials for his history of the Prussian monarchy; and wrote also a secret history and anecdotes of that court.

During Mirabeau’s visit to London, says Dumont, in his “Recollections of Mirabeau,” he was poor, and obliged to live by his writings. This was in 1784, when his reputation was at the lowest. He was at this time in the 36th year of his age. He was then poor, and obliged to live by his writings. He had plans and sketches of various works, upon which he took good care to consult every person capable of giving him information. Having become acquainted with a geographer, he meditated writing a universal geography; and had any one offered him the elements of Chinese grammar, he would no doubt have attempted a treatise on the Chinese language. Such was his confidence in his own capacity. He studied a subject while writing it, and wanted only an assistant to furnish the matter. He could

contrive to get notes and additions from twenty different hands ; and had he been offered a good price, I am confident, says Dumont, he would have undertaken to write an encyclopedia. Such was his enterprise.

“ His activity was prodigious. If he worked little himself, he made others work very hard. He had the art of finding out men of talent, and of successfully flattering those who could be of use to him. He worked upon them with insinuations of friendship, and ideas of public benefit. His interesting and animated conversation was like a hone, which he used to sharpen his tools. Nothing was lost to him. He collected with care, anecdotes, conversations, and thoughts ; appropriated to his own benefit the reading and industry of his friends—knew how to use the information thus acquired, so as to appear always to have possessed it—and when he had begun a work in earnest, it was seen to make a rapid and daily progress.”

He was no man of etiquette, and to carry his point, would go to those who, through shame or contempt, would not come to him.

“ He was a delightful companion, in every sense of the word, and could overcome the strongest personal prejudices, by the generous and animated manner of his intercourse. He rejected the forms of good-breeding ; called people by their names, without the ceremonial addition ; and made it his first care to remove all obstacles to a familiar intercourse :—using an agreeable asperity, and a pleasant crudity of expression, more apparent than real ; for under the disguise of roughness, sometimes even of rudeness, was to be found all the reality of politeness and flattery. After the stiff and ceremonious conversations of formal good-breeding, there was a fascinating novelty in his, never rendered insipid by forms in common use. His residence in Berlin had supplied him with a stock of curious anecdotes : he was at this period” (1788, when Dumont first knew him, at Paris,) “ publishing his book on the Prussian monarchy. This production consisted of a work by Major Mauvillon

and extracts from four different memoirs, procured at great expense. No one could, for a moment, suppose that, during a residence of only eight months at Berlin, Mirabeau could himself have written eight volumes, in which he had introduced every possible information relative to the government of Prussia. He, as usual, employed the talents of others to serve his own designs."

"Mirabeau enjoyed a high reputation as a writer. His work on the Bank of St. Charles, his "Denunciation of Stock-jobbing," his "Considerations on the order of Cincinnati," and his "Lettres de Cachet," were his titles to fame. But if all who had contributed to these works, had each claimed his share, nothing would have remained as Mirabeau's own, but a certain art of arrangement, some bold expressions, biting epigrams, and numerous bursts of manly eloquence, certainly not the growth of the French academy."

He obtained from Claviere and Panchaud the materials for his writings on finance. Claviere supplied him with the subject matter of his letter to the King of Prussia. De Bourges was the author of his Address to the Batavians; and I (says Dumont, from whom the above is a literal transcription,) have often been present at the disputes between them, to which this circumstance gave rise. Though the authors he employed were enraged with his success at their expense, they could not afterwards destroy the reputation they had aided in creating. Mirabeau (says Dumont) had a right to consider himself the parent of all these productions, because he presided at their birth, and without his indefatigable activity they would never have seen the light.

"Claviere called Mirabeau a jackdaw, that ought to be stripped of his borrowed plumes; but this jackdaw, even when so stripped, was still armed with a powerful spur; and of his own strength could soar above all the literary tribe.

"I will give an instance of his activity—of his avarice, I may say, in collecting the smallest literary materials. He

gave me a methodical list of the subjects we had discussed together in conversation, and upon which we had differed. It was headed thus: "List of Subjects which Dumont engages, upon the faith of friendship, to treat conscientiously, and send to Mirabeau, very shortly after his (Dumont's) return to London. Diverse anecdotes on his residence in Russia; biographical sketches of several celebrated Genevise; opinions on national education;" eighteen items in all. A proof of his attention and memory.

"Mirabeau could adopt every style of conduct and conversation, and though not himself a moral man, he had a very decided taste for the society of those whose rigidity of principle, and severity of morals, contrasted with the laxity of his own." "His mode of inspiring confidence was to confess candidly, the faults and follies of his youth, express regret at his former errors, and declare that he would endeavor to expiate them by a sedulous and useful application of his talents in future, to the cause of humanity and liberty; without allowing any personal advantage to turn him from his purpose. He had preserved, even in the midst of his excesses, a certain dignity and elevation of mind, combined with energy of character, which distinguished him from those effeminate and worn-out rakes, those walking shadows, with which Paris swarmed; and one was tempted to admit as an excuse for his faults, the particular circumstances of his education, and to think that his virtues belonged to himself, and that his vices were forced upon him. I never knew a man more jealous of the esteem of those whom he himself esteemed, or one who could be acted upon more easily, if excited by a sentiment of high honor; but there was nothing uniform or permanent in his character. His mind proceeded by leaps and starts, and obeyed too many impetuous masters. When burning with pride or jealousy his passions were terrible; he was no longer master of himself, and committed the most dangerous imprudencies."—*Dumont's Recollec.*, pp. 1-70.

The assembling of the States-General excited in him the

highest, the most extravagant expectations. He foresaw the approach of calamity; he determined—and with him to determine and to execute were the same thing—to become himself its leader.

At the time of the first popular elections of the States-General, he went to Provence, the country of his ancestors, in hope of being chosen one of the deputies of the noblesse for that province; but, rejected on the ground that he had no possession there, he took a shop, or warehouse, and in large letters placed over the door these words:—

“MIRABEAU, MARCHAND DE DRAP.”

He put on his apron, sold his wares, and thus ridiculed as the “Plebeian Count,” he rendered himself so popular, that he was elected a deputy by acclamation, for that district.

On his arrival at the latter city, previously to his election, bread happened to be exceedingly dear; and the people had, in consequence, risen. Mirabeau, whose command over the passions of the populace was at all times absolute, rushed to the balcony of his apartment, and harangued the mob then assembled beneath his window. His appeal thus concluded:—“Bread would not be dear enough were it at the price you wish; and it would be too dear, were it to remain at the present price. I will see to it. Depart, and depart in peace.” The clamor instantly ceased, and the people returned to their homes.

Of this plebeian aristocrat—a designation of which Mirabeau seems to have been vain—La Harpe was accustomed to say, that he was naturally and essentially a despot; and that had he enjoyed the government of an empire, he would have surpassed Richelieu in pride, and Mazarin in policy.\*

“When the list of deputies was read at the opening of the States-General, many well-known names were received with applause, but Mirabeau’s with hooting. Insult and contempt showed how low he stood in the estimation of

\* *Mirabeau’s Letters*, during his residence in England, vol. I., p. 64.

his colleagues, and it was even openly proposed to get his election cancelled. He had employed manœuvres at Aix, and at Marseilles, which were to be brought forward against the legality of his return ; and he himself felt so convinced, that his election at Marseilles could never be maintained, that he gave the preference to Aix." He had tried to speak on two or three occasions, but a general murmur always reduced him to silence. But being suddenly called upon to defend a friend, he astonished the Assembly with a burst of eloquent generosity, which overcame at a blow, all the prejudices against him, (for his reputation was then at the lowest possible ebb,) and gave him instant popularity. His dejection had been great, because of his previous ill-success, and his emotion none the less at this sudden rise of favor. From that time forth he ruled the feelings of the nation, though at no time did he guide, or even modify its opinion. Like Burke, he loved the monarchy, while he understood the people. The secret of his power, as of his eloquence, was an unlimited generosity of soul.

Such was his popularity, that though all titles of nobility were abolished, he retained his own, and was addressed by it ; and such his authority, he needed but to assure the people, the Court, the Assembly, of any measure, they believed that it would inevitably be accomplished.

The latter years of his life were as splendid as the former had been miserable ; he lived expensively, neglected his health, and died of excitement and the effects of intemperate pleasures.

Notwithstanding his constant dissipations, which he supported by large bribes paid him by the Court to sustain their cause, his industry never seemed to relax. He was compelled to employ Dumont, and numbers of others, to write his speeches for him, which he read or declaimed in the Assembly ; and on one occasion, at least, he was committed unawares, by delivering a speech which he had not studied :—yet, in his speeches, as in his literary compilations, it was the addition of a few bright thoughts, poignant witticisms, and

bursts of manly eloquence, with which he gave them his own character and his own fire. He possessed a bold and rapid power of ordering and organizing ; but for cool and judicious arrangement, for legal chicane or intrigue, he had neither the adroitness nor the patience. He never discovered the least trace of analytical or metaphysical talent, nor the head for tedious investigation. It was by principle, by the wisdom of the heart, the instinct of honor, the logic of courage, the flashing light of passion, he saw all that he saw ; his enormous pride precluded form and ceremony ; his unbounded hope, and self-reliance, carried him over the difficulties, and sustained him through the sorrows which they had themselves created. It is probable that a stronger man, take him altogether, never appeared in France ; that there have been greater, few will deny ; for his strength wasted itself in struggling against obstacles created by its injudicious exhibition ; he drew down the rock upon himself, and then put forth all his force to sustain it.

His death was indeed a national calamity ; Danton alone resembled him, and Danton was but a vulgar Mirabeau. There was no heart strong enough, after them, to feel and guide the nation.

Mirabeau died April 2nd, 1791. His funeral was an historical event, and the whole nation felt his death.

## DANTON.

GEORGE JAMES DANTON, born at Arcis-sur-Aube, October 26th, 1759, was a starving advocate until the age of thirty, when he mingled with the Jacobins in Paris, and became their leading orator. "His great stature, commanding front and voice of thunder, made him the fit leader of a band more timid or less ferocious than himself."—*Alison*. He rose in audacity and influence with the Jacobins. "Prodigal in expense, and drowned in debt, he had no chance, at any period, even of personal freedom, but in constantly advancing with the fortunes of the Revolution. Like Mirabeau, he was the slave of sensual passions; like him he was the terrific leader, during his ascendancy, of the ruling-class; but he shared the character, not of the Patricians who commenced the Revolution, but of the Plebeians who consummated its wickedness. Inexorable in general measures, he was indulgent, humane, and even generous to individuals; the author of the massacres of the 2nd of September, he saved all those who fled to him, and spontaneously liberated his personal adversaries from prison. Individual elevation and the safety of his party were his ruling objects; a revolution appeared a game of hazard, where the stake was the life of the losing party; the strenuous supporter of exterminating cruelty after the 10th of August, he was among the first to recommend a return to humanity, after the danger was past."—*Alison*.

"Danton was more capable than any other of being the leader whom all ardent imaginations desired, for the purpose of giving unity to the revolutionary movements. He had formerly tried the bar, but without success. Poor and

consumed by passions, he then rushed into the political commotions with ardor, and probably with hopes. He was ignorant, but endowed with a superior understanding, and a vast imagination. His athletic figure, his flat and somewhat African features, his thundering voice, his eccentric, but somewhat grand images, captivated his auditors at the Cordeliers and the sections. His face expressed by turns, the brutal passions, jollity, and even good-nature. Danton neither envied nor hated anybody, but his audacity was extraordinary, and in certain moments of excitement, he was capable of executing all that the atrocious mind of Marat was capable of conceiving.

“Danton, the impassioned, violent, fickle, and by turns, cruel and generous man:—Danton, though the slave of his passions, must have been,” from his nature, “incorruptible. Under pretence of compensating him for the loss of his former place of advocate in the council, the Court gave him considerable sums. But though it contrived to pay, it could not gain him. He continued, nevertheless, to harangue and excite the mob against it. When he was reproached with not fulfilling his bargain, he replied that, in order to keep the means of serving the Court, he was obliged in appearance to treat it as an enemy. Danton was therefore the most formidable leader of those bands which were won and guided by public oratory. But audacious, and fond of hurrying forward to the decisive moment, he was not capable of that assiduous toil which the thirst of rule requires; and, though he possessed great influence over the conspirators, he did not yet govern them. He was merely capable when they hesitated, of rousing their courage and propelling them to a goal by a decisive plan of operations.”  
—*Thiers*.

When the advance of the Prussians against France was known at Paris, and occasioned the greatest consternation, Danton put himself at the head of affairs, and at once adopted the most energetic measures. He repaired to the commune and suggested that a list of all indigent persons be prepared

at the sections, and that they be furnished with pay and arms. In this manner was the reign of terror begun, by organizing the paupers, bankrupts, thieves, outlaws, and robbers of the city against the better classes, who, the more perfectly to serve the predominance of the mob, were visited and disarmed. "Let the reader fancy to himself a vast metropolis, the streets of which were a few days before alive with the concourse of carriages, and with citizens constantly passing and repassing—let him fancy to himself, I say, streets so populous and so animated, suddenly struck with the dead silence of the grave, before sunset, on a fine summer evening. All the shops are shut; everybody retires into the interior of his house, trembling for life and property; all are in fearful expectation of the events of a night in which even the efforts of despair are not likely to afford the least resource to any individual. The sole object of the domiciliary visits, it is pretended, is to search for arms, yet the gates of the city are shut and guarded with the strictest vigilance, and boats are stationed on the river, at regular distances, filled with armed men. Every one supposes himself to be informed against. Everywhere persons and property are put into concealment. Everywhere are heard the interrupted sounds of the muffled hammer, with cautious knock completing the hiding-place. Roofs, garrets, sinks, chimneys—all are just the same to a fear incapable of calculating any risk. One man, squeezed up behind the wainscot which has been nailed back on him, seems to form a part of the wall; another is suffocated with fear and heat between two mattresses; a third, rolled up in a cask, loses all sense of existence by the tension of his sinews. Apprehension is stronger than pain. Men tremble, but they do not shed tears; the heart shivers, the eye is dull, and the breast contracted. Women on this occasion display prodigies of tenderness and intrepidity. It was by them most of the men were concealed. It was one o'clock in the morning when the domiciliary visits began. Patroles, consisting of sixty pikemen, were in every street. The

nocturnal tumult of so many armed men, the incessant knocks to make people open their doors; the crash of those that were burst off their hinges; and the continual uproar and revelling which took place throughout the night in all the public houses, formed a picture which will never be effaced from my memory."—*Peltier in Thiers*.

By this measure of Danton's, twelve or fifteen thousand persons were taken from their homes, and put in confinement. The greater part perished by massacre, or the guillotine, or the severity of their sufferings. All the liberal and enlightened men of Paris, and all who favored the cause of royalty or religion, or anything but Jacobinism and the mob, were thus swept together into a heap and extinguished. There remained none to rule, but Danton, Robespierre, and their associates.

By the contrivance of Danton, the massacres of the prisoners taken on the night of the domiciliary visits, were organized and carried into execution.

At the same time he advocated measures of defence against the Austrians. Of Danton and Dumouriez, one the first political, the other the first military leader of the Jacobin republic, Thiers says: "Danton having shown as firm a countenance at Paris, as did Dumouriez at St. Menehould, they were regarded as the two saviours of the Revolution, and they were applauded together at all the public places where they made their appearance. A certain instinct drew these two men towards one another, notwithstanding the difference of their habits. They were the rakes of the two systems, who united with the like genius, the like love of pleasure, but with a different sort of corruption. Danton had that of the people, Dumouriez that of the courts; but, more lucky than his colleague, the latter had only served generously and sword in hand, while Danton had been so unfortunate (?) as to sully a great character by the atrocities of September."

Thus speaks the *moral* Thiers.

Danton proposed the organization of the war of La Vendée.

When the leaders of the moderate party were all fled or put to death, and Marat had fallen by assassination, Danton and Robespierre remained undisputed masters of the Republic. But it was impossible for two such chiefs to stand long upon the same platform. The cunning and ostensible virtue of Robespierre, triumphed over the dissolute courage and carelessness of Danton.

“An incredible mania of suspicion and accusation prevailed. The longest and most steady revolutionary life was now no security, and a person was liable to be assimilated in a day, in an hour, to the greatest enemies of the republic. The imagination could not so soon break the spell in which it was held by Danton, whose daring and whose eloquence had infused new courage in all decisive circumstances; but Danton carried into the Revolution a most vehement passion for the object, without any hatred against persons; and this was not enough. The spirit of revolution is composed of passion for the object and hatred against those who throw obstacles in its way—Danton had but one of these sentiments. In regard to revolutionary measures tending to strike the rich, to rouse the indifferent to activity, and to develop the resources of the nation, he had gone all lengths and had devised the boldest and most violent means; but, easy and forbearing towards individuals, he did not discover enemies in all; he saw among them men differing in character and intellect, whom it behooved him to gain or to take, with the degree of their energy, such as it was. He shook hands with noble generals, dined with contractors, conversed familiarly with men of all parties, sought pleasure, and had drunk deeply of it during the Revolution.”—*Thiers*. In fine, it began to be whispered by the friends of Robespierre and others, that Danton was not a good democrat; that he preferred elegant society; loved his ease; did not care essentially what course affairs might take, so long as he stood at their head. Those who did not dare attack him openly

slandered his friends—accused them of lukewarmness in the good cause of liberty. It began at last to be rumored that Danton had no distinct party to support him, but was rather a popular man in general, who consulted his own ambition more than the “public good.” Reports of the most impossible conspiracies were got up, and exaggerated from mouth to mouth, implicating the friends of Danton.

Meanwhile Danton himself was too frequently absent from the club of Jacobins, where all was organized. Robespierre, on the contrary, neglected nothing, and was always in his place. Danton had to apologize for his seeming lukewarmness, and associating with moderate persons or suspected aristocrats.

He gradually lost ground with the party. He was at length denounced as a bad statesman, in his absence. This was the first hint of his failing authority. The Convention, soon after, were about appointing a committee of public welfare, to conduct the wars of the republic. Robespierre was appointed and Danton with him; but he had lately married a young wife of whom he was deeply enamored, and was, moreover, weary of the Revolution, and unfit for the details of public business. With the advice of his friends he solicited permission to retire to Arcis-sur-Aube. As the nation had begun to feel its strength, the leader who had conducted them through the perils of the Revolution, and prepared all its most desperate measures, was no longer felt to be necessary. His leave of absence was granted him. He used it for two months, and lost his hold upon the public in the rapid current of affairs. The war of La Vendée went on without him. On his return, it appeared that he did not approve of the dreadful massacres that had happened in his absence. Though a partisan, a Jacobin, and an inventor of revolutionary measures, he had begun to condemn the blind and ferocious employment of them. A strong party was soon formed against him in the club, which interrupted him when speaking, and cried out against mod-

erates. Danton was opposed and questioned in the Assembly.

He was accused of a conspiracy to set Louis XVII. upon the throne, and of having intended to emigrate to Switzerland. He repelled the charge successfully. Robespierre defended and successfully supported him; a measure by which he proclaimed his own superiority, and destroyed the power of Danton forever. His party were weary of the atrocities of the Revolution, and vainly opposed the more furious of the Jacobins.

Danton, meanwhile, continued to absent himself from Robespierre and the Jacobins, which gave opportunities to his enemies, and nourished Robespierre's suspicions. Danton, discovering the course of affairs, demanded an interview, and remonstrated against certain proposed atrocities; Robespierre replied coolly, Danton sarcastically—and this was his first step towards the guillotine.

Danton's friends warned him of his danger, and implored him to rouse himself, but he replied that he would rather be guillotined than guillotine—that his life was not worth the trouble, and he was weary of humanity. "The members of the committee seek my death; well, if they effect their purpose, they will be execrated as tyrants; their houses will be razed; salt will be sown there; and upon the same spot a gibbet, dedicated to the punishment of crimes, will be planted. But my friends will say of me that I have been a good father, a good friend, and a good citizen. They will not forget me: No—I would rather be guillotined than guillotine."—*Mignet, from Thiers—Edit. Note.*

When in the Conciergerie prison, he jested with his friends contemptuously on Robespierre, and remarked that they did not know how to govern men. Once, says Thiers, and once only, he regretted having taken part in the Revolution, and said it was better to be a poor fisherman than a ruler of men.

Before the tribunal he showed his accustomed grandeur, and demanded to see his accusers; scouting, at the same

time, the fear of death. "Life," he said, "was a burthen from which he longed to be delivered." By the great power of his eloquence he almost defeated the machinations of his enemies. No prisoner ever defended himself with a more terrible power. The trial continued four days. All the charges against him proved ineffectual. But the jury were intimidated by some of the more furious among them, and he was condemned, together with his friends.

At the scaffold he gave way to no fear—but thinking of his wife, was moved for an instant. His death was as heroic as his life.\*

He was beheaded April 5th, 1794, in the thirty-sixth year of his age.

With great qualities he united an atrocious mind, unscrupulous, proud, and equal to any extremity of wickedness that served his purpose; he was not a mere murderer, yet, with perfect coolness, could devise the assassination of thousands of the innocent and guilty. "Prudhomme devotes twenty pages in his History of Crimes, to conversations and papers, which prove with what frightful unconcern this terrible demagogue arranged everything for the great massacres."—*Thiers, Ed. Note in.*

The history of Thiers is partial, even Jacobinical in its spirit. The author discovers an evident partiality for Danton, and no very violent hatred of Robespierre. Men are not generally aware, that many whom they now overlook, perhaps despise as unequal to the strife of order and virtuous enterprise, need but the stimulus of fame, and the opportunities of revolution, to become great in wickedness—to rival the Scyllas, Tamerlanes, Robespierres, and Dantons.

\* See the excellent account of in Thiers, vol. II.

## BENJAMIN CONSTANT.

HENRY BENJAMIN CONSTANT DE REBECQUE was born at Lausanne, in the canton of Vaud, of a French family who took refuge in Switzerland, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, from religious persecution. He was educated in the school of Voltaire, and remained tinctured with scepticism through life. He had the misfortune early in life to lose his mother, and suffered from his father's indifference and neglect. His early promise was great, even to precocity, and discovered his inclination to men, and aptitude for the world.

His education was continued at Oxford in England, where he became acquainted with Mackintosh, Erskine, Graham, and other persons afterwards distinguished on the liberal side in England.

In 1787 he went to Paris, associated with the philosophical reformers of the day, and led a dissipated life to the injury of his health. On a sudden he conceived the idea of travelling over England on foot, and actually accomplished the plan, living on a pittance and associating with the ordinary people of the country. His father called him home, and forgave him this freak on condition of his taking the post of chamberlain in the Court of the Duke of Brunswick. Here his sarcastic contempt for the antiquated ceremonies of the Court made him an object of general dislike. He made epigrams on the courtiers, derided their customs, and made no secret of his sceptical principles. To make matters worse, he married a noble lady in the service of the Duchess of Brunswick, whose feudal prejudices and proud temper soon brought about the necessity for a divorce.

After this event he returned to Switzerland, and in 1794, met, for the first time, with the celebrated Madame de Stael, whose character at once impressed him with admiration and respect. Of her he says, "such an union of imposing and attractive qualities, so much justness of thought, such charms, simplicity and frankness. She is truly a superior being, only to be found once in a century."

The overthrow of the terrorists in Paris, was a fortunate moment for his return to the capital. This was in 1795. Constant undertook to defend the Directory, then in a state of disreputable weakness and vacillation between the old and new.

In 1796, being in the thirtieth year of his age, Constant published a conservative pamphlet in favor of sustaining the authority of the government. Bonaparte being now First Consul, Constant was elected one of the Tribunats, charged with defending the State against the encroachment of despotism. Bonaparte put an end to this head without an arm, by driving Constant and de Stael into exile. This lady, of course, gained a vast reputation. The friends retreated into Germany, and were received at Wiemar by Gœthe and his literati with the greatest honor.

Constant began now to compose his work on *Religion*, but meddled no more with Napoleon. In 1813, after the failure of the Russian invasion, he reappeared in politics, in a work entitled—" *The Spirit of Conquest and Usurpation in its relations to Modern Civilization*," in which he traced with great power the destructive career of Bonaparte, and showed the ruin to society that must follow from the principles which actuated him. He showed the necessity of establishing a new and constitutional system of government, to protect the laws, learning, industry, and civilization of society.

In 1814, on the return of the Bourbons, Constant went to Paris and wrote in favor of the legitimate sovereign. Napoleon's return from Elba, called out violent invectives from his pen;—he styles him an Attila, a Ghengis-Khan. But no sooner was the Emperor fairly seated on his throne,

when Constant accepted office under him, with the title of Councillor of State. He thought if he could not prevent the despotism, he would make the best he could of it for the country.

The second exile of Napoleon left Constant in danger of his life from the new government. He took refuge in England for fifteen years, and apologized for his conduct in an account of the "*Hundred Days of Napoleon.*"

Returning to Paris at the end of this period, he again entered into politics, wrote political pamphlets, and became a principal editor of the "*Minerva,*" a periodical review.

In 1819 he became a member of the Chamber of Deputies. The ultras endeavored to expel him on the plea of his being a foreigner. He defended himself in a three days' trial, and proved his derivation from a family of French Protestants. After this, he sat in the Chambers till his death. It is said of this popular orator that his form was tall, his head slightly stooping, his face care-worn, but original and expressive.

After the Revolution of July 1830, he was called to become one of the first Ministers of State; but he was already struck with a fatal malady, and died in December of the same year, at the age of sixty-three. His funeral was made a time of national mourning. He was reckoned among the greatest defenders of constitutional liberty.

In his great work on Religion, which occupied all the leisure of thirty years of his life, he assumes that the religious principle is inherent in the human soul, but that the forms which express it are always, and of necessity, transient and perishable. These forms, he says, are the doctrines and worship of all nations, heathen and Christian. He makes no exception in favor of Christianity, though he treats it with marked respect.

## ROYER-COLLARD

PIERRE PAUL ROYER-COLLARD was born in a small town of Champagne, June 21st, 1763. His parents were respectable farmers. He showed talent, and was sent to a college of monks to be educated. His Protestant inclinations appeared early, and not inclining to the church, he studied law, and was admitted to the bar at Paris.

Imbibing the spirit of the Revolution, he became secretary of the Paris municipality, but left Paris and remained concealed through the bloody days of the Reign of Terror; but he did not desert his post in the Convention until he had raised his voice against the furious measures of the Jacobins.

In May, 1797, when the Directory was established, M. Collard was appointed one of the Council of Five Hundred, and soon formed an intimacy with members of the moderate monarchical party. He even corresponded secretly with the Bourbons, until the time that Bonaparte began to predominate. He then turned his mind to philosophy, and was influenced by the works of Reid and Stewart, principally because of the spirit of morality which they uphold. In 1811 he was appointed professor of Philosophy in Paris, and for three years drew considerable audiences. His discoveries did much to revive the philosophical spirit in France, which had been plunged in the grossest *materialism*. Royer-Collard undertook to revive *spiritualism*, and taught the doctrine of Ideas, and of the immortality of the soul. His manner was diffuse, but plain and grave, his influence moral and salutary in the extreme.

On the return of the Bourbons, R. Collard entered again into political life, and became director-general of the library,

with influence in preparing laws relative to the liberty of the press, which he supported in conjunction with legitimacy, holding them equally indispensable. His position was a philosophical mean, between the bigots and the liberals. Yet he was attacked as a revolutionist by the friends of Charles X., who neglected his advice, and consequently lost the crown by the Revolution which placed Louis Philippe upon the throne. He seems to have been very nearly the most respected and respectable statesman of his day, but a little too theoretic and abstract to have a solid influence in affairs. Yet in 1827, so great was the confidence of the nation in his integrity, he was chosen deputy by no fewer than seven constituencies at once, and became President of the Chambers.

After the Revolution of July, 1830, Royer-Collard, who had always supported legitimacy, and had been the friend of the Bourbons—though they owed their ruin to neglect of his public advice,—found it necessary to retire from public office at the age of sixty-three. Though he remained fifteen years in the Chamber of Deputies, he made but two speeches in all that time, one to defend hereditary dignities for the peerage, and a second to support the liberty of the press. It is said of him that he was the first to introduce philosophical principles into government in France, and that he gave to her present generation of statesmen their political education. In private life he was exemplary, and avoided intrigue. His countenance was manly and grave,—his wit penetrating and excellent.

## L A M A R T I N E .

A L P H O N S E D E L A M A R T I N E , the latest of distinguished French Poets, was born October 21st, 1780, at Macon, on the Saône. His family name was *De Prat* ; but on the death of his maternal uncle, the poet inheriting his fortune, assumed his name, *De Lamartine*. His father was a Major of Cavalry under Louis XVI. ; his mother the grand-daughter of an Under Governess of the Princess of Orleans. These were dangerous circumstances in the Revolution ;—the earliest remembrances young Lamartine had of his father were of visiting him in a dungeon. But the indiscriminating axe happened to spare the royal Cavalry Major ;—he exchanged his prison for a residence in the little village of Milles. There the future poet was so fortunate as to pass a quiet boyhood, surrounded by the most beautiful landscape ;—its valleys and streams and high mountains, with memories of his mother and sisters, are reflected in the poet's writings.

Lamartine received his collegiate education at Belley. Having taken his degree, he lived some months at Lyons, travelled for a time in Italy, and finally arrived at Paris,—the end of all Frenchmen—during the latter days of the Empire. It is said, that he was not altogether proof against the dissipations of the French metropolis. He, however, pursued his studies with some diligence. In 1813 he went again to Italy ;—the impressions of its scenes and influences are observable in his subsequent poems.

Napoleon fell, and Lamartine, having returned from Italy, became a Bourbon body-guard. The Hundred Days followed soon after, during which he was wise enough to keep quiet. Love however, had probably something to do with

his reserve. But Elvire died:—Lamartine, awaking from his sorrow, became a poet.

The “*Méditations Poétiques*” were published in 1820. It was a long time before the young poet could find a purchaser for his manuscripts. “At last,” says a Parisian correspondent in one of our Journals, “a publisher named Nicol—more discerning or more generous than others—accepted the manuscript, that was everywhere stained with tears, and it soon appeared, without the support of a name or even a preface. Lamartine’s wish respecting his work, seems to be expressed in the invocation in the last verse of the “*Meditations*.”

*Quand la feuille des bois tombe dans la prairie,  
Le vent du soir se lève et l'arrache aux vallons ;  
Et moi, je suis semblable à la feuille flétrie  
Emportez-moi comme elle, orageux Aquilons !*

When the leaf of the wood falls in the meadow,  
The night wind rises and blows it to the valleys—  
And me—I am like to the withered leaf ;  
Bear me away like it, oh, stormy North Wind !”

The “*Méditations*” took the public by surprise. They were different from all previous French poetry, both in sentiment and execution. Their popularity was sudden and universal. More than fifty thousand copies were sold.

His reputation, and the loyalty he had preserved, (through indolence, perhaps, as much as through principle,) procured the favor of the government, and he was attached to the Legation at Florence. A short time afterwards he married an English girl of much wealth and beauty. The death of his uncle also added to his means, so that he was now independent. His next appointment was as Secretary to the Embassy at Naples—then in the same capacity at London.

In 1823 he published his “*Mort de Socrate*”—not so successful as the “*Méditations*.” It has many beautiful passages, but the plan is unfinished, the language unequal, and

the versification careless. These are faults, however, belonging more or less to all Lamartine's productions; his poems are uniformly of a loose structure.

The "*Nouvelles Méditations Poétiques*," which appeared the same year, carried the public back to the impressions produced by his first volume. They contained the same bold and elevated sentiments, and those flights of imagination so unusual in French poetry. Not long after he was bold (or rash) enough to attempt the addition of a fifth Canto to "Childe Harold." With many fine passages, it was in such connection necessarily a failure. It is not within the capacity of Lamartine to attain to the depth and volume, and sombre coloring of the powerful current of the Englishman's poetry. It was productive, however, of one important result. It contained at the end a bitter reflection on the fallen state of Italy, for which a Neapolitan officer challenged him, and the poet nearly lost his life in the duel.

Returning to France in 1829, he put forth the "*Harmonies Portugues et Religieuses*;" but as the times were greatly disturbed, and France not very religious, they did not attract much attention. The next year he was made a member of the Academy, and afterwards appointed Minister to Greece. Before he could go, the Revolution of July occurred, and the powers that appointed him were overthrown.

A new phase of his life now took place. When the new dynasty was plainly established, the poet concluded to turn politician. His first efforts on this field were not so successful as they had been on the field he had left. He offered himself as Deputy at Dunkerque and at Toulon—he was defeated in both places.

Naturally sick of his new employment, he determined to travel through the East, and especially the Holy Land. Such an exploration appears to have been among his early dreams. His boyhood recollections account for this desire

"My mother," he says, in some autobiographical passages of his writings, "had received from her mother,

when on her death-bed, a beautiful Royanmont Bible, in which she learned me to read when I was a little child. This Bible had many pictures of sacred subjects, and when I had read quite correctly a half page of the history, my mother would show me a picture, and holding the book open upon her knees make me contemplate it for my reward. \* \* \* The silvery, tender, solemn and impassioned tone of her voice, added to all she said an accent of force, of charm and of love which remains still at this moment in my ear—alas—after six years silence.”

He sailed from Marseilles in May, 1832, and occupied with his tour thirteen months. Though naturally sufficiently simple in his tastes, he made his pilgrimage ostentatious and splendid.

“His train consisted of twenty horsemen—his rich tent was stored with arms and luxuries—the cities opened their gates to him—the Sheiks came out to meet and salute him—the Arabs of the Desert bowed themselves as he passed, and the Governors became responsible for his safety with their heads.”

But the ability to make so brilliant a display could not preserve him from the deepest misfortune. His young daughter, Julia, in whom much of his happiness was bound up, died at the end of his tour—the vessel which brought him to the East, carried back her corpse.

On his return, he found himself elected Deputy from Dunkerque. His speech, delivered in January, 1834, disappointed all parties. Everybody listened to it; everybody admired it; nobody could understand it. The poet Deputy remained alone as “De Lamartine.”

The next year he published “*Jocelyn*,” which added to his poetical reputation. Some other productions have since followed, mostly of unequal merits.

Lamartine's speeches on the great question of the East—a topic which he was prepared to understand—embracing proposals for the bases of a new European system, first gave him position in the Chambers. Subsequent speeches

against the death-punishment, in favor of foundlings, and on similar subjects, put him subsequently at the head of what are called in France, the Socialists—a party, which like a clique under the same name in this country, have no definite ends in view, and no definite means by which they propose to attain them.

The qualities of Lamartine's writings are peculiar to him among French poets. He has something of Rousseau; something of De Stael—but no poet among his countrymen can be compared with him. The spirit of his verse is English rather than French, though he lacks the English terseness. Instead of the classical school of France, he seems to have made Young and Byron his models, adding also the study of the romantic in the German and British Poets. Thus it is, that he yields himself up, as no Frenchman before him has done, to the dominion of a thoughtful and solemn imagination. His chief characteristics are a dreamy melancholy often bordering on gloom, “a longing lost in sorrowful misgiving, an inclination to the mystical and supernatural, and a great predilection for poetical landscape painting.” Even among English productions, his poems would be found to have great depth and feeling; his language, also, has both variety and beauty, though usually too diffuse, and sometimes bombastic. One quality, at least, he possesses, worthy of especial notice and praise—he is profoundly earnest, a characteristic in which the poetry of the French, so light and superficial, has been deficient ever since the age of Boileau.

In addition to Cormenin's striking “portrait” of the poet-politician, a passage may be taken from the excellent correspondent before referred to:—

“De Lamartine is of good height and elegant form. His face is a little thin, and it is marked by the deep lines which distinguish the nervous man. His chin is slightly projecting, and his nose large, and inclining to the aquiline. His eyebrows are heavy, projecting, and quite arched; and

his grayish hair is arranged with the greatest attention over a fine forehead.

“ M. de Lamartine is a man of rare contradictions—he is proud and simple, good-natured and ironical, light and profound, ambitious and indolent ; he is equally in love with the world and seclusion, with pleasure and retirement. He loves to be praised, and dislikes to make acquaintances. In conversation he hears himself only, and with an extremely good-natured contempt, he laughs at the man whom he cannot convince, paining him with his pride as much as he charms him by his affability. With all these faults, there are few men who have a greater power over others in conversation, and though the impressions which he leaves upon one’s mind are never deep, and always mingled of pleasure and regret, still he is a man whom one will always wish to see again.

“ At his house everything is in the most exact order, and though his fortune is something wasted, he will be found in the midst of studied elegance, in which his horses and dogs share their part, for horses and dogs are among his favorites.”

Thus, “ proud, simple, contemptuous, social, ambitious, indolent—always talking of principle, but always pushed on by the impulses of imagination—with theories so grand that nobody can follow him, and with so many minute exceptions, that he can follow nobody else—a man of the most sublime and beautiful thoughts, yet lacking that common sense which carries many who are less able to greater success—M. de Lamartine is a person who does not well understand himself, and who is not well understood by others. Well did one who undertook to write the poet’s life close the third revision of his history by saying,

“ ‘ *Décidément, la biographie de M. de Lamartine ne’st possible qu’après sa mort.*’

“ Decidedly, the biography of M. de Lamartine is not possible until after his death.”

## GUIZOT.

FRANCOIS PIERRE GUILLAUME GUIZOT was born at Nismes, where his father fell by the guillotine, in the general catastrophe of the Dantonist party. His parents were Protestants, and held a respectable position in society. In his seventh year his mother went with him to Geneva, and placed him in the Gynmnase de Geneva, where he became a diligent and excellent scholar. His character was early marked by sense, and his demeanor by gravity. Such was his diligence, in four years he had acquired six languages; and after six years of study, he was first of the school in history and philosophy.

In 1805, Guizot began his law studies at Paris, and the gravity and severity of his character, contributed, with want of friends and poverty, to keep him a long time in obscurity.

The second year of his residence in Paris brought him a preceptorship in a family of great respectability; where he was treated according to his singular merits, and brought into connection with influential society.

In this situation he became acquainted with Mademoiselle Pauline de Meulan, a lady of excellent attainments and character, and of a distinguished family, but impoverished by the Revolution. She had taken up the occupation of a journalist, and was suddenly prevented in the course of her duties by a serious illness. Her family being dependent on her labors, the interruption was critical, and might have been fatal. She is said to have made a public offer for the best assistance. M. Guizot sent her a letter, enclosing a good article. It was accepted, and followed by several

others. The affair led to a personal friendship, and five years after, to a marriage between the parties. The lady is said to have been perfectly worthy of him. In 1809, M. Guizot, always engaged in literary labors, published his first work—*Le Dictionnaire des Synonymes*. This was in the twenty-third year of his age. He followed it with "Lives of the French Poets," a translation of Gibbon's Roman Empire, with valuable notes; and a translation of a Spanish work—"Spain in 1808."

In 1812, being in his twenty-sixth year, he became adjunct professor of history in the University, and soon after the professorship of history was given to him.

In 1814, through the friendship of Royer-Collard, he became secretary-general to the Minister of the Interior.

Bonaparte's return from Elba sent Guizot back to his professorship.

The Constitutionalist sent him to plead the cause of their charter before Louis XVIII. in Ghent—a duty which he performed successfully.

In 1815, his reputation being fully established, he was made secretary to the Minister of Justice, and became one of the leaders of the party of Doctrinaires, who adopted certain philosophical views of justice and of government. This party, it was said, might all have sat upon one sofa. The assassination of the Duc de Berri, caused an expulsion of the Constitutionalist from office, and Guizot lost his place. He then gave himself wholly to letters, and published various historical works and compilations, besides essays on Shakspeare and review articles.

In 1827, he lost his first wife—a heavy grief to him. This lady has been highly eulogized, as a person of extraordinary capacity and worth. Though born a Catholic, it is said, that for her husband's sake, who gave her religious consolation in death, she died a Protestant.

During the ministry of Polignac, the College of Lisieux elected M. Guizot to the Chamber of Deputies. He assisted in the Revolution of 1830, and wrote the famous pro-

test of the Chamber against the royal ordinances. He became Minister of Public Instruction ; afterwards of the Interior ; and in this last office exercised the power of expelling and replacing office-holders, with great freedom. Since then, M. Guizot has been the undoubted first man in the French political world. Thiers only rivals him in public estimation. M. Guizot is a philosopher, and a very rigid ruler. He inclines evidently to a strong and even a despotic government. He is neither democratic nor aristocratic, but *constitutional*.

We gather from other sources that M. Guizot is a member of the Reformed Church, and that his character has an English cast, for gravity and reserve ; but that when it pleases him to be affable, his powers of entertainment are very great.

Under the Huguenot persecution his grandfather, Francis Guizot, was one of those who suffered persecution and exile, and preached to his scattered flock for forty years, in danger of his life.

Of M. Guizot's mother, whose husband fell by the guillotine under Robespierre, it is said that her care and exemplary piety formed the principles and guided the conduct of her son. In July, 1845, this venerable person was still living.

Of Guizot's proficiency in early life, it is reported that at the age of fifteen, he could read in their native languages, Demosthenes, Tacitus, Dante, Gæthe, and Shakspeare.

The story of his first acquaintance with Mademoiselle de Meulan is variously told. We know of no version of it perfectly trustworthy. She wrote books on education. It is said that her husband's influence contributed to develop her talents.

M. Guizot married a second time, but is now a widower.

M. Guizot's *doctrinaires* support the authority of Reason as the source of law. Of course no one knows precisely what is meant by that term, but M. Guizot's "Reason" is at present very analogous with the more ancient, "Reasons of State," the great argument of those who love and support despotism. It is not probable that M. Guizot has much

respect for the *opinion* of the people, however much he may desire to secure their happiness.

Of M. Guizot's private conduct his contemporaries speak with unqualified respect. Instead of employing his office to enrich himself, he remains comparatively poor. His former colleagues have amassed millions, he, on the contrary, has but a small country-house at a short distance from Paris, and will leave his children no inheritance but his name.

His manners are reported to have a certain hardness, consistent with his stoical principles. He evidently loves power, and feels that he was born to command.

His great merit is constitutionality,—he puts all government into a solid and equitable form.

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## THIERS.

LOUIS ADOLPHE THIERS was born at Marseilles, April 6th, 1797. His father was a locksmith and small iron dealer, and his mother a daughter of a bankrupt merchant, of a poor but proud family.

By the influence of some relations, Adolphe was admitted a free scholar in the Imperial Lyceum of Marseilles, where he acquitted himself creditably until 1815, when he removed to Aix, to enter upon the study of law. Here he formed a lasting friendship with Mignet the historian, who was his fellow-student. In this situation, Thiers added history, philosophy, and belles-lettres, to his law studies, and imbibed radical notions. Even then he showed traces of the demagogue—declaimed against the Restoration, and made himself suspected by the police and hated by the faculty of the college.

Rather than confer the prize of eloquence upon him, his instructors adjourned the trial a year, when, producing the same piece, he was outdone, much to their satisfaction, by an anonymous oration sent from Paris; but what was their subsequent mortification to find that this also was a production of their mischievous little Jacobin, who had taken this pleasant method of entrapping them.

As a lawyer in Aix, Thiers could get no employment, and went with Mignet to Paris.

During the first months of their residence in Paris, our two aspirants took a lodging, which, since their arrival at fame and fortune, has become classic ground. The house of Shakspeare at Stratford-on-Avon, was never visited by the votaries of the bard with more enthusiasm than the admirers of French literature have examined the dwelling of the future Prime Minister of France, and the distinguished Professor of History. A dirty dark street in the purlieus of the Palais Royale, is called the *Passage Montesquieu*, situate in the most crowded and noisy part of Paris. Here you ascend by a flight of steps into a gloomy and miserable lodging-house, in the fifth story of which a smoked door conducts you into two small chambers, opening one from the other, which were the dwellings of two men, whose celebrity, within a few years afterwards, filled the world. A common chest of drawers, of the cheapest wood, a bed to match, two rush-bottom chairs, a little rickety nut-wood table, incapable of standing steadily on its legs, and a white calico curtain, formed the inventory of the furniture which accommodated the future Prime Minister of the greatest country in Europe, and the future Historian of the Revolution.\*

After some time spent in poverty and restlessness, Thiers presented himself to Manuel, who was just then expelled from the Chamber, under Villéle's ministry. Manuel received him as a friend and partisan, and introduced him to Lafitte, who got him a place among the editors of the *Com-*

\* American Review: Dec. and Jan., 1846-7.

*stitutionnell*. His bold articles in that paper excited great attention; and the young politician, in despite of poverty, found himself drawn into the best circles of Paris.

He became a constant and admired frequenter of the most brilliant assemblies of Lafitte, Casimir-Perier, and Count Flahaut. The Baron Louis, the most celebrated financier of that day, received him as his pupil and friend, and at his table a place was always provided for M. Thiers.

He gleaned much in conversation, was a good talker and listener; and gathered anecdotes and facts for a history of the French Revolution, which he was then composing.

By the eclat of his history he gained valuable friends. One of them, an obscure German bookseller, Schubert, (whom he afterwards, when elevated to power, painfully neglected,) having conceived a devoted admiration for him, solicited on his behalf a rich publisher beyond the Rhine, Baron Cotta, and obtained funds by which one-half of the *Constitutionnel* was purchased and put into Thiers' hands.

This enabled him to change his habits of life, and from a poor scholar in his garret, he shone out a Parisian man about town. He was, however, exceedingly diligent, and made the utmost improvement of the fortune thus placed at his disposal. He rose at five in the morning, and from that hour till noon, applied himself to the columns of the Journal, which soon in his hands quintupled its receipts. After having thus devoted six hours to labor which most persons consume in sleep and idleness, he would go to the office of the paper and confer with his colleagues, among whom were MM. Etienne, Jay, and Everiste Dumoulin. His evenings were passed in society, where he sought not only to extend his connections, but to collect information, which he well knew how to turn to account. In accomplishing his object, some struggle was necessary to overcome his personal and physical disadvantages.

"In stature he is diminutive, and although his head presents a large forehead, indicative of intellect, his features are common, and his figure clumsy, slovenly, and vulgar. An

enormous pair of spectacles, of which he never divests himself, half cover his visage. When he begins to speak you involuntarily stop your ears, offended by the nasal twang of his voice, and the intolerable provincial sing-song of his dialect. In his speech there is something of the gossip; in his manner there is something of \* \* He is restless and fidgety in his person, rocking his body from side to side in the most grotesque manner. At the early part of his career, to which we now refer, he was altogether destitute of the habits and *convenances* of society, and it may be imagined how singular a figure he presented in the elegant salons of the Faubourg Chaussée l'Antin. Yet this very strangeness of appearance and singularity of manners gained him attention, of which he was not slow to profit. His powers of conversation were extraordinary. No topic could be started with which he did not seem familiar. If finance were discussed, he astonished and charmed the bankers and capitalists. If war were mentioned, and the victories of the Republic and Empire referred to, the old marshals, companions of Napoleon, listened with amazement to details, which seemed to have come to the speaker by revelation, being such as only an eye-witness could have given, and a thousand times better and more clearly described, than they, who were present on the scene of action, could have given them. In short, in a few months, M. Thiers was the chief lion of the salons of the Notables of the opposition under the Restoration."\*

Soon after he founded a new paper, the "National," more radical in its tendency, and aided by the radical party in the Chambers, made it noticed and feared.

He directed his writings and conversation against the administration of Polignac, and absoluteism, and attacked every ministerial measure with great fury.

At the Revolution of July, 1830, he was the first to invite Louis Philippe to the throne, but had not discovered any great courage in the Revolution itself; on the contrary, it

is said, he retreated to a place of safety, at the first tokens of violence, and talked rather weakly of legal measures to insure order.

Elected, however, a deputy from Aix, he appeared in the new Assembly, dressed, it is said, à la Danton, and made himself hated and ridiculous by his bombast and insolence. In return his proper misanthropy was not much diminished.

On the dissolution of the Lafitte ministry, he deserted his old friends, and went over to the hereditary peerage party in the Chambers. He became a violent Monarchist.

Up to this time Thiers' parliamentary efforts had been mostly failures. This year, 1831, on the important question of a hereditary peerage, he delivered a speech of four hours' length, which with numerous defects held the attention of the Chamber, and established his reputation as an orator. With the restlessness of his nature, he let no opportunity slip of improving the impression he had made. The next year, in particular, he seized upon a very peculiar and happy exigence. M. Thiers was to furnish them a long and complicated report of the committee on the Budget. A protracted debate then in progress was expected to continue much longer. It happened unexpectedly, however, that the debate was suddenly brought to a close on the 22nd of January, the day on which it commenced, and the report on the Budget was the order of the day for the 23rd. To write a report so voluminous in a single night, was a mechanical impossibility, to say nothing of the mental part of the process. What was to be done? Such reports are always prepared in writing and read to the Chamber for this obvious reason, that although necessarily the composition of an individual member of the committee, they are in fact supposed to proceed, and do really possess the sanction of all the members of the committee, as well as of that individual member who is more especially charged with their composition. M. Thiers, however, pressed by the exigency of the occasion, and not sorry to find an occasion for playing off a parliamentary *tour de force*, went down to the Chamber on

the morning of the 23rd. He presented himself in the Tribune, and apologizing to the Chamber for being compelled to depart from the usage of the House, by the unexpectedly early period at which the report was called for, in giving a viva voce and unwritten report, he proceeded at once to the subject aided only by a few numerical memorandas, and delivered a speech of four hours' duration, in which he discussed and exhausted every topic bearing on the matter of the Budget. He plunged with the more ready and voluble fluency, into financial, political, and administrative details, unfolded with a logical perspicuity, an arithmetical order and precision, and intermingled with bursts of picturesque oratory with which he astonished and confounded the Chamber. History, politics, public economy, questions of national security and progress, were passed in succession before his wondering hearers, like scenes exhibited in a magic lantern. As usual no topic was omitted, every question was marshaled in its proper place and order, and the House nevertheless exhibited no signs of fatigue; they hung upon his words. On several occasions in pauses of his speech, after he had continued speaking for nearly three hours, they invited him to rest, not from fatigue on their part, but from apprehension of his physical powers being exhausted. "Repose-vous en pere," exclaimed several deputies. He proceeded, however, to the close without suspension.

At the death of Casimir-Perier in 1832, he was made Minister of the Interior, during the Belgian troubles, and the Vendée insurrections. In this position he was fortunate; he did no mischief and won some glory. He was now broken into public business, and exchanging the portfolio of the Interior for that of Commerce and Public works, everything prospered which he engaged in; but his efforts were directed chiefly to the completion of popular public works.

In the disturbances of the Republican party, in 1834, Thiers discovered more courage, and redeemed his character in a measure, from the reproach of cowardice incurred by his flight in 1830.

At this time he quarrelled with Marshal Soult, and had the better of him in abuse. Soult sent in his resignation. His successor had the same difficulty, and it appeared that Thiers, if not a brave man, was at least a very quarrelsome and abusive one when it suited his humor to be so.

Guizot and the Duc de Broglie met the same fate, and could not keep place with him. He now began to be abused on all sides, and soon had no party, a condition which presently forced him to resign. He now went over to Lafitte and the Opposition, as was natural, after seven years of monarchism; and now found time to prepare his histories of Florence and of the Consulate.

In 1840, in consequence of a difficulty on the part of Guizot, Mole, and Broglie to agree with the Royal policy, Thiers came again into power. In the Syrian affairs he discovered no prudence or decision, and lost influence, but the fortifications of Paris were easier to be carried through by the shrewd king and the cunning minister. By the popular discontent he was again ejected and Guizot succeeded him. It is said that since his fall from favor he is much more of a radical; but whether he is or not seems to be a matter of extremely slight importance.

It is said of him that he has but one fixed purpose in life, and that is to advance himself.



