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1750-1850
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Edited by **Caroline Franklin**



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WAR MINISTER, AND WITH THE COMMISSARIES - LETTERS
OF BOURNONVILLE, MIRANDA, VALENCE, &C. &C. VOL I

Helen Maria Williams

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The publisher has gone to great lengths to ensure the quality of this reprint but points out that some imperfections in the original book may be apparent.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the accounts reprinted in this series present themselves as autobiographical and implicitly claim to be objective non-fiction. However, the genre of travel writing was diverse and unstable: while supposedly devoted to the utilitarian dissemination of knowledge, it occasionally took on some of the entertaining properties of romance. Earlier writers had sometimes been suspected of plagiarism, telling tall tales or even of inventing journeys altogether, so that narrative conventions developed to enhance the effect of authorial authenticity and authority. The narrator might adopt the intellectual stance of the philosophic voyager, the sensitivity of the sentimental traveller, or the aesthetic discrimination of the picturesque tourist, while the autobiographical convention provided a connecting link ordering the narrative as well as a strategy to present the speaker as candid and trustworthy.¹ Inevitably, anecdotes, character sketches, retrospective reflections, landscape descriptions, poetical effusions and other fictional techniques pervaded travel writing, and, by the Romantic period, some examples of the genre had become noticeably egocentric. Today, readers of autobiographical texts are generally sophisticated enough to discriminate between the self outside the text and the persona of the author depicted within, and to realize that an impression of epistolary spontaneity may be carefully crafted.

Women's travel writing was fairly uncommon in the period 1750–1850. Modern feminists may therefore be tempted to romanticize these pioneers, or take on trust their self-portraits of themselves as heroic explorers, because we assume such women, by definition, must have been unconventional and thus proto-feminist. It is possible, though, that it was not so much that women didn't travel in the eighteenth century, but that publishing conventions only slowly accommodated themselves to rising levels of female literacy, allowing them access to the genre. Our contemporary interest in gender in literature also leads us to expect their writing to demonstrate distinctively feminine traits and concerns. It is certainly the case that most of them put their names on the title page and

wrote consciously as women, if for no other purpose than as a selling point. Almost all of them took care to describe the customs relating to women in the lands they visited, as well as communicating any particular difficulties females experienced on the voyage. But by no means did all our writers identify the feminine with the subjective, the quotidian or the domestic. Finally, as Sara Mills has pointed out, feminists need to relate these texts to the development of Western colonialism and not treat the writers merely as interesting individuals.² Travel writing was intimately related to the mapping and knowledge-gathering activities of soldiers and settlers extending the British Empire. The accounts of several of our authors show them adopting the subject-positions of colonialists when they travelled to India, West Africa and the lands of the Mediterranean.

Contemporary reviewers, though, were concerned at women's encroachment into what had formerly been a male preserve. A woman such as Lady Morgan, adopting the already inchoate genre of travel writing, doubly disrupted the decorum of the literary sphere: producing and reproducing sprawling volumes which made a mockery of the ordering of knowledge.³ The woman travel writer was particularly disturbing because she wrote from the border between public and private; between homeland and the wider world: unsettling certainties and distinctions and undermining even further the authority of the printed word. Increasingly, she used the genre to comment on society: its structures, institutions, customs and government. Because she usually had no professional affiliation – she was not a diplomat, soldier or civil servant – she was at liberty to take an independent view: sometimes even transforming her journals into journalism.

*Volume V: Letters from the Island of Teneriffe, Brazil,
the Cape of Good Hope, and the East Indies.*

By Mrs Kindersley, London, 1777

Not a great deal is known about Jemima Kindersley, and her travel writing does not centre on her personal story and subjectivity, as would later 'Romantic' examples of the genre, but turns outward to describe, compare and try and account for the different cultures of the world. She had been born Jemima Wickstead on 2 October 1741 and became a local beauty in her home town of Great Yarmouth, being nicknamed 'Pulcherrima' by her friends.⁴ At the age of 20, she married Lieutenant Nathaniel Kindersley and, a year later, gave birth to their son, also Nathaniel. In 1764, her husband became a captain in the Bengal artillery, and his wife and baby son accompanied him on the long voyage to India, where they arrived in 1765. Because of illness, she and her son returned to Britain in 1769, and

her husband died in Calcutta that same year. She settled at Southampton, moving to Bath in her later years. When her son grew up, he became a civil servant with the East India Company at Madras, and in 1794 published *Specimens of Hindoo Literature*. Like his mother, Nathaniel was genuinely fascinated by Indian culture as well as having mercantile motives for learning local languages. He pointed out that, though Persian was considered necessary in Bengal, 'the vulgar Hindostauny or the two prevailing dialects the Telingy and Tamoul' were more useful for employees on the coast of Coromandel.

Though she had come from fairly humble antecedents and had received little formal education, Mrs Kindersley's travel writing was not a naïve confection of impressions. Her attempt to compare and order knowledge of foreign societies was influenced by Enlightenment comparativism. Mrs Kindersley cites Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* (1748) as an authority for her own emphasis on climate as one of the determining factors in producing a despotic sexual and political system, as she believed the Mughal empire to have been (p. 189).⁵ She was positioning herself as an impartial cultural observer yet was also firmly situated within the colonial context. Gender acts as a fault line revealing potential instability in such an authorial identity.

As Shirley Foster and Sara Mills have pointed out, the heroic subject position adopted by bourgeois male adventurers was often constructed through the implied exclusion of the female, the native and the servant, based on stereotypes of their relative passivity and weakness.⁶ Jemima Kindersley finds herself drawn to similar exclusions, in her self-positioning as a British and Protestant observer (pp. 72, 181–6). However, this does not cause her to compensate by figuring her femininity through rueful self-deprecation or by stressing her maternal role. Though she utilizes the epistolary format deemed suitable for women writers because of its relative informality and familial context, she adopts the authoritative authorial point of view of an objective gatherer of information, whose intellectual attempts to analyze cultural differences include cool observations on the ways different European colonial governments behaved in India (p. 74) and the extraordinary way of life adopted by the English there (p. 80).

The frontispiece showing the secluded Indian women in a 'zannanah' promises the reader insights into a secret world of women from which a male traveller would be excluded. Mrs Kindersley here follows in the footsteps of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in capitalizing on the greater opportunity a European woman travel writer has than either a man or a sequestered oriental woman of observing and comparing Eastern social mores in both private and public spheres. In Letter 53, she paints a portrait

of Indian women's lack of education and enforced idleness, caged in their separate quarters. In the Roman Catholic Canary Islands, she had been just as eager to visit a nunnery (p. 12), and to disabuse readers of idealized notions of life in the cloister. From the very first letter, she had shown herself aware of the link between religion and oppression of certain social groups, reminding us of missionary activity used to persecute the natives when Spain colonized the New World (pp. 8, 49) while shrewdly acknowledging how well Christianity has socialized and rendered passive the negro slaves in present-day Portuguese Brazil (p. 50). Her description of the veiling of the Tenerife ladies by entire covering of the head except for a little opening for one eye, and account of their only acquiring authority with advanced age, and vicariously, from being the mother of sons (pp. 18–19) implies a comparison of Catholic patriarchy with that in Muslim cultures. In Brazil, she finds her own liberty curtailed under the name of punctilious masculine chivalry which insists she should be continuously escorted, suspecting that her independence is viewed as potentially subversive. She realizes she will not be allowed to visit any nunneries there, though in fact she does manage to make one private visit. Acknowledging that 'whatever subject I begin a letter upon, it generally slides into religion before I finish it', she declares 'it cannot be otherwise, where the forms of religion encompass everything, where one half of the people are governed by superstition, and the other half make use of it to govern with' (pp. 51–2).

Her visit to the Cape of Good Hope again brought her into contact with negro slaves who to her 'appear hardly a degree above the brute creation' (p. 70) in their violent appetites for food and drink and limited ability to communicate with the Europeans. Mrs Kindersley's ill-disguised revulsion at their appearance must have led her Dutch acquaintances to tease her, for she innocently relays the 'fact' that the 'Hottentots' are born white and straight-nosed but become black when their parents break their babies' noses and bake them in the sun (p. 68). She is again horrified by the sight of so many 'black' people when she lands in India, the nakedness of the lower classes is disgusting and the dress and turbans of the wealthier men seem effeminate (p. 72). Visiting the coast of Coromandel allows her to compare Dutch with British government in India, pointing out that the former make money out of fining any governors who line their own pockets (p. 74). Unsurprisingly, she vindicates the British army and assures us of its mercy after victory over the French at Pondicherry. Yet she confesses herself astonished at the profligacy and luxury of the way of life of her fellow countrymen (p. 80), especially the men whose intemperance makes them especially prone to illness (p. 85).

It is not long before Kindersley is describing the principal religions of India, and comparing their influence on social customs (Letter 28). She notes the religious tolerance in India, pointing out that the Hindus believe that people of all religious persuasions worship the same gods in different ways (p. 115). However, she bewails the decline in learning, and shows a typically rational Protestant contempt for the 'absurd unaccountable ceremonies' of Hinduism (p. 113), castigating the Brahmins' fostering of the ignorance and credulity of the people (p. 115) as she had done with Roman Catholic priests. But even if an Indian Martin Luther arose to open the people's eyes to their own religion in their own language, she fears they are 'too ignorant and too indolent' to benefit (p. 138). However, she commends the charity, temperance and mild passivity of the Hindus, though noting the military skills of the fighting castes (p. 120) which show them to be capable of different behaviour when occasion demands it. In Letter 31, Kindersley gives a sketch of the treatment of Hindu women, and hesitantly proffers some suggestions as to how the shocking custom of suttee arose as well as the seclusion of women. She emphasizes the overwhelming importance of honour and belief in fulfilling one's role in the hierarchy, both in the caste system on earth and transmigration of souls in the hereafter, which overrides individual happiness or the fear of death.

In Letter 35, Mrs Kindersley gives an historical account of how the Mughal empire was established in India, its opulent magnificence and then military and cultural decline: a particularly meaningful story for the nation which saw itself as succeeding to that dominion. Not surprisingly, she goes into particular detail regarding Bengal and the surrounding area, recounting the story of British trade, settlements and military successes as they wrested control from the Muslim rulers there (Letter 39). She is puzzled but proud that the British, a mere 'handful of men', can now manage to govern such a large number of 'the black people' (p. 165), and ascribes this to the latter's lack of discipline and indolence. Taking her cue from Montesquieu, Kindersley regards the Mughal empire in India as an example of despotic government in which the prince is subject to no control from laws (pp. 160, 162), but she notes that it allowed the Hindus liberty of conscience and, rather than setting up a code of laws, local customs were permitted to continue (p. 161). (This was, of course, the policy which the British also followed in the eighteenth century.) She relates the former military success of the Mughals directly to the effect of their religion: belief in predestination made them indifferent to death so that they sought the heavenly reward a soldier earns by dying in battle (p. 174). This military ethic is intimately related to their concept of masculinity.

Kindersley carefully distinguishes between the cultural assumption by Indian Muslims that women have no souls and the actual account in the Koran, yet comments that in practice women are not treated as spiritually equal to men (p. 176). Furthermore, Muslim men have a monopoly on exercising judgement, having the power of life or death over their wives, children, families and slaves, when any of them commit capital crimes.

Kindersley is aware that her view of Indian society will be judged as bigoted and harsh (p. 189). For she castigates the corruption which poverty generates in a hierarchical society, and deplors the abject condition of the common people. Indeed, the modern reader will detect bigotry in the way she implicitly ascribes their extreme lassitude to lack of moral fibre (p. 181) when we might suspect that starvation was the likely cause. On the other hand, she does attempt to discriminate between nature and culture in her determinist approach to society:

I will not pretend to determine (on a point which has often been urged) whether black people are by nature inferior in understanding to white; who can judge of it here, where the nature of the government checks the growth of very virtue? Where property is not secure, what incitement is there to industry: Where knowledge is of no use, who will resign his indolence and ease in endeavours to obtain it? In such a government can we wonder, that the general characteristic of the inhabitants should be stupidity and low cunning?

(pp. 193–4)

Spurred by the critical success of her *Letters* in 1777, which was favourably noticed by several periodicals, Mrs Kindersley next planned to write some 'essays on the female mind'.⁷ These she intended to constitute an objective study of women's roles in various cultures, for she rejected both the special pleading of histories of illustrious women and the superficiality of conduct books. However, when she realized that she had been pre-empted by the French man of letters, A.L. Thomas, she contented herself with appending the two essays of her own she had already completed to her translation of his 1772 work, entitled *An Essay on the character, the manners and the understanding of women in different ages* (1781). The first essay showed her giving a 'feminist' spin to the theory of Jean-Jacques Rousseau that male control of woman is exerted in direct ratio to her sexual power in a specific culture. She compares the phlegmatic Dutch merchants who are more interested in money than sex, whose women are valued for usefulness and economy and are thus

under little restraint, with Muslim men in thrall to their seraglios, where women are highly valued as beautiful possessions and carefully guarded. In her second essay, she presumably writes out of her own experience as a young widow struggling to survive on a pension: arguing that women are always assumed to be under the guardianship of either a husband or father, but, in fact, many single women 'in the prime of life' have to make their own way, and cultivate great strength of mind to care for children and themselves without complaint.

It was not fortuitous that Kindersley turned from travel writing to speculations on gender, for the two types of discourse were interlinked. Descriptions of the appearance and dress of women of the locality were a conventional topic of the former, and prurient curiosity about polygamy and sexual customs was a particular feature of accounts of the East and of the indigenous peoples of the non-Christian world being newly discovered by Europeans. As Kindersley had realized, social comparativism could be sharply focused by comparing the treatment of women in various human societies across the globe and throughout history. Such universalist accounts were indeed produced by Scottish philosophers such as William Alexander, in his *The History of Women from the Earliest Antiquity, to the Present Time; giving some account of almost every interesting particular concerning that sex, among all nations, ancient and modern* (1779) as well as A.L. Thomas. That mankind's development toward modernity, leisure and civil society was linked to the greater social freedom of woman produced an ambivalence in these Enlightenment narratives, a questioning of whether this effeminization and luxury represented progress or degeneration. Eighteenth-century women, anxious to avoid determinism and preferring to tie female emancipation to the active exercise of virtue, therefore rarely wrote such conjectural histories of women though Lady Morgan produced a late example in her ironically entitled *Woman and her Master* (1840).⁸

*Volume IV: Original Letters from India, Containing a
Narrative of a Journey Through Egypt, and The
Author's Imprisonment at Calicut by Hyder Ali. To
which is added, an abstract of three subsequent
voyages to India.*

By Mrs Fay, Calcutta, 1821

When we turn to another woman's account of India a generation later, we find travel writing has changed. In Eliza Fay's *Letters from India*, instruction and Enlightenment comparativism have vanished, and in its place we have a personal memoir with no pretensions other than to entertain.

Indeed, as a modern critic comments disparagingly: 'All in all, her letters actually have little to do with India. Her life was with the nabobs and that is largely what she tells us about.'⁹ Much of what we know about Eliza Fay herself derives from her travel book, the first part of which was based on the letters and journals that she had written for her family, and in particular her two sisters, one of whom married a Thomas W. Preston and probably lived in Blackheath. Her narrative is addressed to a Mrs L. in the second volume. E.M. Forster speculated that Eliza may have been a sailor's daughter: she certainly relished travel and adventure.¹⁰ Letter 8 was written by Mrs Fay's husband, to his father-in-law, a Mr C (p. 87). Fay relays the deaths first of her mother in the early 1780s and then of her father in 1794.

At the age of 23, Eliza had set off in April 1779 for India with her barrister husband Anthony Fay, who hailed from Rotherhithe, but was of Irish extraction. Eliza claimed she had to accompany him for his own safety, because on his own he would have been too extravagant and hot-headed to survive! (p. 244). They took an arduous overland route to India via France (with whom Britain was at war until 1783); over the Alps to Italy; by sea to the deserts of Northern Africa; and thence to Suez and down the Red Sea. She eventually arrived in Calcutta, but only after many misadventures and having endured violent ill-treatment at Calicut. Sardar Khan, the governor, had imprisoned them and their party for over three months during hostilities which eventually developed into the second Anglo-Mysore War. This event is the sensational heart of the book; and the exotic drama with its motley cast of raffish characters seen through the wide but sharp eyes of a young woman must have touched some raw nerves in contemporary readers, whether nervous about the safety of the growing number of expatriates, or sensitive to accusations of British mercantile greed in India. For in Letter 9 we had already heard of adventurers attempting to circumvent the control of the East India Company over trade in the African desert. (The Company was shortly to be confirmed as a ruling agency for the crown in Bengal.) But in Letter 12 we have clear-cut evidence of British opportunists in the disreputable shape of ex-highwayman and renegade Captain Ayres, now in Hyder Ali's service, hoping for richer pickings (p. 136). Hyder Ali was a Muslim warlord who had fought the English in Madras once and was about to do so again, and Sardar Khan was his brother-in-law. Eliza Fay surely conjured up the worst nightmare of the British colonialists in her picture of their ship being overrun by his Sepoys, and the British sailors first having to be restrained from jumping overboard to escape slavery and then crying to the officers for their wages (p. 143). At the time the Fays

arrived in Calcutta, British ambivalence about its colonial role was about to culminate in a symbolic act of purgation: the impeachment of the governor-general, Warren Hastings.

When the young couple arrived in Calcutta, Anthony Fay was admitted as an advocate to the Supreme Court on 16 June 1780. He had expressed his apprehensions that this would not be possible because he hadn't obtained the permission of the East India Company, but Chief Justice Sir Elijah Impey vehemently asserted the independence of the judiciary (pp. 246–7). The couple were befriended by Sir Robert Chambers and his wife, and Eliza also visited Mrs Hastings at Belvidere House (p. 242). However, according to his wife, Anthony was not interested in cultivating such patrons and making his way. The marriage was not a happy one and the Fays separated in 1781 after Eliza discovered he had fathered an illegitimate child. Mr Fay also joined Philip Francis's faction in opposing William Hastings over the imposition of a house tax. In the course of this feud, Francis and Hastings fought a duel, as Mrs Fay recounts (p. 262). According to the 1909 reviewer of *Bengal Past and Present*, Mr Fay defended J.A. Hicky of the *Bengal Gazette* in the case against him by Warren Hastings.¹¹ He got into debt through want of briefs, and had to leave India. Francis too returned to Britain to attempt to have both Hastings and Impey impeached for High Treason. Teltscher notes in the *Oxford DNB* that it was Mr Fay who presented the petition to Parliament against Impey in London and thus instigated the process which would lead to his unsuccessful impeachment.

After being helped by Sir Robert Chambers and other friends, Eliza left for Britain in May 1782, arriving in February 1783. But she had resolved to make her own fortune in Calcutta. She made three further voyages to India as an independent woman. She first returned to Calcutta in 1784 and set up a millinery business. Though the business made bad losses in 1788, she continued trading for another five years until her debts were paid. She also took on the responsibility of having her husband's natural son educated in England, though he died in a shipwreck on the voyage (p. 353). In 1794, Mrs Fay returned to Britain via St Helena, where she had to answer a charge of having sold a woman named Kate Johnson into slavery in 1782 in the course of a stop there on her previous voyage. Kate Teltscher has consulted the court records, which state that while Mrs Fay declared she dismissed the servant for bad behaviour but did not realize she would be sold, Kate Johnson asserted she had been abandoned because of her knowledge of Fay's affair with the ship's doctor which her erstwhile mistress presumably wanted to keep secret. Fay cut her losses by paying a £60 fine rather than go to court. By February 1796, this

indefatigable woman was back in Calcutta, having acquired an interest in a ship, the *Minerva*, but her stock had been destroyed by fire. She had then acquired the *Rosalia*, and set off, operating as a merchant exporting Indian muslins to the United States, but endured another calamity when the ship was discovered to be leaking and the cloth spoiled. The letters recounting this period up to her eventual arrival in New York on September 1797 aboard the *Hero* are dated 1815 and addressed from Blackheath in England, where she was probably visiting her sister, Mrs Preston. Her husband also passed away that year. But Eliza Fay made a final voyage to India and died back in Calcutta in 1816, aged 60, and was buried the day after her death, on 10 September. She had been in the course of inviting subscribers for the book she was preparing for the press. Having died insolvent and intestate, the book was published as it stood and the proceeds of the publication went to her creditors.

It is important to recognize that, despite the impression of spontaneity, Fay crafted her account, incorporating passages of retrospection into the narrative of the original letters. Indeed, these utilized the novelistic trick of temporarily withholding information when unwilling to worry her recipients with her hair-raising escapades until she is out of danger and can fill in the gaps with a detailed flashback. The second volume was probably recast from her journal, to take the form of letters addressed to a patron figure, Mrs L (p. 335). The book thus always invokes female readers, implicitly justifying its chatty personal style. The Preface, which seems to have been written by the author herself, proposes that her story is as amusing as fiction (p. iii). She tells us that friends had suggested she publish the account of her first voyage in the 1780s, but confesses that, having no pretensions to superior intellect or genius, she had not then the courage to face certain censure; whereas at the present time ‘a female author is no longer regarded as an object of derision’ (p. v). Perhaps because she was looking back at a distance of thirty-five years, perhaps to add spice, she was remarkably frank about the personages described, many of whom would have been personally known to or remembered by her readers in Calcutta.

The book was published there in 1817 in an incomplete state, the account breaking off abruptly just as the author had left it. The frontispiece consists of an engraving by T. Alais of a lively drawing by A.W. Devis of the author in the Egyptian costume she had so carefully described, tended by the obligatory black servant (perhaps Kate Johnson) to emphasize by contrast her European beauty. Her book was favourably reviewed in the *Calcutta Gazette* the following year, and in four years had made a profit of 200 rupees.¹² A second Calcutta edition of this spirited and

lively book was called for in 1821 (the edition here reprinted, which is identical to the 1817 one, except for the omission of the publisher's advertisement explaining the abrupt ending and a reset title page). As a portrait of British life in late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century Calcutta, it was later considered to be of particular historical interest, and a new edition with Introduction and notes by Revd W.K. Firminger, was published in 1908 for the Calcutta Historical Society, which contained photographs of Warren Hastings' house at Alipore and Mrs Fay's house and millinery business in the former Post Office in Hastings Street. E.M. Forster, however, resented the patronizing way Firminger had 'corrected' the original which he restored in his 1925 edition. Forster relished Mrs Fay's vivid and often comic pen portraits and her sharp eye for telling human details which bring the story to life.

What strikes a contemporary reader about Fay's *Letters* is her feminist individualism, not only expressed in personal courage and commercial enterprise, but also in the emphasis running through the narrative of the vital importance to her of female friendship and support. After the breakdown of her marriage, Fay lost confidence in humanity and the world seemed '“a howling wilderness” peopled with terrific monsters' (p. 336). She asked herself what could be her place in society as a separated woman (p. 307). Moreover, the frank revelation of Captain Lewis on her voyage back to England of his physical revulsion for her, not as an individual, but as a female (p. 326) revealed the usual parade of courtesies towards women to be a charade. Fay was restored by the 'benign influences' of 'gentler beings' especially Mrs I—n, when she changed ships and made 'a friendship which has constituted one of the sweetest enjoyments of my life, and which still remains unbroken' (p. 336).

We may, however, question whether feminism, especially that of a female mercantilist like Fay, is complicit with and even interwoven with colonialism. Fay is puzzled by the Hindus whom she portrays as seemingly soft and harmless yet paradoxically threatening: despite their 'mild countenances and gentle manners' (p. 222), they make untrustworthy servants; though they are 'pusillanimous creatures', they will dare any danger on the water for reward (p. 229); they are not susceptible to reason, their religious rites are 'gross acts of folly and superstition' (p. 237). She never makes the connection between her own effeminization of the Hindus and the way men like Captain Lewis perceive women. However, as Felicity A. Nussbaum argues, Fay anticipates contemporary feminists in her thoughtful analysis of suttee, recognizing that the widow is neither oppressed victim nor free agent but influenced by a powerful ideology

of gender.¹³ Fay concludes her account with the ironic recognition that English women would make the same sacrifice if their all-precious ‘reputation’ demanded it:

I cannot avoid smiling when I hear gentlemen bring forward the conduct of the Hindu women, as a test of superior character, since I am well aware that so much are we the slaves of habit *every where* [her italics] that were it necessary for a woman’s reputation to burn in England, many a one who has *accepted* a husband merely for the sake of an establishment, who has lived with him without affection; perhaps thwarted his views, dissipated his fortune and rendered his life uncomfortable to its close, would yet mount the funeral pile with all imaginable decency and die with heroic fortitude.

(pp. 203–4)

*Volume III: Narrative of Two Voyages to the River
Sierra Leone, during the Years 1791–2–3, performed
by A.M. Falconbridge, London, 1802*

Our next example of women’s travel writing is particularly tendentious with regard to the interface between gender and colonialism. A.M. Falconbridge made two journeys to a settlement in West Africa, which had been founded in order to combine philanthropy with mercantilism in resettling liberated slaves. The title of the book itself gives notice that this text entered an existing controversy concerning the activities of the Sierra Leone Company, the fate of which played a symbolic role encapsulating the wider debate over the slave trade, between the 1780s, the high point of the abolitionist campaign, and the Act of 1807 which ended British participation.¹⁴ The *Narrative of Two Voyages to the River Sierra Leone, during the years 1791–2–3, performed by A.M. Falconbridge. With a succinct account of the Distresses and proceedings of that Settlement; a description of the Manners, Diversions, Arts, Commerce, Cultivation, Custom, Punishments, etc. And every interesting Particular relating to the SLAVE TRADE in the West Indies, and the improbability of its total abolition* was first published for the author in 1794, reissued almost immediately and again in 1795; and went into a second edition proper in 1802, here reprinted.¹⁵ Dedicated to her home city of Bristol, this book can obviously be seen as giving succour to the pro-slavery faction, who saw the whole concept of Africans running plantations and trading for themselves as undermining the sugar trade which had been founded on slavery. The author’s motivation, however, was more mixed and more

personal than this: she was answering the Sierra Leone Company's criticism of her first and her second husbands, both its employees, in its 1794 report on the problems within the settlement, which blamed these on the moral shortcomings of both white officials and the settlers themselves.¹⁶ Mrs Falconbridge admits in the Preface that her book was written specifically for publication, though she asserts that in the account of her last voyage she has concentrated on the tribulations of the colony rather than the descriptive tour of a conventional travel account because of not wanting to repeat information contained in the recently published *A Voyage to the River Sierra Leone* (1788) of John Matthews. She denounces the company's treatment of herself and her first husband, and challenges the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company to deny the truth of her version of events. In her attempt to obtain the money she feels is her due, she attempts to make common cause with the grievances of the black settlers over the way the settlement was being run. Falconbridge's book concludes with an appendix of correspondence between black representatives of Freetown, Cato Perkins and Isaac Anderson, and the British company which they felt had let them down.

The narrative is delivered in the conventionally 'feminine' form of fourteen letters to a female friend, the calculated informality of which supposedly guarantees authenticity and also permits the author to confide personal information about her 'hasty marriage' (p. 9). The couple's relationship is depicted as precarious from the start: with Anna Maria's hints about Alexander's drinking and bad temper complicating our response to their ever-diverging views of the Sierra Leone scheme and indeed even abolition itself. This is the case as soon as they land, when Mrs Falconbridge shows her annoyance at her husband's wine-fuelled peremptoriness, in forbidding her to accept a slave-trader's offer of a bed ashore instead making do with the 'hog trough' of the ship (p. 23). Her rhetoric seems consciously or unconsciously to imply a comparison of his treatment of her with the captivity endured by Africans on the slave ships: 'Conceive yourself pent up in a floating cage, without room either to walk about, stand erect, or even to lay at length' (p. 24).¹⁷ In her account in Letter 10 of her husband's death, Anna Maria frankly admits she does not regret his passing, for 'his conduct to me was so unkind, (not to give it a harsher term) as long since to wean every spark of affection or regard I ever had for him (p. 169). Indeed, in the very next letter she coyly confesses she has lost no time in marrying again (p. 209). Her second husband was Isaac Du Bois, but she never mentions this. She even published her book under the name of Falconbridge, presumably the more emphatically to draw attention to her refutation of her former husband's published abolitionist views.

Alexander Falconbridge had formerly been a Bristol ship's surgeon on four slaving voyages before being converted to the anti-slavery cause, whose committee published his devastating indictment, *An Account of the Slave Trade* (London: James Phillips, 1788). He had provided Thomas Clarkson with extensive evidence regarding the trade, and then became involved with Clarkson and Granville Sharp's 1787 scheme for establishing an African-British colonial trade which would provide a market for Africa and profits for the British without the need for slavery.¹⁸ For critic Deirdre Coleman, the scheme was 'clearly designed to rid London's slums' of the mushrooming numbers of 'black poor' or ex-slaves, as well as hundreds of loyalist negroes who had fought for the British in the American War of Independence, including some who had been languishing at Nova Scotia.¹⁹ However, historian Stephen Braidwood argues that to represent the venture as a racist deportation is to ignore the fact that the black poor themselves had taken an active part in getting the scheme off the ground, which, on the part of the whites, was inspired primarily by genuinely humanitarian motives.²⁰ Our attitude to Anna Maria Falconbridge's Janus-faced text is necessarily framed by this debate, a modern descendant of the controversy about the Sierra Leone Company which raged at the time. As Coleman observes, two feminist critics in 1992 saw *Two Voyages* quite differently, one as abolitionist and the other as pro-slavery.²¹

By 1791, four years after it had been set up, the colony had failed and Clarkson persuaded Mr Falconbridge to travel there as agent and organize a rescue operation for the survivors. They had been driven off their land by King Jemmy, a local chief of the Koya Temne people. Alexander's delicate task was to negotiate for the return of the land, and recognition of the earlier treaty; to re-establish plantations, and defend them if necessary; and to restore ordered self-government within the settlement. He knew Africa very well and was successful in this difficult first mission. But the long-term threat to the survival of the infant settlement was the fact it was sited in the very area devoted to the slave trade. Mrs Falconbridge acknowledged that more than two thousand slaves had been shipped to the West Indies from Sierra Leone in the year she had been there (p. 193). It was difficult for the struggling new settlers to adhere to the charter which forbade any commerce with the thriving slave 'factories' or trading posts. For example, a French ship insisted on being paid in slaves for the provisions it sold them, and, though the Governor gave an order on a third party, he was only adhering to the letter of the charter as the latter would recompense the ship with a human cargo (p. 191). Mrs Falconbridge disapprovingly noted how renegades and deserters from the slave trade sought sanctuary in the colony and obtained employment there (p. 172).

Such information would have been seized upon by anti-abolitionists, who saw the colony as seeking to establish a monopoly on unfair terms.

From the first, Anna Maria's account casts a realist and often sceptical light on the gaps between the idealism professed by the philanthropists back in London and the way the settlement was actually run as a colony. She was horrified to discover, on their arrival, that seven of the female settlers they found in a deplorable condition were London prostitutes who had been taken by force to provide 'wives' for some of the blacks (p. 65). (Modern historians have questioned this claim.) Falconbridge's ironic commentary on the status of women often reveals paternalism and patriarchy criss-crossing colonial and native communities, for example, she notes that the slavers on Bance (or Bunce) Island had all taken native mistresses (p. 22); the use made by the African King Naimbana of cheap labour described as '*old, refuse, female slaves*' (her italics) in his salt works (p. 61); and the natives' employment of women 'in all hard labour' (p. 76). As a white woman, treated by her own countrymen with courtesy but allowed no authority or power, she had herself easily slipped into the role of disinterested observer then diplomatic go-between with whom the local chieftain, King Jemmy, and the ruler of the region, King Naimbana, both confided (pp. 77, 137, 188, 192, 195). However, she enjoyed mocking their monarchical pretensions behind their backs to other Europeans: her readers (p. 45) or to the slavers at the trading post at Bance Island (p. 59). Commercial success was always her yardstick: she often caustically noted the tawdriness of the African king's few fine clothes and relative poverty by European standards: 'his legs to be sure were *harliquined* by a number of holes in the stockings through which his black skin appeared' (p. 34). Mrs Falconbridge asserted her humanitarianism by declaring that the Africans are as 'susceptible of improvement and cultivation' as any part of the human race (p. 79), though she later made her belief in the overriding importance of education into a reason for pragmatically supporting the slave trade until they have caught up with Europe (p. 239).

By September, the couple were back in London, bringing with them King Naimbana's son to be educated in England. But by December they had sailed for Africa again. Anna Maria is here punctilious in giving the details, including copies of letters, of how Alexander had been persuaded by Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson to return to Sierra Leone in the service of the 'chimerical' cause of abolition (p. 125). Clarkson's brother John was to collect several hundred blacks from Nova Scotia, while Falconbridge was now to act as commercial agent at thrice his previous salary, together with an honorarium for his services, while Mr Thornton gave assurances that Anna Maria would be well provided for in the case of her husband's death (pp. 129–30). But it would soon become

apparent how Herculean the task that lay ahead of him. The newly-appointed Council consisted of quarrelsome self-important Evangelicals (p. 135); and new instructions arrived from London that Falconbridge was to take his orders from them (p. 138). This 'pack of designing, puritanical parasites' proved needlessly obstructive when he attempted to initiate even basic measures to obtain supplies, in place of those rotting on the beach for want of storage (p. 152). John Clarkson, the Superintendent, is praised as having integrity and is on good terms with the Nova Scotians, despite their disappointment that they have not received the land promised them and their resentment of the arrogance of the other whites (p. 141). He promoted harmony and paid the blacks two shillings a day for their labour, and King Jemmy was prevailed upon to visit Freetown and drink rum, as token of the peaceful co-existence of the colony with the local inhabitants.

Mrs Falconbridge estimated the overall cost of the colony at £150 a day, and calculated that £25,000 had already been spent on setting it up, but at that time she believed that with continued good government the investment could have brought good financial returns. However, Mr Clarkson did not sufficiently prioritize trade (pp. 164–5). Ideology was more important than economics to the white settlers (p. 186). In London, the directors were so ignorant of the wet climate of West Africa that they sent over a consignment of watering pots (p. 182). By December 1792 they had sacked Falconbridge as Commercial Agent and send out a Mr Wallis as his replacement. Anna Maria suggested that this had been their purpose all along, knowing that the former had no mercantile experience (p. 168). This humiliation, coming on top of fever, increased his recourse to drink of which he soon died (p. 169). However, like Eliza Fay, Anna Maria Falconbridge was an adventurer, the end of whose unhappy marriage did not deter her staying on abroad.

The government of the colony changed character when Mr Clarkson proposed to return to Britain and hand over command for six months to the austere Mr Dawes, whose previous experience, ominously, had consisted of running the penal colony at Botany Bay (p. 178). Mr Dawes was more preoccupied with building fortifications than with surveying land for the black settlers. They claimed discrimination in the apportioning of lots and decided to send two representatives to the Court of Directors in London to demand justice and an end to racial discrimination (pp. 205–7). Mrs Falconbridge included their petition in her account (pp. 211–16), and clumsily attempted to couple their grievances with her own attack on Henry Thornton and claim that she had not been paid what they owed her first husband. The arrival of a Mr McAuley, Member of Council, and former overseer upon a Jamaican plantation also provoked

Mrs Falconbridge to sarcasm:

It is not to be questioned that such an education must impress him with sentiments favorable to the Slave Trade, and consequently I should not suppose him qualified for a member of Administration in a Colony mostly formed of *Blacks*, founded on principles of *freedom*, and for the *express purpose* of abolishing the Slave Trade.

(p. 194. Her italics)

More material for irony was provided by a sermon preached to convert the natives to Christianity even though they did not understand English, together with the sight of black settlers enjoying an hour off work every day supposedly to attend church (pp. 199–201).

As her narrative draws to a close, the contradictions at the heart of it (and indeed in the setting up of the colony) become more apparent. Mrs Falconbridge's comic irony operates effectively when drawing attention to the naïvety and impracticality of the Evangelicals and the sinister turn their paternalism takes in discriminating against the blacks over the allocation of land. Yet, she also finds it just as nonsensical that a jury of twelve blacks had the temerity to find white British sailors guilty of stealing a duck, condemning one to the lash: self-evidently this was Utopianism gone mad and overstepped the terms of the colony's charter (p. 222). She professes to continue to hope that the colony will succeed, but fears that under the government of Mr Dawes it will degenerate into 'a *common slave factory*' (p. 226).²² For the finishing touch, she recounts how she and her new husband returned to Britain aboard a Bristol slave ship commanded by her own brother (p. 232). In obvious contradiction of her first husband's well-known account, she gives a detailed account of the 'kindness and care' bestowed on the slaves, the cleanliness of the ship, the excellence of the Africans' provisions and attentive nursing of their sick. In short she has been converted to the anti-abolitionist cause, blaming the Africans themselves for enslaving their fellows and asserting that in the West Indies they live a carefree life looked after by paternalistic masters.

*Volumes I and II: Letters from France; Containing A
great Variety of original Information Concerning the
Most Important Events that Have Occurred in that
country in the years 1790, 1791, 1792, and 1793.*

By Helen Maria Williams, Dublin, 1794

In the midst of her account of her African adventures, Anna Maria Falconbridge had mentioned that on 25 April 1793 she had 'heard of the

French King being massacred, and that England had declared war against the blood thirsty banditti, who have usurped the reins of government in France, (p. 220). The French Revolution, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and black uprisings in the West Indies were events frightening British conservatives away from abolition even while she was writing, and especially when the new Republic abolished slavery in 1794.²³ In complete contrast to Falconbridge, our next travel book consists of a compendium of the first four of eight volumes of an eye-witness account of the French Revolution published serially between 1790–96, by a woman writer who was particularly drawn to its ideals by her existing commitment to such humanitarian causes such as the anti-slavery campaign.

Helen Maria Williams, like Lady Morgan and Mary Shelley after her, was a professional rather than an occasional writer: she wrote, in various literary genres, for money and in order to influence public opinion.²⁴ Williams was one of the younger members of the influential Bluestocking circle of women scholars and writers who came to prominence during the 1780s, and, like her friends Anna Barbauld and Mary Wollstonecraft, became radicalized during the 1790s. Born on 17 June 1761, the daughter of Welsh army officer Charles Williams and his Scottish wife Helen (née Hay), she was well-read and moved among the intellectual circles of Rational Dissent. Here she met the most eminent scientists and avant-garde philosophers of the day, but as a woman and as a religious enthusiast, it was her feeling heart and everyday experiences rather than her scholarship that constituted her claim on the reader's attention. Williams made her name as a poet of sensibility in her early twenties, a *protégée* of the Dissenting minister Andrew Kippis. By the time she turned to travel writing, she was an established and respected writer at the height of her popularity. Having published *Edwin and Eltruda, A Legendary Tale* (1782), *Peru, A Poem in Six Cantos* (1784), *An Ode on the Peace* (1783), a subscription volume *Poems* (1786), *On the Bill . . . for Regulating the Slave Trade* (1788), she then turned to prose with an experimental novel about transgressive passion, *Julia: a Novel; Interspersed with some poetical pieces* (1790).²⁵ Charming and sociable, she also established herself as a literary hostess, bringing together all types of thinkers in the feminine domestic space of the home she shared with her widowed mother and sisters. As well as Bluestockings such as Anna Seward, Hester Thrale Piozzi, Frances Burney and Anna Barbauld, Williams knew Dr John Moore, William Godwin, William Hayley, Samuel Rogers and many other intellectuals and artists.

The first volume of *Letters From France* (1790) was an enthusiastic account of the golden summer when the French Revolution was young, and published just after the events it described. It was an instant critical

and popular success, favourably reviewed in most periodicals and translated into French. Edward Jerningham published a poetic tribute in the *European Magazine* contrasting Williams' naturalness with Edmund Burke's elaborate rhetoric.²⁶ In September 1791, Williams was back in Britain, but a poem, *A Farewell for Two Years to England*, announced her departure for a long sojourn in Paris, which resulted in her second tourist's view of the revolution, *Letters from France, Containing Many New Anecdotes . . .* (1792). Reviews were now beginning to sound a rather more critical note, reflecting British fears of the Revolution in some quarters.

After only a short visit to London, Williams returned to the Republic for good, where she was by now closely involved with the major politicians of the dominant Girondin grouping, who were, however, shortly to lose power to the 'Mountain' or Jacobins. By 1793, Britain was at war with the French Republic, and as Williams had chosen to make her home in France with the married Unitarian businessman, John Hurford Stone, the pair would in future be portrayed as immoral traitors by the right-wing press in their native land. Yet British sympathizers with the Revolution were no longer welcome in the new Jacobin regime, which imprisoned Williams and her family for six weeks that October. *Letters from France, Containing a Great Variety of Interesting Information* (2 vols) had to be published anonymously that autumn. Gone was the all-important feminine authorial consciousness, refracting impressions of all events. In its place was a multi-authored work including contributions from other British observers: Williams' partner J.H. Stone and Thomas Christie, editor of the liberal nonconformist periodical, the *Analytical Review*, and excerpts from the letters of Generals Dumourier and Miranda. But Williams' was still the dominant, orchestrating voice, and its tone was now the very obverse of the optimism of the first volume. It was Williams' own 'very animated description of the horrid massacre of the 2d of September, which reflects so much infamy upon those who planned and encouraged it', as the *Analytical Review* put it,²⁷ and criticism of Robespierre (2, p. 4) and the Jacobins that made it dangerous for her to stay in France, as well as the fact that British journals had identified the authors in their extracts. Williams and Stone decamped for six months to Switzerland in July 1794, not returning until the Terror was over.²⁸ It can be seen that the first four instalments of *Letters from France*, here reprinted from a 1794 Dublin compendium edition in two volumes, constitute an example of travel writing turning into political journalism, the author conscious that history is being made before her eyes.

The first volume of *Letters from France* is the best-known and reprinted of the series, and because of this Helen Maria Williams has been forever fossilized in the public imagination as a gushing enthusiast.

Twentieth-century critics have tended therefore to underestimate her importance. With the first four volumes before us, reprinted as two, we can, however, better appreciate the variety in her writing and the ways she found to exploit to best advantage the attractions of the travel writing genre and to minimize its shortcomings. She developed the device of letter-writing further than had any other woman traveller, except Hester Thrale Piozzi, in the direction of chatty informality and, more importantly, personal expressions of feeling.

This was the type of travel writing in which women were meant to excel, rather than the more scholarly and objective accounts of diplomats or soldiers, concerned about economics or politics. In adapting the fashionable scenic tour to survey a series of revolutionary tableaux, as Elizabeth Bohls comments, Williams combines aesthetic distance with emotional closeness.²⁹ Williams also deliberately conflated the 'masculine' stuff of public affairs with the 'feminine' genre of epistolary romance: the first two volumes each concluded with a true life story of feudal tyranny overthrown by the triumph of young love. In Volume 1, this melodrama concerned her friend, Madame de Fossé, whose husband had been imprisoned by his aristocratic father because of his disapproval of the marriage. In Letter 23 with a parade of faux-naïve self-deprecation, Williams implies it was accidental that the story illustrated the evils of the *ancien régime*: 'What, indeed, but friendship could have led my attention from the annals of imagination to the records of politics . . . ?' (1, p. 111). Her stress on emotion justified her propaganda technique: 'however dull the faculties of my head, I can assure you, that when a proposition is addressed to my heart, I have some quickness of perception'. In the second instalment of letters, the young heroine, Madeleine, thanks the Revolution she already loved for forbidding nuns to be professed, enabling her to marry Auguste and form a truly patriotic family (1, p. 228). These, the most popular parts of the books, were separately published as cheap chapbooks to spread the revolutionary message to the poor, the uneducated, the young and the female.

The letter format testified to the importance of written communications in bearing witness to the truth, one individual to another, in the public sphere. Williams buttonholed the reader, via her imaginary narratee: 'You, my dear friend, who have felt the tender attachments of love and friendship' (Letter 20: 1, p. 92). Letters as material objects and the writing of them are foregrounded to give authenticity to the story. However, the domestic, the private happiness of the Fossés, was threatened by the contrasting public letter of the law, a *lettre de cachet* enforcing arbitrary power.³⁰ Critics have often compared Williams with Edmund Burke, in that both use the sentimentalist epistolary style to impart political

polemic.³¹ Whereas Burke associates chivalry with the traditional paternalistic role played by the nobility and monarchy in British government and society, Williams sees revolutionary France as ‘a region of romance’ (1, p. 129), where the aristocracy has chivalrously divested itself of feudal privilege to save the weak (1, p. 239). Her first volume had come out only two weeks after Burke’s *Reflections of the Revolution in France* (1790), so was not written specifically in refutation of it, yet time and time again she exemplifies the sublime, not in Burkean terms, as the terrifying power of an omnipotent God and His forces of nature, but as the inspiring evidence of society’s collective will to effect change (1, p. 1), and the spectacle of the crowd in a modern city (1, p. 42; 1, p. 140).

She herself is a *flâneur*, a modern woman who dares walk the public streets and attend the revolutionary *fêtes* (1, p. 207) and join in the enlightened conversation at the Lycée. As a foreigner and a woman, she was lucky even to be able to observe the debates of the National Assembly (1, p. 25), and could not participate, but was allowed to be an actress personifying the Goddess of Liberty in a revolutionary festival (1, p. 116). Williams thus endorses the separate, secondary and merely ornamental role that women play in the Revolution (1, p. 36), the calculated use of a pretty face in the propaganda spectacles organized to rouse ‘the most powerful passions of human nature’. She is nervous of the ‘savage ferocity’ of lower-class female activists, the *Poissardes* (1, p. 48) who write their own scripts.

The spontaneity of the epistolary style and the speed with which Williams’ accounts came out gave them the immediacy of on-the-spot journalism, for a British public avid for news, even when their initial sympathy for the French Revolution had evaporated.³² The disadvantages are obvious. Her almost visionary optimism jostled uncomfortably with passing allusions to assassinations (1, p. 46; 1, p. 239) and the possibility of civil war (1, p. 60; 1, p. 204; 1, p. 214). Events too often disproved Williams’ predictions: ‘Ah, what is become of the delightful visions, which elevated the enthusiastic heart?’ (2, p. 4). But in the second volume, we see her adjusting her self-presentation from tourist to informed insider: ‘I am placed near enough the scene to discern every look and gesture of the actors’ (2, p. 2).³³ There is now a concerted attempt to back opinion with facts and to juxtapose multiple viewpoints. In Letter 1, dated 25 January 1793, Williams opens with the drama of the king’s execution in recent time and an account of the present clash for power between the Girondins and the Jacobins. Then the next six letters, by Stone, enact a flashback from 6 October–12 December 1792, to interrupt this frightening scenario with the stirring story of the French victories, against the odds, over the invading forces of Austria and Prussia.³⁴ As Kelly suggests,

by using a male contributor, Williams thereby ‘distanced herself and her woman’s political vision’ from the masculine domain of warfare.³⁵ Also, she was a Christian pacifist and this was a crucial element in her authorial persona. It was vital to maintain her mediating role now that Britain was at war with her adopted country. Her friends, the Girondins, had been the war party, but by giving Stone’s account of General’s heroic leadership in a largely defensive campaign (2, p. 30), she is able to show the Republic united and successful under their direction without personally endorsing war.³⁶ This journey to the North-eastern battlefields also reminds us that there is more to France than Paris. The Jacobins and the Paris Communes are the rabble-rousers of the capital but do not speak for the country at large.

With Letter 8, dated 10 February 1793 at Paris, Williams resumes the pen, with details of the tangled arguments over the fate of the king. She attempts to present a balanced view: asserting that the king was undoubtedly guilty of conspiring against the Republic, but acknowledging that his trial was not conducted fairly; that men of principle voted both for and against the death sentence, while others thought only of themselves (2, p. 135). She now soberly contemplates the downward spiral of the Revolution: the Girondins losing their grip in the struggle for control of the Republic, a process accelerated by the desertion of Dumourier himself (2, p. 153). As the Satanic Marat seizes power, Williams foresees the Republic about to be deformed by tumult and anarchy from within and defeated by enemies from without (2, p. 200). The concluding letter comprises a combatative essay by Christie, which attempts to stem the turning tide of British liberal opinion, now that the predictions of the reactionaries seem to have come true, with the September massacres and the execution of the king. He uses his journalistic expertise and personal experience of the Revolution to counter ‘erroneous opinions entertained in England respecting the French Revolution’ derived from newspapers, journals and publications in the Revolution Debate such as that by Burke (2, p. 227). Like Williams, he urges his readers not to dismiss the concept of liberty themselves just because French ‘were unfit’ for it (2, p. 251). As Favret comments, the multiple perspectives of this volume ask the reader to challenge any one version of events.³⁷

After the publication of these volumes, Williams began to be attacked in England, beginning with an anonymous anti-feminist denunciation by Laetitia Matilda Hawkins, *Letters on the Female Mind, Its Powers and Pursuits* (1793), which deplored women writing on politics. Similar sentiments would be voiced in 1798 by Revd Richard Polwhele’s misogynist satire on all women writers who espoused liberal views in print, *The Unsex’d Females*, and the brutal *Anti-Jacobin Magazine*. Ironically,

however, these conservative attacks actually signalled Williams' importance. She had become an indispensable and respected commentator on French affairs, and this was acknowledged by most periodicals of the day.

During the Terror, many of Helen Maria Williams' close friends and allies were guillotined, including Madame Roland. Williams' detailed denunciation of the Jacobin betrayal of the Revolution is to be found in two more volumes of observations of the French scene: *Letters Containing a Sketch of the Politics of France, from the 31st of May 1793, till the Twenty-eighth of July, 1794 and of the scenes which have passed in the prisons of Paris* followed by a third, *Letters Containing a Sketch of the Scenes which passed in Various Departments of France during the tyranny of Robespierre, and of the Events which took place in Paris on the 28th of July 1794* published in 1795. The rise of Napoleon later revived Williams' hopes that the early ideals of the Revolution would be re-established, expressed in her *Tour of Switzerland* (1798), and then *Sketches of the State of Manners and Opinions in the French Republic* (1801). The latter caused a controversy in Britain by its revelation and denunciation of Horatio Nelson's dishonourable treatment of republican prisoners at Naples, when the British re-established the monarchy there in 1799.

Nevertheless, Bonaparte had no time for women writers, especially political *salonnières*, and in 1802 he had Helen imprisoned for a symbolic twenty-four hours, when her *Ode to Peace* (1801) was published, merely because it was insufficiently flattering to him. Though Williams was embarrassed by the discovery that the correspondence of Louis XVI she translated and published in 1803, in order to vindicate the revolutionaries' conduct in executing him in January 1793, was found to be a forgery, she continued publishing and welcoming her literary visitors until her death in 1827. She had followed her successful translation of Bernadin de St Pierre's sentimental novel, *Paul et Virginie* (1796) with an ambitious edition of the major works of Alexander von Humboldt on South America which was published serially from 1814. She continued producing commentaries on French current affairs; another book of poetry, *Poems on Various Subjects* (1823); and also her memoirs, published in French in 1827.

Volumes VI–VIII: Italy
by Lady Morgan, London, 1821

After 1815 there was a boom in travel writing, for, with the end of the Napoleonic wars, the British flocked to visit Europe again. Professional rather than dilettante women travel writers were beginning to appear by then. Taking up the baton from Helen Maria Williams was Lady Morgan,

who further developed Williams' idea of breaking up epistolary travel writing with the occasional tale. With her 1806 novel, *The Wild Irish Girl*, Morgan had created a hybrid genre, the travel tour strung on the framework of an allegorical love story, and for similarly propagandist purposes. As an Irishwoman and a republican, Lady Morgan was already predisposed in France's favour, when she visited Paris in 1816. She was delighted to meet the older writer she so admired, especially as she was about to embark on her first travel book proper.³⁸ The two-volume *France* (1817) she now produced may be seen as following on from Williams' famous series, *Letters from France*. Writing as an impartial observer, rather than an English patriot, Lady Morgan praised the original aims of the French Revolution and trenchantly criticized the part played by Britain in restoring the monarchy. Her book caused a storm of protest throughout the newspapers and the periodical press. The anti-Jacobin William Playfair even issued a two-volume refutation – *France as it is, Not Lady Morgan's France* (1819) – which, on the one hand patronizingly compared her to a naïve child at a fair, in the way she was over-impressed by French culture (1, p. xxxv), yet unintentionally signalled her importance by the scale of his response, and encouraged other reviewers to do likewise, warning: 'We must treat her book, not as the production of a lady, but as a production fraught with mischief' (1, p. xxxvii).

The most vilified of writers in an age notable for the savagery of the periodical press, Lady Morgan was denounced in racist, misogynist and snobbish terms which targeted her origins as Sydney Owenson, the daughter of an Irish actor, Robert Owenson (originally Macowen). Her short stature and slight deformation of the spine and face inspired the lowest form of wit.³⁹ Though the reviewers, led by her *bête noire*, John Wilson Croker, rottweiler of the government organ, the *Quarterly Review*, treated her as almost illiterate, she had been extremely well educated in the Clontarf Huguenot Academy, after the death of her English mother, Jane (née Hill), and had been employed as a governess as a young woman. Her early publications, *Poems* (1801), and novels *St Clair* (1802), and *The Novice of St Dominick* (1805), were influenced by Rousseau and Goethe. Her *Twelve Original Hibernian Melodies* (1805) and *Patriotic Sketches of Ireland* (1807) and *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806) also showed her to be one of a group of Irish antiquarian Protestants engaged in bringing the richness of Ireland's Catholic and Gaelic heritage to the notice of the English-speaking world. She combined romance with scholarly research and forthright opinions in most of her books. But she was obnoxious to Tory diehards in London and the Ascendancy alike because her works were so popular, and because they argued for Catholic Emancipation and against imperialism.

Lady Morgan was inspired by Madame de Staël's travelogue novel *Corinne, or Italy* (1807), itself almost certainly influenced by *The Wild Irish Girl*, to take a more 'feminist' view in later femino-centric novels, the Philhellenist *Woman, or, Ida of Athens* (1809) and *The Missionary* (1811), which dealt with religious conflict in India. Later novels, now considered her best, returned to the fraught topic of the state of Ireland: *O'Donnel* (1814); *Florence Mccarthy* (1818) and *The O'Briens and the O'Flahertys* (1826). In 1812 she had married the freethinking physician, Charles Morgan, knighted through the influence of Sydney's former employer, Lady Abercorn. Vivacious and sociable, a performer like her father, but in the drawing room not the stage, Lady Morgan hosted a salon in Kildare Street, Dublin, from 1812 to 1837. Her modern biographer suggests that it was her ability to relate to all classes of society in the countries she visited that made her such a lively commentator.⁴⁰ On 4 April 1819, the couple set out again on their travels, this time to cross the Alps and make a thorough twelve-month tour of Italy, visiting Milan, Bologna, Florence, Rome, Naples and Venice.

Such was the success of *France* that her publisher Colburn had offered Lady Morgan two thousand pounds for *Italy*. However, she had a challenging task before her. For she was taking on the long-established masculine and aristocratic tradition of the Grand Tour with its art history and well-worn itinerary of famous spots, such as St Peter's, Mount Vesuvius and the waterfall at Tivoli. As always, she assiduously researched the field. Lady Morgan often courteously referred the reader to her predecessors' accounts, though she corrected their mistakes and was scornful of the 'pedantry and affectation of Winkelman' (2, p. 27). She did not herself concentrate on the aesthetic, however.

By the nineteenth century, travel writing had become less an objective genre of antiquarian and classical scholarship, and more subjectively impressionistic, with women claiming particular personal responsiveness to atmosphere. Having her husband contribute appendices of statistical information may be thought evidence of Lady Morgan's conforming to gender stereotypes, as had Helen Maria Williams by using her partner to comment on military matters.⁴¹ Anne O'Brien observes, however, that Lady Morgan tended to reverse the usual 'feminine' writing practice by relegating personal information to the footnotes in order to foreground social analysis.⁴²

Nature would have been as difficult to write on with originality as culture, for Italy was arguably the premier inspiration behind British Romanticism.⁴³ In her meditations on famous places, Owenson was following in the footsteps of literary giants such as Madame de Staël and Lord Byron, who had already rhapsodized about the Coliseum by moonlight;

Gothic novelists Horace Walpole and Ann Radcliffe, who had tingled readers' spines with the banditti and vendettas; and poets Samuel Rogers, Leigh Hunt, Felicia Hemans and Percy Shelley who immersed themselves in Italy's landscapes. Very sensibly, she didn't try to compete. Though acknowledging the magnificence of the Alps, she felt the modern road driven through by Napoleon to be equally awe-inspiring. She denied the superiority of the perceiving mind in apprehending the otherness of nature in all its sublimity:

An aspect of the material world then presents itself, which genius, even in its highest exaltation, must leave to original creation, as unimitated and inimitable. The sensation it produces is too strong for pleasure, too intense for enjoyment . . . The mind in such scenes is not raised. It is stricken back upon its own insignificance.

(1, pp. 31–2)

In fact, Lady Morgan had a strong grasp on the real: an Enlightenment concern with how society functioned rather than a love of solitude and nature; a fascination with progress and with history, and overwhelmingly with politics. She was also an intensely topical writer and, at the time she was writing, revolution was fomenting in Italy. Lady Morgan made her travel book into an outspoken critique of the 1815 Congress of Vienna (1, p. 80), when the Holy Alliance of Russia, Austria, Prussia and Britain had set aside the Code Napoléon and restored absolutist feudal rule by altar and throne (1, p. 226). The peninsula had been parcelled up into seven sovereign states, five of which were given to the Austrians, who regarded liberal reforms as the thin end of the revolutionary wedge. Lady Morgan was bitterly disappointed that Britain had not held out for constitutional governments (1, p. 229; 1, p. 367). She frequently looked back and compared Italy now with how it had been under Napoleon Bonaparte, and reflected on his career generally. She can be regarded as a Bonapartist, though the Italian context forced her to confront his imperialism (1, p. 37; 1, p. 44; 1, p. 195; 1, pp. 215–23).⁴⁴ Though few Italians would have endorsed unification at this time, risings took place in 1820–1821 against foreign occupation.⁴⁵ Lady Morgan bitterly condemned conservatives who had rejoiced in the failure of the Neapolitan rising 'to shake off the tyranny which has poisoned the sources of humanity' (3, p. 83).

Lady Morgan correspondingly saluted the patriot writers and artists she had met on her journey, who risked all to write in an oppressive climate of censorship: such as the poet Vincenzo Monti, dramatist Silvio Pellico and the Abate di Brême, whose liberal periodical *Il Conciliatore*

was suppressed (1, p. 85; 1, p. 159; 2, p. 258). The Morgans themselves had been under surveillance in Northern Italy because of their political views.⁴⁶ For Lady Morgan, ‘morals, wit and learning’ only flourish under liberty (1, p. 161) and art is thus related to true patriotism, the resistance to tyranny (2, p. 68). Her view of sexual politics is related to a dichotomy between the freedom of thought of an enlightened society and mere sexual freedom, construed as primitive and ignorant laxity. She makes the Rousseauistic association of republicanism with masculinity and morals, and monarchy with effeminacy and libertinism:

the wives and mothers of England owe their glorious pre-eminence far more to MAGNA CHARTA, than to their chill skies and northern latitude. But operas and cecisbeos, and Aulic councils, go best together.

(1, p. 161)

In the degraded society of Venice, women have lost their moral influence (3, p. 295). As Chard comments, the persona of the Northern traveller (even though here gendered feminine) was still conventionally constructed in opposition to the effeminacy of the South.⁴⁷

Southern Italy was seen by Lady Morgan as particularly primitive, with Naples compared to an eastern city (3, p. 83; 3, p. 88), while even Rome had been only recently rescued from its ‘sloth, filth and inertness’ (2, p. 337). On the other hand, she did not adopt Montesquieu’s determinist theory of climate, while implied an innate predisposition. Morgan argued against accusations that the Neapolitans were cowards, reminding her readers that these people had helped the Romans drive Hannibal out of Italy (3, p. 165), and had a distinguished intellectual history in classical times. Britain is severely castigated for the ‘short-sighted and *journalier* policy of the British cabinet, bungling on from expedient to expedient’ in its interference with both Sicily and Naples, and she follows Williams’ *Sketches* (1801) in denouncing Nelson’s conduct in 1799 in breaking the terms of an agreement and restoring despotism to the latter with brutal recriminations (3, p. 153). When she saw the bounty of nature in the countryside, she was struck by the comparative health and prosperity of these southern peasants compared to those groaning under the absentee rack-renting landlords of her native land (1, pp. 394–5).

Visiting St Peter’s, every traveller perforce participated in a pilgrimage to the heart of Christendom. Lady Morgan was even presented to Pope Pius VII. She was treated courteously by Cardinal Gonsalvi, his Secretary of State, who ‘rescued her husband’s books from a seizure made by the Holy Office’.⁴⁸ Charles Morgan’s rejection of theological orthodoxy in

The Philosophy of Life (1818) and *The Philosophy of Morals* (1822) led to such accusations in the United Kingdom of ‘diabolically undermining religion’ that he had to retire from medical practice.⁴⁹ Lady Morgan was equally radical in *Italy*. It was not just that she attacked Roman Catholic superstition and fanaticism (1, p. 352; 2, p. 177) and the restoration of monasticism and the inquisition (2, p. 12) after the defeat of Napoleon. Any Protestant writer would have done likewise. But Volume 3 opens by using Enlightenment comparativism to show Christianity as only one religion among several, all of which abound in ceremony and ‘the celebration of mysteries, performed less in honour of the Deity than for imposition upon man’ (3, p. 2). She describes, in almost Blakean terms, the organized religion of the Greek, Roman and English branches of Christianity as ‘inimical to liberty’ (3, p. 4) and a perversion of Christ’s doctrines, which attacked institutional religion and would have been ‘fatal to all existing *state churches*’ (3, p. 3):

A religion arose in the course of succeeding ages, which, taking the name, and affecting some of the doctrines of Christianity, exhibited a ritual, splendid and ceremonious beyond all which Jerusalem or Athens had ever witnessed: it attacked every sense, it seized on every feeling, it intoxicated the imagination, it set reason at defiance, and became at once the duty and recreation, the penalty and pleasure of its followers.

(3, p. 3)

Unsurprisingly, *Italy* would be proscribed by the Pope, as well as the Emperor of Austria and the King of Sardinia: the book and its author were banned in Italy, the Papal States and Germany.

Italy was published on 20 June 1821 to a chorus of vituperation from the *Quarterly Review*, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, the *British Critic* and the right-wing newspaper press, as well as inspiring pamphlets and poetical squibs. Nor did Whig journals, such as the *Edinburgh Review*, leap to Sydney’s defence. The publisher, Colburn, published a letter in *The Times* on 24 November, pointing out that claims of journalists that the book was dull and unsaleable were transparently bogus. In fact, he claimed to have sold 500 copies on the first day of publication and was then preparing a second edition, and said that two editions, amounting to 4000 copies, had been printed in Paris, and another in Belgium.⁵⁰ Altogether, there were three editions in 1821 and a fourth in 1824 in London. *Italy* was published in the United States and hotly debated throughout Europe. Her views on Italian women were challenged by Ginevra Canonici Fachini’s *Prospetto biografico delle donne italiane* (Venice, 1824) and

the anonymous article ‘Prospetto biografico delle donne italiane – recensione’, which bracketed her with Staël.⁵¹ However, later writers treated her as one of the foremost writers on Italy, for example, Giuseppe Sacchi in *Viaggio in Toscana* (Milan, 1835) and Melchior Missirini, *Degli Illustri Italiani* (Siena, 1838).⁵²

Though Byron had complained to Thomas Moore when he first heard she was writing the book that such feminine travellers knew nothing of the country, he declared admiringly when he read it that it was ‘fearless and excellent’, and even had to defend himself from charges of plagiarism from it. He protested to John Murray, his own and the periodical’s publisher, that the *Quarterly*’s attack was not gentlemanly.⁵³ But Lady Morgan was more than capable of defending herself, and published a sharp *Letter to the Reviewers of Italy* (1821), which Colburn bound with further copies of the book, and had printed in the October number of the *New Monthly Magazine*, to the disapproval of its Whig editor, Thomas Campbell.⁵⁴ John Wilson Croker retaliated by mischievously setting up a ‘Royal commission’ to enquire into her real age, to this day a matter of doubt! In 1822 he instigated a legal case, which ran for over a year before being thrown out, arguing that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland did not have the right to confer knighthoods such as that of Sir Charles Morgan.⁵⁵ Sydney knew that all the malice and ribaldry in the press was a testament to her own importance and bravery as a writer. She was already planning her next book, *The Life and Times of Salvador Rosa* (1824) and would go on redoubtably stirring up controversy with her publications until the year of her death, 1859, though at what age she then was we wouldn’t want to conjecture.

*Volume III: History of a Six Weeks’ Tour through a
Part of France, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland,
with Letters descriptive of a sail round the Lake of
Geneva, and of the Glaciers of Chamouni.*

Mary Shelley, London, 1817

Our last example of travel writing is probably the most problematic to consider in terms of gender, for it was a collaboration, and with the usual roles reversed: so that the female writer here took more responsibility for factual matter and the male for personal subjectivity. The text is a medley of genres, comprising journal prose, letters and poetry and describes two journeys taken by Percy and Mary Shelley. The first, that of 1814, began as a walking tour through war-torn France and Switzerland and ended as a boat trip down the Rhine through Germany and Holland. Mary, not quite 17, had eloped with the 23-year-old married poet, though this is

not disclosed in the text. She later revised selections from their jointly-authored journal. The second trip took place in 1816, when the couple travelled more conventionally by coach through France to the Alps, and explored the environs of Lake Geneva. Four letters, two signed 'M' and two signed 'S', describing the tour, are followed by P.B. Shelley's lyric 'Mont Blanc'. Percy also contributed the Preface.

Scholars have struggled to uncover the precise authorship of specific passages, and to determine whether one or both took the role of editor in putting the text together, while critics have argued over how to construe the relationship between the travel writing and the poem which concluded the volume. Was there a hierarchy of genres? Jeanne Moskal notes that it was Mary who took the first step towards turning their journal into a book of travel writing, perhaps influenced by her reading in the summer of 1817 of her mother Mary Wollstonecraft's *Letters from Norway* (1796), Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto 3 (1816), and other travelogues.⁵⁶ Moskal quotes a letter of Mary Shelley's to Leigh Hunt in October 1839, where she claimed of the account of the first tour: 'it was printed & corrected by Shelley though written by me'.⁵⁷ This suggests that Mary was in charge of transforming the original journal and letters into the text we have and preparing the manuscript, though Percy probably then copy-edited it and corrected the proofs. From scrutiny of the surviving journal notebooks, Moskal considers that the majority of passages of sublime description were taken straight from the poet's entries in their journal and incorporated by Mary into a matrix of her own diary entries completely rewritten by her. The four letters from the second tour were most probably revised versions of letters sent to Mary's half-sister, Fanny Imlay, perhaps also incorporating journal entries.

Donald Reiman believes that *History of a Six Weeks' Tour* was carefully constructed to lead up to 'Mont Blanc', and that the travel writing, mainly authored by Mary, was meant to create a sympathetic hearing for the poem which Percy knew readers would find obscure, and which was not published elsewhere in his lifetime.⁵⁸ Benjamin Colbert, however, comments that such a teleology would have been very much less apparent to the contemporary reader who would have come to the volume through interest in travel writing, not poetry, and would not have been particularly surprised at the inclusion of a poetical effusion.⁵⁹ He notes that, though slight, the book was well advertised and was judged sufficiently interesting to be reviewed by three periodicals. The review in *Blackwood's* was very positive, comparing it favourably to the travel-writing of Bluestockings (a dig at Lady Morgan).⁶⁰ However, the volume did not sell well enough to cover its costs. After Percy's death, Mary included a revised

version of *History of a Six Weeks' Tour* as biographical information in her 1839 edition of his poetical works, signalling her own authorship by use of her initials, and included a further revised version in the one-volume 1845 edition.⁶¹

Though neither of the young authors was well known at the time, they were using the genre of the tour very much as a form of life-writing. Pioneered by Mary Wollstonecraft, Madame de Staël and Byron, this had evolved into a portrait of the Romantic artist, whose travels were not utilitarian but a form of escape from the mundanities of bourgeois society. The protagonist was in search of adventure or health after sickness of mind or body, and the journey described was likely to be one of the psyche as well as the body. But the Shelleys repudiated the melancholy of *Letters from Norway* (1796), *Corinne, or Italy* (1807) and *Child Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812–18), which was very much a product of liberal despair at the extinguishing of the ideals of the French Revolution. The tone of *History of a Six Weeks' Tour* is happy. 'You know that we have just escaped from the gloom of winter and of London' (p. 96).⁶² Their pilgrimage to Geneva was a pledge of faith that the republican ideals of thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau would remain as a beacon, like the everlasting sublimity of Mont Blanc.

Mary's self-deprecating humour portrays the party on the first journey as impetuous, impractical idealists: having departed without sufficient funds; they battle with seasickness on their voyage across the Channel; and their youthful high spirits are sobered by the sight of war-devastated France. Her account is very much a prose equivalent of a Rowlandson cartoon, mocking the ridiculous spectacle they present in their search for the picturesque: 'there was something irresistibly ludicrous in our equipage' (p. 7). Their valiant attempt at democratic pedestrianism results in buying an ass which is so decrepit that it sinks under the weight of the portmanteau (p. 15), and in Percy spraining his ankle (p. 21), so they revert to an open carriage. The young revolutionaries next found themselves tricked and imposed upon by lower-class characters such as the wily *voiturier*, and were disgusted by the manners of their artisan German travelling companions in the *diligence par-eau* on the Rhine, who drank, smoked and kissed each other. Percy even knocked one of them down in an argument while Mary tried to concentrate on reading Byron's poetic description of the scenery before them. Jeanne Moskal notes that Mary's comparison of Percy and herself to Don Quixote and Sancho Panza (p. 16) signals her conflicted response to her radical parents, whose political lead they were following, for *Don Quixote* was one of William Godwin's favourite books, and Mary Wollstonecraft was

regarded as a female Quixote by her contemporaries.⁶³ Like Helen Maria Williams, Mary's parents had romanticized the French Revolution and been satirized as deluded dreamers.

Percy's Preface had stressed the novelty of the volume in that it was 'unpresuming', 'imperfect', 'little', 'desultory', and the product of 'youth' and the Summer of a swallow with all its 'enthusiasm' for natural beauty (pp. iii–v). He and Mary may have been emulating the prose writing of Leigh Hunt, which sought to amuse and entertain through a personal, informal style but also to link together love of nature with immersion in the arts and with liberal politics. It was also a repudiation of the apolitical distanced objectivity which marked the aesthetic theory of the cult of the picturesque. The 1816 letters, recounting the second journey, mark a movement from defensive mock-heroic to conveying the sublimity of the snow-covered Alps, where Mary revels in the elemental storms (p. 100). The overt political propagandizing of Helen Maria Williams and Lady Morgan is not found here. Yet the book opens with the first defeat of Napoleon, and the second section begins after Waterloo: the 'hundred days' are the unspoken gap between. Mary's contribution concludes with the author's sympathy for the French indignation that Britain has filled their land with 'hostile garrisons, and sustains a detested dynasty on the throne' (p. 86). She even maintains that the French Revolution 'notwithstanding the temporary bloodshed and injustice with which it was polluted, has produced enduring benefits to mankind' (p. 102). But the social commentary which notes the Swiss republics have produced a more equal society (p. 103), the literary pilgrimage to the country of Rousseau (p. 127), and the poetic effusion on the snowy mountain peak are all bound together 'by the magic of words' (p. 106) and implicit symbolism rather than didacticism.

NOTES

1. See Charles L. Batten, Jr., *Pleasurable Instruction: Form and Convention in Eighteenth-Century Travel Literature* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 72–6.
2. Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 29.
3. See Ina Ferris, 'Mobile words: Romantic Travel writing and Print anxiety', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 60:(4) (Dec. 1999), 451–68, 449.
4. For biographical information, I am indebted to the *Oxford DNB* entry by Rosemary Cargill Raza, and Ketaki Kushari Dyson, *A Various Universe: A Study of the Journals and Memoirs of British Men and Women in the Indian subcontinent, 1765–1856* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978, repr. 2002), pp. 124–6.
5. Kate Teltscher discusses the elaboration of this notion of 'oriental despotism' by British writers on India in *India Inscribed: European and British Writing on India 1600–1800*

- (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 113–19. She sees Kindersley's Letter 49 as a particular example of the rhetorical enactment of the invincibility of British power, based on the theory of the inherent submissiveness of the Hindus produced by climate.
6. Shirley Foster and Sara Mills (eds), *An Anthology of Women's Travel Writing* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 252–9.
 7. See her Introduction to her translation of A.L. Thomas's *An Essay on the character, the manners, and the understanding of women in different ages* (London, 1781).
 8. Sylvana Tomaselli considers the reasons why women rarely wrote conjectural histories of women in 'Civilisation, patriotism and enlightened histories of women', in Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (eds), *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 117–35.
 9. Kathleen Collins Beyer, 'Two passages to India: Eliza Fay and E.M. Forster', *Aligarh Journal of English Studies*, 8:1 (1983), 15–23, 16.
 10. For biographical details, see K.K. Dyson, *A Various Universe*, pp. 126–8, and Kate Teltscher's entry for the *Oxford DNB*. Useful information on the Calcutta background may also be found in the review of the 1908 edition by Elliot Walter Madge in *Bengal Past and Present*, 3 (1909): 130–3. The publication history and historical context can be found in E.M. Forster's Introduction to the 1925 London edition.
 11. *Bengal Past and Present*, 3 (1909): 130–3, 131.
 12. E.M. Forster, Introduction to *Original Letters* (London: Woolf, 1925), p. 8.
 13. Felicity A. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 187–91.
 14. The title page of the first edition had been much briefer.
 15. For detailed notes on the slight differences between the two editions, as well as an informative introduction, see Deirdre Coleman (ed.), *Maiden Voyages and Infant Colonies: Two Women's Travel Narratives of the 1790s* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1998).
 16. See *ibid.*, p. 5, citing *Substance of the Report delivered by the court of directors of the Sierra Leone Company, to the general court of proprietors, on Thursday the 27th March, 1794* (London: James Phillips, 1794). There would be four parliamentary enquiries into the running of the colony in 1799, 1802, 1803–4 and 1807, according to the *Special Report of the Directors of the African Institution made at the annual general meeting on the 12th April, 1815, respecting the allegations contained in a pamphlet entitled 'a Letter to William Wilberforce, esq.' by R. Thorpe, esq.* (London: J. Hatchard, 1815).
 17. This point is made by Moira Ferguson, 'Anna Maria Falconbridge and Sierra Leone: the reality of a coloniser', in K. Ansell-Pearson, Benita Parry and Judith Squires (eds), *Cultural Readings of Imperialism: Edward Said and the Gravity of History* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1997), pp. 247–66, 248. See also the analysis of the way Falconbridge materializes her authorial presence through the bodies of others by Katrina O'Loughlin, "'Our floating prison": Anna Maria Falconbridge and travel to the River Sierra Leone', *Journal of African Travel Writing*, 5 (1998): 38–49.
 18. See Ellen Gibson Wilson, *Thomas Clarkson: A Biography* (York: William Sessions Ltd, 1989), pp. 32, 48.
 19. Deirdre Coleman, 'Sierra Leone, Slavery, and sexual politics: Anna Maria Falconbridge and the "swarthy daughter" of late 18th century abolitionism', *Women's Writing*, 2:1 (1995), 3–24, p. 5.
 20. See Stephen J. Braidwood, *London's Blacks and the Foundation of the Sierra Leone Settlement 1786–1791* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1994), Chapter 5, and pp. 268–75.

21. Coleman, 'Sierra Leone, slavery and sexual politics', p. 8, citing Moira Ferguson, *Subject to Others: British Women Travel Writers and Colonial Slavery, 1670–1834* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 198–208; Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 102–6.
22. The Directors would admit in future years that some settlers and company officials entered into the slave trade or worked for slave factories, while Thorpe charged them with perpetuating slavery themselves under the name of apprenticeship, see *Special Report of the Directors* (1815).
23. April 1791 saw a bill to abolish the slave trade defeated.
24. For an up-to-date scholarly account of Williams' life and the publication history of her works, see Deborah Kennedy, *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution* (Lewisburg, VA: Bucknell University Press and Associated University Presses, 2002). For a detailed study which situates her writing as exemplary of the feminized bourgeoisie who were professionalizing print culture, see Gary Kelly, *Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790–1827* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).
25. See my introduction to the reprint of *Poems in The Romantics: Women Poets*, 12 vols (London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press, 1996), 1, pp. v–xvii; and that of Peter Garside to *Julia in The Romantics: Women Novelists*, 12 vols (London: Routledge/ Thoemmes Press, 1995), 1, pp. v–xxi.
26. See Kelly, *Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790–1827*, p. 40.
27. *Analytical Review*, 17:11 (Oct, 1793), 121–27, 121.
28. See Deborah Kennedy, *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution*, p. 101.
29. Elizabeth A. Bohls discusses Williams' use of the picturesque in *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics 1716–1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 108–39.
30. On this theme, see Mary A. Favret, *Romantic Correspondence: Women, Politics and the Fiction of Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
31. On the part played by *Letters from France* in the Revolution Debate, see Matthew Bray, 'Helen Maria Williams and Edmund Burke: radical critique and complicity', *Eighteenth-Century Life* 16(2) (May, 1992): 1–24; Chris Jones, *Radical Sensibility: Literature and Ideas in the 1790s* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 139; Steven Blakemore, *Crisis in Representation: Thomas Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft, Helen Maria Williams, and the Rewriting of the French Revolution* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1997).
32. On the reception of *Letters from France*, see Deborah Kennedy, 'Benevolent historian: Helen Maria Williams and her British readers', in Adriana Craciun and Kari E. Lokke (eds), *Rebellious Hearts: British Women Writers and the French Revolution* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2001), pp. 317–36.
33. Deborah Kennedy observes that in fact she avoided publishing much of what she had seen and communicated in private letters in these dangerous times. See *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution*, p. 99.
34. The letters are misnumbered but it seems that the second no. 6, concluding the story of the campaign, is also by Stone.
35. Kelly, *Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790–1827*, pp. 50–1.
36. Stone describes the French transformed from effeminacy to Roman firmness (2, p. 77).
37. Favret, *Romantic Correspondence*, p. 95.
38. Mary Campbell, *Lady Morgan: The Life and Times of Sydney Owenson* (London: Pandora, 1988), p. 141.
39. See *Oxford DNB* entry by Dennis R. Dean.

40. Campbell, *Lady Morgan*, p. 140.
41. Jeanne Moskal makes the point that in *France Morgan* had used a panoply of footnotes and textual apparatus to 'construct an appearance of masculine authority, authenticity and scholarship'; see 'Gender, nationality and textual authority in Lady Morgan's travel books', in Paula R. Feldman and Theresa M. Kelley (eds), *Romantic Women Writers: Voices and Countervoices* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1995), pp. 171–193.
42. Anne E. O'Brien, 'Lady Morgan's travel writing on Italy: a novel approach', in Jane Conroy (ed.), *Cross-Cultural Travel: Papers from the Royal Irish Academy Symposium on Literature and Travel* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), pp. 179–85.
43. See C.P. Brand, *Italy and the English Romantics: The Italianate Fashion in Early Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957). See also James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).
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45. See Denis Mack Smith, 'Britain and the Italian Risorgimento', in Martin McLaughlin (ed.), *Britain and Italy from Romanticism to Modernism: A Festschrift for Peter Brand* (Oxford: Legenda, Modern Humanities Research Association, 2000), pp. 13–31.
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L E T T E R S

FROM

F R A N C E ;

CONTAINING

A GREAT VARIETY OF ORIGINAL INFORMATION
CONCERNING THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS
THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN THAT COUNTRY IN
THE YEARS 1790, 1791, 1792, AND 1793.

BY HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

TO WHICH ARE ANNEXED,

The Correspondence of DUMOURIER with PACHE, the
War Minister, and with the Commissaries.—Letters
of BOURNONVILLE, MIRANDA, VALENCE, &c. &c.

V O L. I.

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L E T T E R S

FROM

F R A N C E.

L E T T E R I.

I ARRIVED at Paris, by a very rapid journey, the day before the federation; and when I am disposed to murmur at the evils of my destiny, I shall henceforth put this piece of good fortune into the opposite scale, and reflect how many disappointments it ought to counterbalance. Had the packet which conveyed me from Brighton to Dieppe failed a few hours later; had the wind been contrary; in short, had I not reached Paris at the moment I did reach it, I should have missed the most sublime spectacle which, perhaps, was ever represented on the theatre of this earth:

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B

I shall

I shall send you once a week the details which I promised when we parted, though I am well aware how very imperfectly I shall be able to describe the images which press upon my mind. It is much easier to feel what is sublime than to paint it; and all I shall be able to give you will be a faint sketch, to which your own imagination must add colouring and spirit. The night before the federation, by way of prelude to the solemnities of that memorable day, the Te Deum was performed at the church of Notre Dame, by a greater number of musicians than have ever been assembled together, excepting at Westminster Abbey. The overture which preceded the Te Deum was simple and majestic: the music highly expressive, had the power of electrifying the hearers: and near the conclusion of the piece, the composer, by artful discords, produced a melancholy emotion, and then, by exciting ideas of trouble and inquietude, prepared the mind for a recitative which affected the audience in a very powerful manner, by recalling the images of that consternation and horror which prevailed in Paris on the 13th of July, 1789, the day before that on which the Bastille was taken. The words were, as well as I can recollect, what follows:—“ People, your enemies advance, with hostile sentiments, with menacing looks! They come to bathe their hands in your blood! Already they encompass the walls of your city! **Rise**, rise from the inaction in which you are plunged, seize your arms, and fly to the combat!

bat! God will combat with you! These words were succeeded by a chorus of instruments and voices, deep and solemn, which seemed to chill the soul. But what completed the effect was, when the sound of a loud and heavy bell mixed itself with this awful concert, in imitation of the alarm-bell, which, the day before the taking of the Bastille, was rung in every church and convent in Paris, and which, it is said, produced a confusion of sounds inexpressibly horrible. At this moment the audience appeared to breathe with difficulty; every heart seemed frozen with terror; till at length the bell ceased, the music changed its tone, and another recitative announced the entire defeat of the enemy; and the whole terminated, after a flourish of drums and trumpets, with an hymn of thanksgiving to the Supreme Being.

L E T T E R II.

I Promised to send you a description of the federation: but it is not to be described! One must have been present, to form any judgment of a scene, the sublimity of which depended much less on its external magnificence than on the effect it produced on the minds of the spectators. “ The people, sure,

B 2

the

the people were the sight!" I may tell you of pavilions, of triumphal arches, of altars on which incense was burnt, of two hundred thousand men walking in procession; but how am I to give you an adequate idea of the behaviour of the spectators? How am I to paint the impetuous feelings of that immense, that exulting multitude? Half a million of people assembled at a spectacle, which furnished every image that can elevate the mind of man; which connected the enthusiasm of moral sentiment with the solemn pomp of religious ceremonies; which addressed itself at once to the imagination, the understanding, and the heart!

The Champ de Mars was formed into an immense amphitheatre, round which were erected forty rows of seats, raised one above another with earth, on which wooden forms were placed. Twenty days labour, animated by the enthusiasm of the people, accomplished what seemed to require the toil of years. Already in the Champ de Mars the distinctions of rank were forgotten; and, inspired by the same spirit the highest and lowest orders of citizens gloried in taking up the spade, and assisting the persons employed in a work on which the common welfare of the state depended. Ladies took the instruments of labour in their hands, and removed a little of the earth, that they might be able to boast that they also had assisted in the preparations at the Champ de Mars; and a number of old soldiers were seen voluntarily bestowing on their

their country the last remains of their strength. A young Abbe of my acquaintance told me, that the people beat a drum at the door of the convent where he lived, and obliged the Superior to let all the Monks come out and work in the Champ de Mars. The Superior with great reluctance acquiesced, "Quant à moi," said the young Abbé, "je ne demandois pas mieux*."

At the upper end of the amphitheatre a pavilion was built for the reception of the King, the Queen, their attendants, and the National Assembly; covered with striped tent-cloth of the national colours, and decorated with streamers of the same beloved tints, and fleurs de lys. The white flag was displayed above the spot where the King was seated. In the middle of the Champ de Mars L'Autel de la Patrie was placed, on which incense was burnt by priests dressed in long white robes, with sashes of national ribbon. Several inscriptions were written on the altar, but the words visible at the greatest distance were, La Nation, la Loi, et le Roi†.

At the lower end of the amphitheatre, opposite to the pavilion, three triumphal arches were erected, adorned with emblems and allegorical figures.

The procession marched to the Champ de Mars, through the central streets of Paris. At La Place de Louis Quinze, the escorts,

* As for me, I desired nothing better.

† The Nation the Law, and the King.

who

who carried the colours, received under their banners, ranged in two lines, the National Assembly, who came from the Tuilleries. When the procession passed the street where Henry the Fourth was assassinated, every man paused as if by general consent: the cries of joy were suspended, and succeeded by a solemn silence. This tribute of regret, paid from the sudden impulse of feeling at such a moment, was perhaps the most honourable testimony to the virtues of that amiable Prince which his memory has yet received.

In the streets, at the windows, and on the roofs of the houses, the people, transported with joy, shouted and wept as the procession passed. Old men were seen kneeling in the streets, blessing God that they had lived to witness that happy moment. The people ran to the doors of their houses loaded with refreshments, which they offered to the troops; and crowds of women surrounded the soldiers, and holding up their infants in their arms, and melting into tears, promised to make their children imbibe, from their earliest age, an inviolable attachment to the principles of the new constitution.

The procession entered the Champ de Mars by a long road, which thousands of people had assisted in forming, by filling up deep hollows, levelling the rising grounds, and erecting a temporary bridge across the Seine, opposite to the triumphal arches. The order of the procession was as follows:

A troop of horse, with trumpets.

A great

- A great band of music.
 A detachment of grenadiers.
 The electors chosen at Paris in 1789.
 A band of volunteers.
 The assembly of the representatives of the people.
 The military committee.
 Company of chaffeurs.
 A band of drums.
 The Presidents of sixty districts.
 The Deputies of the people sent to the Federation.
 The administrators of the municipality.
 Bands of music and drums.
 Battalion of children, carrying a standard, on which was written, *L'Espérance de la Patrie**.
 Detachment with the colours of the national guard of Paris.
 Battalion of veterans.
 Deputies from forty-two departments, arranged alphabetically.
 The Oriflamme, or grand standard of the Kings of France.
 Deputies from the regular troops.
 Deputies from the navy.
 Deputies from forty-one departments, arranged also alphabetically.
 Band of volunteer chaffeurs.
 Troop of horse, with trumpets.
 The procession, which was formed with eight persons abreast, entered the Champ de

* The Hope of the Country.

Mars beneath the triumphal arches, with a discharge of cannon. The deputies placed themselves round the inside of the amphitheatre. Between them and the seats of the spectators, the national guard of Paris were ranged, and the seats round the amphitheatre were filled with four hundred thousand people. The middle of the amphitheatre was crowded with an immense multitude of soldiers. The National Assembly walked towards the pavilion, where they placed themselves with the King, the Queen, the royal family and their attendants; and opposite this group, rose in perspective the hills of Passy and Chaillot, covered with people. The standards, of which one was presented to each department of the kingdom, as a mark of brotherhood, by the citizens of Paris, were carried to the altar to be consecrated by the bishop. High mass was performed, after which Monsieur de la Fayette, who had been appointed by the King Major General of the Federation, ascended the altar, gave the signal, and himself took the national oath. In an instant every sword was drawn, and every arm lifted up. The King pronounced the oath, which the President of the National Assembly repeated, and the solemn words were re-echoed by six hundred thousand voices; while the Queen raised the Dauphin in her arms, shewing him to the people and the army. At the moment the consecrated banners were displayed, the sun, which had been obscured by frequent showers in the course of the morning, burst forth, while the people

people lifted their eyes to heaven, and called upon the Deity to look down and witness the sacred engagement into which they entered. A respectful silence was succeeded by the cries, the shouts, the acclamations of the multitude: they wept, they embraced each other, and then dispersed.

You will not suspect that I was an indifferent witness of such a scene. Oh no! this was not a time in which the distinctions of country were remembered. It was the triumph of human kind; it was man asserting the noblest privileges of his nature; and it required but the common feelings of humanity to become in that moment a citizen of the world. For myself, I acknowledge that my heart caught with enthusiasm the general sympathy; my eyes were filled with tears; and I shall never forget the sensations of that day, "while memory holds her seat in my bosom."

The weather proved very unfavourable during the morning of the federation; but the minds of people were too much elevated by ideas of moral good, to attend to the physical evils of the day. Several heavy showers were far from interrupting the general gaiety. The people, when drenched by the rain, called out with exultation, rather than regret, * "Nous sommes mouillez a la nation." Some exclaimed, † "La revolution Française est cimentée avec de l'eau, au lieu de sang." The national guard, during the

* We are wet for the nation.

† The French revolution is cemented with water, instead of blood.

hours which preceded the arrival of the procession, amused the spectators * d'une dance ronde, and with a thousand whimsical and playful evolutions, highly expressive of that gaiety which distinguishes the French character. I believe none but Frenchmen would have diverted themselves, and half a million of people, who were waiting in expectation of a scene the most solemn upon record, by circles of ten thousand men galloping † en dance ronde. But if you are disposed to think of this gaiety with the contempt of superior gravity, for I will not call it wisdom, recollect that these dancers were the very men whose bravery formed the great epocha of French liberty; the heroes who demolished the towers of the Bastille, and whose fame will descend to the latest posterity.

Such was the admirable order with which this august spectacle was conducted, that no accident interrupted the universal festivity. All carriages were forbidden during that day, and the entrances to the Champ de Mars were so numerous, that half a million of people were collected together without a croud.

The people had only one subject of regret: they murmured that the king had taken the national oath in the pavilion, instead of performing that ceremony at the foot of the altar; and some of them crouding round Mons. de la Fayette, conjured him to persuade the king to go to the altar, and take the oath a second time. ‡ “Mes

* With dancing in a circle.

† In the round dance.

‡ My friends, the oath is not an air which can be played twice over.

enfans,”

enfants," said Monf. de la Fayette, "le serment n'est pas une ariette, on ne peut pas le jouer deux fois."

Monfieur de la Fayette, after the Federation, went to the Chateau de la Muette, where a public dinner was prepared for the national guard. An immense croud gathered round him when he alighted from his horse, at a little distance from the chateau, and some Aristocrates, mixing themselves with the true worshippers of him who is so justly the idol of the French nation, attempted to stifle him with their embraces. He called out "** Mais, mes amis, vous m'etouffez !*" and one of his *aide de camps*, who perceived the danger of his general, threw himself from his horse, which he intreated Monf. de la Fayette to mount. He did so, and hastened to the chateau.

This incident reminds me of a line in Racine's fine tragedy of Britannicus, where Nero says,

† "J'embrasse mon rival, mais c'est pour l'etouffer."

Adieu.

* But, my friends, you stifle me.

† I embrace my rival, but it is to destroy him.

LETTER

L E T T E R III.

THE rejoicings at Paris did not terminate with the ceremony of the Federation. A succession of entertainments, which lasted several days, were prepared for the deputies from the provinces, who are all quartered in the houses of the bourgeois, where they were received with the most cordial hospitality.

The night of the 14th of July the whole city of Paris was illuminated, and the next day le ci-devant Duc, now Monf. d'Orleans, gave a public dinner to the national guard in the hall of the Palais Royal. We walked in the evening round the gallery, from which we saw part of the croud below amusing themselves by dancing, while others were singing in chorus the favourite national songs.

On the following Sunday the national guards were reviewed by Monf. de la Fayette in the Champ de Mars, which was again filled with spectators, and the people appeared more enthusiastic than ever in the applauses of their general. The Champ de Mars resounded with repeated cries of * "Vive Monf. de la Fayette." On this day carriages were again forbidden, and the evening displayed a scene of general rejoicing. The whole city was illuminated, and crowds of company filled the gardens of the

* Long live Monf. de la Fayette.

Tuilleries,

Tuilleries, from which we saw the beautiful façade of the Louvre lighted in the most splendid manner. In the Champs Elysées, where a fête was given to the Deputies, innumerable lamps were hung from one row of trees to another, and shed the most agreeable brilliance on those enchanting walks; where the exhilarated croud danced and sung, and filled the air with the sound of rejoicing. Several parties of the national guard came from the Champ Elysées, dancing along the walks of the Tuilleries with a woman between every two men; and all the priests, whom they met in their way, they obliged to join in the dance, treating them as women, by placing them between two soldiers, and sometimes sportively dressing them in grenadiers caps. Fire-works of great variety and beauty were exhibited on the Pont Neuf, and the statue of Henry the Fourth was decorated with the ornament of all others the most dear in the eyes of the people, a scarf of national ribbon. Transparencies of Monf. de la Fayette and Monf. Bailly were placed, as the highest mark of public favour, on each side of this revered statue.

But the spectacle of all others the most interesting to my feelings, was the rejoicings at the Bastille. The ruins of that execrable fortress were suddenly transformed, as if with the wand of necromancy, into a scene of beauty and of pleasure. The ground was covered with fresh clods of grass, upon which young trees were placed in rows, and illuminated with a blaze of light. Here the minds of the people took a higher tone of exultation than in the other scenes

scenes of festivity. Their mutual congratulations, their reflections on the horror of the past, their sense of present felicity, their cries of **“Vive la Nation,”* still ring in my ear! I too, though but a sojourner in their land, rejoiced in their happiness, joined the universal voice, and repeated with all my heart and soul, *“Vive la nation!”*

LETTER IV.

BEFORE I suffered my friends at Paris to conduct me through the usual routine of convents, churches, and palaces, I requested to visit the Bastille; feeling a much stronger desire to contemplate the ruins of that building than the most perfect edifices of Paris. When we got into the carriage, our French servant called to the coachman with an air of triumph, † *“A la Bastille, mars nous n’y resterons pas.”* We drove under that porch which so many wretches have entered never to re-pass, and alighting from the carriage, descended with difficulty into the dungeons, which were too low to admit of our standing upright, and so dark that we were obliged at noon-day to visit them with the light of a candle. We saw the hooks of those chains

* Long live the Nation.

† To the Bastille, —but we shall not remain there.

by

by which the prisoners were fastened round the neck, to the walls of their cells; many of which being below the level of the water, are in a constant state of humidity; and a noxious vapour issued from them, which more than once extinguished the candle, and was so insufferable that it required a strong spirit of curiosity to tempt tone to enter. Good God!—and to those regions of horror were human creatures dragged at the caprice of despotic power. What a melancholy consideration, that

———“ Man! proud man,
Drest in a little brief authority,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven,
As make the angels weep.”———

There appears to be a greater number of these dungeons than one could have imagined the hard heart of tyranny itself would contrive; for, since the destruction of the building, many subterraneous cells have been discovered underneath a piece of ground which was inclosed within the walls of the Bastille, but which seemed a bank of solid earth before the horrid secrets of this prison-house were disclosed. Some skeletons were found in these recesses, with irons still fastened on their decaying bones.

After having visited the Bastille, we may indeed be surprized that a nation so enlightened as the French, submitted so long to the oppressions of their government; but we must cease to wonder that their indignant spirits at length shook off the galling yoke.

Those who have contemplated the dungeons of the Bastille, without rejoicing in the French revolution, may, for ought I know, be very respectable

spectable persons, and very agreeable companions in the hours of prosperity; but, if my heart were sinking with anguish, I should not fly to those persons for consolation. Sterne says, that a man is incapable of loving one woman as he ought, who has not a sort of an affection for the whole sex; and as little should I look for particular sympathy from those who have no feelings of general philanthropy. If the splendour of a despotic throne can only shine like the radiance of lightning, while all around is involved in gloom and horror, in the name of heaven let its baleful lustre be extinguished for ever. May no such strong contrast of light and shade again exist in the political system of France! but may the beams of liberty, like the beams of day, shed their benign influence on the cottage of the peasant, as well as on the palace of the monarch! May liberty, which for so many ages past has taken pleasure in softening the evils of the bleak and rugged climates of the north, in fertilizing a barren soil, in clearing the swamp, in lifting mounds against the inundations of the tempest, diffuse her blessings also on the genial land of France, and bid the husbandman rejoice under the shade of the olive and the vine.

The Bastille, which Henry the Fourth and his veteran troops assailed in vain, the citizens of Paris had the glory of taking in a few hours. The avarice of Mons. de Launay had tempted him to guard this fortress with only half the complement of men ordered by government; and a letter which he received the morning of the 14th of July, commanding him to sustain the siege till the evening, when succour would arrive,

arrive, joined to his own treachery towards the assailants, cost him his life.

The courage of the besiegers was inflamed by the horrors of famine, there being at this time only twenty-four hours provision of bread in Paris. For some days the people had assembled in crouds round the shops of the bakers, who were obliged to have a guard of soldiers to protect them from the famished multitude; while the women, rendered furious by want, cried, in the resolute tone of despair, * “ Il nous faut du pain pour nos enfans.” Such was the scarcity of bread, that a French gentleman told me, that, the day preceding the taking of the Bastille, he was invited to dine with a Negotiant, and, when he went, was informed that a servant had been out five hours in search of bread, and had at last been able to purchase only one loaf.

It was at this crisis, it was to save themselves the shocking spectacle of their wives and infants perishing before their eyes, that the citizens of Paris flew to arms, and, impelled by such causes, fought with the daring intrepidity of men who had all that renders life of any value at stake, and who determined to die or conquer. The women too, far from indulging the fears incident to our feeble sex, in defiance of the cannon of the Bastille, ventured to bring victuals to their sons and husbands; and, with a spirit worthy of Roman matrons, encouraged them to go on. Women mounted guard in the streets, and when any person passed, called out boldly, † “ Qui va la ? ”

* We must have bread for our children.

† Who goes there?

A gen-

A gentleman, who had the command of fifty men in this enterprize, told me, that one of his soldiers being killed by a cannon-ball, the people, with great marks of indignation, removed the corpse, and then snatching up the dead man's hat, begged money of the bystanders for his interment, in a manner characteristic enough of that gaiety, which never forfakes the French, even on such occasions as would make any other people on earth serious. * "Madame, pour ce pauvre diable qui se fait tué pour la Nation!—Monf. pour ce pauvre chien qui se fait tué pour la nation!" This mode of supplication, though not very pathetic, obtained the end desired; no person being sufficiently obdurate to resist the powerful plea, † "qu'il se fait tué pour la Nation."

When the Bastille was taken, and the old man, of whom you have no doubt heard, and who had been confined in a dungeon thirty-five years, was brought into day light, which had not for so long a space of time visited his eyes, he staggered, shook his white beard, and cried faintly, ‡ "Messieurs, vous m'avez rendu un grand service, rendez m'en un autre, tuez moi! je ne fais où aller."—"Allons, allons," the croud answered with one voice, "la Nation te nourrira."

As the heroes of the Bastille passed along the streets after its surrender, the citizens stood at

* Madam, for this poor devil, who has been killed for the nation!—Sir, for this unfortunate dog, who has been killed for the Nation!

† Had been killed for the Nation.

‡ Gentlemen, you have rendered me one great service; render me another, kill me! for I know not where to go.—Come along, come along, the Nation will provide for you.

the

the doors of their houses loaded with wine, brandy, and other refreshments, which they offered to these deliverers of their country. But they unanimously refused to taste any strong liquors, considering the great work they had undertaken as not yet accomplished, and being determined to watch the whole night, in case of any surprize.

All those who had assisted in taking the Bastille, were presented by the municipality of Paris with a ribbon of the national colours, on which is stamped, inclosed in a circle of brass, an impresson of the Bastille, and which is worn as a military order.

The municipality of Paris also proposed a solemn funeral procession in memory of those who lost their lives in this enterprize; but, on making application to the National Assembly for a deputation of its members to assist at this solemnity, the Assembly were of opinion that these funeral honours should be postponed till a more favourable moment, as they might at present have a tendency to inflame the minds of the people.

I have heard several persons mention a young man, of a little insignificant figure, who, the day before the Bastille was taken, got up on a chair in the Palais Royal, and harangued the multitude, conjuring them to make a struggle for their liberty, and asserting, that now the moment was arrived. They listened to his eloquence with the most eager attention; and, when he had instructed as many as could hear him at one time, he requested them to depart, and repeated his harangue to a new set of auditors.

Among

Among the dungeons of the Bastille are placed, upon a heap of stones, the figures of the two men who contrived the plan of this fortress, where they were afterwards confined for life. These men are represented chained to the wall, and are beheld without any emotion of sympathy.

The person employed to remove the ruins of the Bastille, has framed of the stones eighty-three complete models of this building, which, with a true patriotic spirit, he has presented to the eighty-three departments of the kingdom, by way of hint to his countrymen to take care of their liberties in future.

L E T T E R V.

I Am just returned from a visit to Madame Sillery, whose works on education are so well known and so justly esteemed in England, and who received me with the most engaging politeness. Surely the French are unrivalled in the arts of pleasing; in the power of uniting with the most polished elegance of manners, that attentive kindness which seems to flow warm from the heart, and which, while it soothes our vanity, secures our affections. Madame Sillery and her pupils are at present at St. Leu, a beautiful spot in the rich valley of Montmorenci. Monf. d' Orleans has certainly conferred a most essential obligation

obligation upon his children, by placing them under the care of this lady. I never met with young people more amiable in their dispositions, or more charming in their manners, which are equally remote from arrogance, and from those efforts of condescension which I have seen some great people make, with much difficulty to themselves, and much offence to others. The Princess, who is thirteen years of age, has a countenance of the sweetest expression, and appears to me to be Adelaide the heroine of Madame Sillery's Letters on education, personified. The three princes, though under Madame Sillery's superintendence, have also preceptors who live in the house, and assist in their education. The eldest prince, *Monf. de Chartres*, is nearly eighteen years of age, and his attentive politeness formed a striking contrast in my mind, to the manners of those fashionable gentlemen in a certain great metropolis, who consider apathy and negligence as the test of good breeding. But if I was pleased with the manners of this young Prince, I was still more delighted to find him a confirmed friend to the new constitution of France, and willing, with the enthusiasm of a young and ardent mind, to renounce the splendour of his titles for the general good. When he heard that the sacrifice of fortune also was required, and that the immense property, which he had been taught to consider as his inheritance, was to be divided with his brothers, he embraced them with the utmost affection, declaring that he should rejoice in such a division. To find a democratic Prince, was somewhat singular: I was much less surprized that Madame Sillery had

had adopted sentiments which are so congenial to an enlarged and comprehensive mind. This lady I have called Sillery, because it is the name by which she is known in England: but, since the decree of the National Assembly, abolishing the nobility, she has renounced with her title the name of Sillery, and has taken that of Brulart. She talked to me of the distinctions of rank, in the spirit of philosophy, and ridiculed the absurdity of converting the rewards of personal merit into the inheritance of those who had perhaps so little claim to honours, that they were a sort of oblique reproach on their character and conduct. There may be arguments against hereditary rank sufficiently convincing to such an understanding as Madame Brulart's: but I know some French Ladies who entertain very different notions on this subject; who see no impropriety in the establishments of nobility; and who have carried their love of aristocratical rights so far as to keep their beds, in a fit of despondency, upon being obliged to relinquish the agreeable epithets of Comtesse or Marquise, to which their ears had been so long accustomed.

But let me do justice to the ladies of France. The number of those who have murmured at the loss of rank, bears a very small proportion to those who have acted with a spirit of distinguished patriotism; who, with those generous affections which belong to the female heart, have gloried in sacrificing titles, fortune, and even the personal ornaments, so dear to female vanity, for the common cause. It was the ladies who gave the example of *le don patriotique* *, by of-

* The patriotic donation.

fering

fering their jewels at the shrine of liberty; and, if the women of ancient Rome have gained the applause of distant ages for such actions, the women of France will also claim the admiration of posterity.

The women have certainly had a considerable share in the French revolution: for, whatever the imperious lords of the creation may fancy, the most important events which take place in this world depend a little on our influence; and we often act in human affairs like those secret springs in mechanism, by which, though invisible, great movements are regulated.

But let us return to Madame Brulart, who wears at her breast a medallion made of a stone of the Bastille polished. In the middle of the medallion, *Liberte* was written in diamonds; above was marked in diamonds, the planet that shone on the 14th of July; and below was seen the moon, of the size she appeared that memorable night. The medallion was set in a branch of laurel, composed of emeralds, and tied at the top with the national cockade, formed of brilliant stones of the three national colours.

Our conversation on the subject of the Bastille, led Madame Brulart to relate an action of Monf. de Chartres, which reflects the highest honour on his humanity. Being in Normandy, he visited Mont St. Michel, a fortress built on a rock which stands a league and a half from the coast of Normandy. The tide covers this space twice every twenty-four hours, but when it is low-water, a person can pass over on foot. Mont St. Michel was originally a church, founded by a good bishop in the seventh century, in honour

of St. Michel, who, it seems, appeared to him in a vision on this spot. Richard, the first Duke of Normandy of that name, afterwards converted the church into an abbey, and this abbey gave rise to the military order des Chevaliers de St. Michel, instituted by Louis the Eleventh. After having seen the precious relics of the abbey, the square buckler, and the short sword found in Ireland near the body of the well known dragon, whose destruction is attributed to the prowess of St. Michel, Mons. de Chartres was conducted, through many labyrinths, to the subterraneous parts of the edifice; where he was shewn a wooden cage, which was made by order of Louis the Fourteenth, for the punishment of an unfortunate wit, who had dared to ridicule his conquests in Holland, no sooner gained than lost. Mons. de Chartres, beheld with horror this instrument of tyranny, in which prisoners were still frequently confined; and, expressing in very strong terms his indignation, he was told, that as a prince of the blood, he had a right, if he thought proper, to order the cage to be destroyed. Scarcely were the words pronounced, when the young Prince seized a hatchet, gave the first stroke himself to this execrable machine, waited to see it levelled with the ground, and thus may claim the glory of having, even before the demolition of the Bastille, begun the French revolution.

We found at St. Leu a young English lady, who is the companion of the Princess, and whose appearance is calculated to give the most favourable idea of English beauty. I never saw more regular features, or an expression of countenance
more

more lovely: and Madame Brulart, by whom she has been educated, assured me that "the mind keeps the promise we had from the face." This young lady talked of her own country with a glow of satisfaction very grateful to my feelings. She seems to,

"Cast a look where England's glories shine,
"And bids her bosom sympathise with mine."

LETTER VI

I HAVE been at the National Assembly, where, at a time when the deputies from the provinces engrossed every ticket of admission, my sister and I were admitted without tickets, by the gentleman who had the command of the guard, and placed in the best seats, before he suffered the doors to be opened to other people. We had no personal acquaintance with this gentleman, or any claim to his politeness, except that of being foreigners and women; but these are, of all claims, the most powerful to the urbanity of French manners.

My sister observed to me, that our seats, which were immediately opposite the tribune from which the members speak, reminded her of our struggles to attain the same situation in Westminster Hall. But you must recollect, I answered, that we have attained this situation without any struggle. I believe, however, that

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if the fame of Mr. Fox's eloquence ſhould lead a French woman to preſent herſelf at the door of Weſtminſter Hall without a ticket, ſhe might ſtand there as long as Mr. Haſtings's trial has laſted, without being permitted to paſs the barrier.

The hall of the National Aſſembly is long and narrow; at each end there is a gallery, where the common people are admitted by applying very early in the morning for numbers, which are diſtributed at the door; and the perſons who firſt apply ſecure the firſt numbers. The ſeats being alſo numbered, all confuſion and diſorder are prevented. The galleries at the ſide of the hall are divided into boxes, which are called tribunes. They belong to the principal members of the National Aſſembly, and to theſe places company are admitted with tickets. Rows of ſeats are placed round the hall, raiſed one above another, where the members of the Aſſembly are ſeated; and immediately oppoſite the chair of the preſident, in the narrow part of the hall, is the tribune which the members aſcend when they are going to ſpeak. One capital ſubject of debate in this Aſſembly is, who ſhall ſpeak firſt; for all ſeem more inclined to talk than to liſten; and ſometimes the preſident in vain rings a bell, or with the vehemence of French action ſtretches out his arms, and endeavours to impoſe ſilence; while the fix Huiffers, perſons who are appointed to keep order, make the attempt with as little ſucceſs as the preſident himſelf. But one ceases to wonder that the meetings of the National Aſſembly are
tumultuous,

tumultuous, on reflecting how important are the objects of its deliberations. Not only the lives and fortunes of individuals, but the existence of the country is at stake: and of how little consequence is this impetuosity in debate, if the decrees which are passed are wise and beneficial, and the new constitution arises, like the beauty and order of nature, from the confusion of mingled elements! I heard several of the members speak; but I am so little qualified to judge of oratory, that, without presuming to determine whether I had reason to be entertained or not, I shall only tell you that I was so.

And this, repeated I with exultation to myself, this is the National Assembly of France! Those men now before my eyes are the men who engross the attention, the astonishment of Europe; for the issue of whose decrees surrounding nations wait in suspense, and whose fame has already extended through every civilized region of the globe: the men whose magnanimity invested them with power to destroy the old constitution, and whose wisdom is erecting the new, on a principle of perfection which has hitherto been thought chimerical, and has only served to adorn the page of the philosopher; but which they believe may be reduced to practice, and have therefore the courage to attempt. My mind, with a sensation of elevated pleasure, passing through the interval of ages, anticipated the increasing renown of these legislators, and the period when, all the nations of Europe following the liberal system which France has adopted, the little crooked policy of the present times

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shall

shall give place to the reign of reason, virtue, and science.

The most celebrated characters in the National Assembly were pointed out to us. Monsieur Barnave de Dauphiné, who is only six and twenty years of age, and the youngest member of the Assembly, is esteemed its first orator, and is the leader of the democratic party. I believe Mons. Barnave does not owe all his reputation to his talents, however distinguished: his virtues also claim a considerable share of that applause which he receives from his country. He has shewn himself as stedfast in principle, as he is eloquent in debate. With firm undeviating integrity he has defended the cause of the people. Every motion he has made in the Assembly has passed into a law, because its beneficial tendency has been always evident; and it was he who effected that memorable decree which deprived the King of the power of making war, without the consent of the nation. Mons. Barnave is adored by the people; who have two or three times taken the horses from his carriage, and drawn him in triumph along the streets of Paris.

We also saw Mons. Mirabeau l'ainé, whose genius is of the first class, but who possesses a very small share of popularity. I am, however, one of his partizans, though not merely from that enthusiasm which always comes across my heart in favour of great intellectual abilities. Mons. Mirabeau has another very powerful claim on my partiality: he is the professed friend (and I must and will love him for being so) of the African race. He has proposed the abolition of the slave trade to the National Assembly, and,

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though the Assembly have delayed the consideration of this subject, on account of those deliberations which immediately affect the country, yet, perhaps, if our senators continue to doze over this affair as they have hitherto done, the French will have the glory of setting us an example, which it will then be our humble employment to follow. But I trust the period will never come, when England will submit to be taught by another nation the lesson of humanity. I trust an English House of Commons will never persist in thinking, that what is morally wrong, can be politically right; that the virtue and the prosperity of a people are things at variance with each other; and that a country which abounds with so many sources of wealth, cannot afford to close one polluted channel, which is stained with the blood of our fellow-creatures.

But it is a sort of treason to the honour, the spirit, the generosity of Englishmen, to suppose they will persevere in such conduct. Admitting, however, a supposition which it is painful to make: admitting that they should abide by this system of inhumanity, they will only retard, but not finally prevent the abolition of slavery. The Africans have not long to suffer, nor their oppressors to triumph. Europe is hastening towards a period too enlightened for the perpetuation of such monstrous abuses. The mists of ignorance and error are rolling fast away, and the benign beams of philosophy are spreading their lustre over the nations.—But whither have these children of captivity led me? I perceive I have wandered a great way from the National Assembly, where I was so happily seated, and of which I will tell you more in my next letter.

LETTER

L E T T E R VII.

THE Abbé Maury is one of the most distinguished members of the National Assembly. He possesses astonishing powers of eloquence; but he has done his talents the injustice to make them subservient to the narrow considerations of self-interest. Had he displayed that ability in defence of civil and religious liberty, which he has employed in the service of the exorbitant pretensions of the church, he would have deserved the highest applause of his country; instead of which, he has called to the aid of his genius an auxiliary it ought to have scorned; that subtlety which tries "to make the worse appear the better reason;" and he is still more detested than admired. I am not surprized that a little mind is sometimes tempted by interest to tread in a mean and fordid path; but I own it does astonish me that genius can be seduced from the fair field of honourable fame into those serpentine ways where it can meet with no object worthy of its ambition. "Something too much of this." You shall hear a repartee of the Abbé Maury, who, after having made a very unpopular motion in the Assembly, was insulted as he was going out; the people crying, as they are too apt to do, * "A la lanterne." The Abbé, turning to the croud, answered, with equal indignation and spirit, † "Eh! Messieurs, si j'étois à la lan-

* To the lantern.

† If I were at the lantern, would you be more enlightened!

terne,

terne, seriez vous plus éclairés?" The Abbé Maury, before the revolution, was in possession of eight hundred farms, and has lost sixty thousand livres a year in consequence of that event. But enough of Monf. l'Abbé, whose picture I have just purchased in a snuff-box. You touch a spring, open the lid of the snuff box, and the Abbé jumps up, and occasions much surprize and merriment. The joke, however, is grown a little stale in France: but I shall bring the Abbé with me to England, where I flatter myself his sudden appearance will afford some diversion.

A singular but very respectable figure in the National Assembly is a Deputy from Brittany, called Le Pere Gerard. This venerable old man is a peasant, and his appearance reminds one of those times when Generals were called from the plough to take the command of armies. The dress of Le Pere Gerard is made of a coarse woollen cloth, which is worn by the peasants of Brittany, and is of such strong texture that a coat often descends from one generation to another. This cloth is called Pinchina; and the King, to whom the old Breton has presented several addresses from the Assembly, calls him, * en badinage, Le Pere Pinchina. When I saw him, he had on this everlasting coat, and wore worsted stockings gartered above the knees. But, what pleased me most in his appearance, were the long white hairs which hung down his shoulders; an ornament for which you know I have a particular predilection.

* In pleasantry, Father Pinchina.

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The respectable Pere Gerard boasts that he is descended from a race of deputies, his great grandfather having been chosen as a deputy to Les Etats Generaux in 1614, the last time the States were held, before that memorable period when they effected the revolution.

At the time when the ladies set the example of * *Le don patriotique*, by offering their jewels, and the members of the National Assembly, in a moment of enthusiasm took the silver buckles out of their shoes, and laid them on the President's table, the Pere Gerard arose, and said, that he had no such offering to give, his buckles being made of brass, but that his *don patriotique* should be that of rendering his services to his country unpaid. The old man was heard by the Assembly with the applause he merited; and the people, on the day of the Federation, carried him from the Champ de Mars to his own house in triumph on their shoulders.

Messieurs Charles and Alexander Lameth, two brothers, and Mons. Rabeau de St. Estienne, are among the first patriots of the National Assembly, and have a very high reputation for talents. The French, who love what they call an † *equivoque*, tell you, que Mons. Rabeau vaut deux d' Mirabeau.

The meetings of the Assembly, though still tumultuous, are much less so than they were at their first commencement. A gentleman, who was present when the motion was made for abolishing monasteries, told me, that the minds of

* The patriotic donation

† A play upon words.

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the members were, on that occasion, inflamed to such a height, that it appeared to him very probable, that the debate would end in a massacre. He mentioned a circumstance very characteristic of French vivacity. One of the members was expressing himself in these words, "What is a Monk? A man who has renounced his father, his mother, every tie, every affection that is dear in nature! and for whom?"—before the speaker could finish his sentence, a member from the other end of the hall seized the moment while the orator was drawing his breath, and called out * "Pour une puissance étrangere," to the great horror of la coté noir, for so the clergy are called.

The Democrats place themselves on one side of the hall, and the Aristocrates on the other. The spectators in the galleries take such a part in the debate, as frequently to express their applause by clapping their hands with great violence. An old Marechal of France rose, the day I was at the Assembly, when they were debating on the military pensions, and declared, that in recompence for the services which he had rendered his country, he desired honours and not pay. The Assembly clapped him, and the galleries joined in this mark of approbation. A young Frenchman, who sat next me, whispered to me, † "Mons. trouve apparament que l'argent l'incommode."

The members of the National Assembly are paid three crowns a day for their attendance;

* For a foreign power.

† I suppose that gentleman finds money troublesome.

while in England a candidate for a seat in parliament often spends many thousand pounds, and, with magnificent generosity, makes a whole county drunk for a week, merely to enjoy the privilege of serving his country without pay.

The qualification requisite, for a member of the National Assembly, is that of possessing sufficient property in land or houses to pay taxes to the amount of a marc d'argent, which is the value of four louis. Every hundred of the citizens, who pay taxes to government of three days labour, or three livres, have a right to vote for an elector, whose qualification is that of paying taxes to the amount of ten livres, or ten days labour. The electors of one department meet together in one assembly, and chuse from among their own body the persons who are to direct the administration of that department.

Those electors will also chuse in the same manner the deputies sent by that department to the National Assembly. There will therefore be only one intermediate degree between the lowest order of active citizens, and the members of the National Assembly.

I was interrupted by a visitor, who related a little incident, which has interested me so much, that I can write of nothing else at present, and you shall therefore have it warm from my heart. While the National Assembly were deliberating upon the division of property among brothers, a young man of high birth and fortune, who is a member of the Assembly, entered with precipitation, and, mounting the tribune, with great emotion informed the Assembly, that he had just received account that his father was dying that he

he himself was his eldest son, and had come to conjure the Assembly to pass, without delay, that equitable decree, giving the younger sons an equal share of fortune with the eldest, in order, he said, that his father might have the satisfaction, before he breathed his last, of knowing that all his children were secure of a provision. If you are not affected by this circumstance, you have read it with very different feelings from those with which I have written it: but if, on the contrary, you have fallen in love with this young Frenchman, do not imagine your passion is singular, for I am violently in love with him myself.

LETTER VIII.

YOU have not heard, perhaps, that on the day of the Federation at Paris, the national oath was taken throughout the whole kingdom, at the hour of twelve.

A great number of farmers and peasants walked in the procession at Rouen, bearing in their hands the instruments of their husbandry, decorated with national ribbons. The national guard cut down branches from the trees, and stuck them in their hats; and a French gentleman of my acquaintance, who understands English, and reads Shakespeare, told me that it seemed like Birnham Wood coming to Dunfinane.

The

The leaders of the French revolution, are men well acquainted with the human heart. They have not trusted merely to the force of reason, but have studied to interest in their cause the most powerful passions of human nature, by the appointment of solemnities perfectly calculated to awaken that general sympathy which is caught from heart to heart with irresistible energy, fills every eye with tears, and throbs in every bosom.

I have heard of a procession, which took place not long ago in one of the districts of Paris, in which five hundred young ladies walked dressed in white, and decorated with cockades of the national ribbon, leading by silken cords a number of prisoners newly released from captivity; and who with their faces covered by long flowing veils, were conducted to a church, where they returned thanks for their deliverance.

Thus have the leaders of the revolution engaged beauty as one of their auxiliaries, justly concluding, that, to the gallantry and sensibility of Frenchmen, no argument would be found more efficacious than that of a pretty face.

I have just read a private letter from a little town about two leagues from Montauban, called Negre-Pelisse, where the inhabitants on the day of the Federation, displayed a liberality of sentiment, which reflects honour, not only on themselves, but on the age in which we live. The national guard of this little town and its environs, were assembled to take the national oath. Half of the inhabitants being protestants, and the other half Catholics, the Cure and the Protestant Minister ascended together one altar, which

which had been erected by the citizens, and administered the oath to their respective parishioners at the same moment, after which, Catholics and Protestants joined in singing *Te Deum*.

Surely religious worship was never performed more truly in the spirit of the Divine author of Christianity, whose great precept is that of universal love! Surely the incense of praise was never more likely to ascend to heaven, than when the Catholics and Protestants of Negre-Pelisse offered it together!

This amiable community, when their devotions were finished, walked in procession to a spot where fire works had been prepared; and, it being considered as a mark of honour to light the fire-works, the office was reserved for *Monsieur le Curé*, who, however, insisted on the participation of the protestant Minister in this distinction; upon which the Minister received a wax taper from the *Curé*, and with him led the procession. The fire-works represented two trees. One, twisted and distorted, was emblematical of aristocracy, and was soon entirely consumed; when a tall straight plant, figurative of patriotism, appeared to rise from the ashes of the former, and continued to burn with undiminished splendour.

When we look back on the ignorance, the superstition, the barbarous persecutions of Gothic times, is it not something to be thankful for, that we exist at this enlightened period, when such evils are no more; when particular tenets of religious belief are no longer imputed as crimes; when the human mind has made as many important discoveries in morality as in science, and liberality

berality of sentiment is cultivated with as much success as arts and learning; when, in short, (and *you* are not one of those who will suspect that I am not all the while a good Englishwoman) when one can witness an event so sublime as the French revolution?

L E T T E R IX.

YESTERDAY I received your letter, in which you accuse me of describing with too much enthusiasm the public rejoicings in France, and prophesy that I shall return to my own country a fierce republican. In answer to these accusations, I shall only observe, that it is very difficult, with common sensibility, to avoid sympathizing in general happiness. My love of the French revolution, is the natural result of this sympathy, and therefore my political creed is entirely an affair of the heart; for I have not been so absurd as to consult my head upon matters of which it is so incapable of judging. If I were at Rome, you would not be surprized to hear that I had visited, with the warmest reverence, every spot where any relics of her antient grandeur could be traced; that I had flown to the capitol, that I had kissed the earth on which the Roman senate sat in council: And can you then expect me to have seen the Federation at the
Champ

Champ de Mars, and the National Assembly of France, with indifference? Before you insist that I ought to have done so, point out to me, in the page of Roman history, a spectacle more solemn, more affecting, than the Champ de Mars exhibited, or more magnanimous, more noble efforts in the cause of liberty than have been made by the National Assembly. Whether the new form of government, establishing in France, be more or less perfect than our own,

“ Who shall decide when doctors disagree,

“ And soundest casuists doubt, like you and me ?”

I fancy we had better leave the determination of this question in the hands of posterity. In the mean time, I wish that some of our political critics would speak with less contempt, than they are apt to do, of the new constitution of France, and no longer repeat after one another the trite remark, that the French have gone too far, because they have gone farther than ourselves; as if it were not possible that that degree of influence which is perfectly safe in the hand of the executive part of our government, might be dangerous, at this crisis, to the liberty of France. But be this as it may, it appears evident that the temple of Freedom which they are erecting, even if imperfect in some of its proportions, must be preferable to the old gloomy Gothic fabric which they have laid in ruins. And therefore, when I hear my good countrymen, who guard their own rights with such unremitting vigilance, and who would rather part with life than liberty, speak with contempt of the French for having imbibed the noble lesson which Eng-
land

land has taught, I cannot but suspect that some mean jealousy lurks beneath the ungenerous censure. I cannot but suspect, that, while the fair and honourable traders of our commercial country act with the most liberal spirit in their ordinary dealings with other nations, they wish to make a monopoly of liberty, and are angry that France should claim a share of that precious property; by which, however, she may surely be enriched, without our being impoverished. The French, on the contrary, seem to have imbibed, with the principles of liberty, the strongest sentiments of respect and friendship towards that people, whom they gratefully acknowledge to have been their masters in this science. They are, to use their own phrase, * "devenus fous des Anglois," and fondly imagine that the applause they have received from a society of philosophers in our country, is the general voice of the nation.

Whether the new constitution be composed of durable materials or not, I leave to politicians to determine; but it requires no extraordinary sagacity to pronounce, that the French will henceforth be free. The love of liberty has pervaded all ranks of the people, who, if its blessings must be purchased with blood, will not shrink from paying the price:

"While ev'n the peasant boasts his right to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man."

The enthusiastic spirit of liberty displays itself, not merely on the days of solemn ceremonies—occupies not only every serious deliberation—

* Become madly fond of the English.

but

but is mingled with the gaiety of social enjoyment. When they converse, liberty is the theme of discourse; when they dance, the figure of the cotillon is adapted to a national tune; and when they sing, it is but to repeat a vow of fidelity to the constitution, at which all who are present instantly join in chorus, and sportively lift up their hands in confirmation of this favourite sentiment.

In every street, you see children performing the military exercise, and carrying banners made of paper of the national colours, wearing grenadiers caps of the same composition, and armed, though not like Jack the Giant-killer, with swords of sharpness.

Upon the whole, liberty appears in France adorned with the freshness of youth, and is loved with the ardour of passion. In England she is seen in her matron state, and, like other ladies at that period, is beheld with sober veneration.

With respect to myself, I must acknowledge, that, in my admiration of the revolution in France, I blend the feelings of private friendship with my sympathy in public blessings; since the old constitution is connected in my mind with the image of a friend confined in the gloomy recesses of a dungeon, and pining in hopeless captivity; while, with the new constitution, I unite with the soothing idea of his return to posterity, honours, and happiness.

This person is *Monf. du F——*, whose lady I am come to France to visit. They are friends with whom I wept in the day of their adversity, and with whom in their prosperity I have hastened to rejoice. Their history is most affecting;

ing; and, when I leave the hurry of Paris, to accompany them to their Chateau in Normandy, I will make you acquainted with incidents as pathetic as romance itself can furnish. Adieu!

L E T T E R X.

WE have been driving at a furious rate, for several days past, through the city of Paris, which I think bears the same resemblance to London (if you will allow me the indulgence of a simile) that the grand natural objects in a rude and barren country bear to the tame but regular beauties of a scene rich with cultivation. The streets of Paris are narrow, dark, and dirty; but we are repaid for this by noble edifices, which powerfully interest the attention. The streets of London are broad, airy, light, and elegant; but I need not tell you that they lead scarcely to any edifices at which foreigners do not look with contempt. London has, therefore, most of the beautiful, and Paris of the sublime, according to Mr. Burke's definition of these qualities; for I assure you a sensation of terror is not wanting to the sublimity of Paris, while the coachman drives through the streets with the impetuosity of a Frenchman, and one expects every step the horses take will be fatal to the foot passengers, who are heard exclaiming,
 " Que

* "Que les rues de Paris sont aristocrates." By the way, *aristocratie*, and *à la nation*, are become cant terms, which, as *Sterne* said of *tant pis*, and *tant mieux*, may now be considered as two of the great hinges in French conversation. Every thing tiresome or unpleasant, "c'est une aristocratie!" and every thing charming and agreeable is, "à la nation."

I have seen all the fine buildings at Paris, and fancy I should have admired the façade of the Louvre, the beautiful new church of Genevieve, and some other edifices, even if I had not been told previously, by a connoisseur in these matters, the precise degree of admiration which it was proper to bestow on every public building in Paris: but, having received such minute instructions on this subject, I can form but an imperfect notion of my own taste for architecture.

At the request of Madame Brulart, Monsieur de Chartres sent orders for our admission to the Palais Royal, which is not at present shewn to the public. Of the collection of pictures I am incapable of saying any thing, and enough has been already said by those who understand its merits. Fine painting gives me considerable pleasure, but has not the power of calling forth my sensibility like fine poetry; and I am willing to believe that the art I love is the most perfect of the two; and that it would have been impossible for the pencil of Raphael to convey all those ideas to the mind, and excite all those emotions in the heart, which are awakened by the pen of Shakespeare.

* That the streets of Paris are aristocrates.
I confess,

I confess, the only picture in Paris which has cost me any tears, is that of La Valliere, in the convent of the Carmelites. She is represented in the habit of a Carmelite; all the former ornaments of her person lie scattered at her feet; and her eyes are cast up to Heaven with a look of the deepest anguish. While I gazed at her picture, I lamented that sensibility which led into the most fatal errors a mind that seems to have been formed for virtue, and which, even in the bosom of pleasure, bewailed its own weakness. How can one forbear regretting, that the capricious inconstant monarch, to whom she gave her heart, should have inspired a passion of which he was so unworthy; a passion which appears to have been wholly unmixed with interest, vanity, or ambition? And how can one avoid pitying the desolate penitent, who, for so many years, in the dismal gloom of a convent, deplored her errors, and felt at once the bitterness of remorse, and the agony of disappointed love? while, probably,

“ In every hymn she seem’d his voice to hear,
 “ And dropt with every bead, too soft a tear !”

If the figure of this beautiful Carmelite had not come across my imagination, I should have told you sooner, that the Palais Royal is a square, of which the Duc de Orleans’s palace forms one side. You walk under piazzas round this square, which is surrounded with coffee houses, and shops displaying a variety of ribbons, trinkets, and caricature prints, which are now as common at Paris as at London. The walks under the piazzas are crowded with people, and in the upper part of the square, tents are placed, where coffee,

coffee, lemonade, ices, &c. are sold. Nothing is heard but the voice of mirth; nothing is seen but chearful faces; and I have no doubt that the Palais Royal is, upon the whole, one of the merriest scenes under the sun. Indeed, what is most striking to a stranger at Paris, is that general appearance of gaiety, which it is easy to perceive is not assumed for the moment, but is the habit of the mind, and which is, therefore, so exhilarating to a spectator of any benevolence. It is this which gives such a charm to every public place and walk in Paris. Kensington Gardens can boast as fine verdure, as majestic trees, as noble walks, and perhaps more beautiful women than the gardens of the Tuilleries, but we shall look in vain for that sprightly animation, that everlasting chearfulness, which render the Tuilleries so enchanting.

We have just returned from the Hospital des Invalides, a noble building, adorned with fine paintings which record the history of some celebrated saints, whose exploits were recounted with incredible rapidity by the man who conducted us through the chapels, and who seemed to think that nothing could be more absurd than our curiosity, after having heard these stories from his lips, to observe how they were told by the painters.

As we passed through the church, we saw several old soldiers kneeling at the confessionals, with that solemn devotion which seemed undisturbed by our intrusion, and fixed upon "the things that are above."

A few days before the taking of the Bastille, a croud of the Parisians assembled at the Hopital des

des Invalides, and demanded arms of the old soldiers; who answered, that they were the friends of their fellow citizens, but durst not deliver up their arms without the appearance of a contest: and therefore desired that the people would assemble before the gates in greater numbers the next day, when, after firing a little powder upon them, they would throw down their arms. The people accordingly returned the following day; and the invalids, after a faint shew of resistance, threw down their arms, which the citizens took up, embraced the old men, and then departed.

We stopped yesterday at La Maison de Ville, and went into a large apartment where the mayor and corporation assemble. The walls are hung round with pictures of Kings and Dukes, which I looked at with much less respect than at the chair on which *Monf. Bailly* sits. If his picture should ever be placed in this apartment, I fancy that, in the estimation of posterity, it will obtain precedency over all the Princes in the collection.

As we came out of La Maison de Ville, we were shewn, immediately opposite, the far-famed * *lanterne*, at which, for want of a galows, the first victims of popular fury were sacrificed. I own that the sight of La Lanterne chilled the blood within my veins. At that moment, for the first time, I lamented the revolution; and, forgetting the imprudence, or the guilt, of those unfortunate men, could only reflect with horror on the dreadful expiation they

* The lamp-iron.

had made. I painted in my imagination the agonies of their families and friends, nor could I for a considerable time chase these gloomy images from my thoughts.

It is for ever to be regretted, that so dark a shade of ferocious revenge was thrown across the glories of the revolution. But, alas! where do the records of history point out a revolution unstained by some actions of barbarity? When do the passions of human nature rise to that pitch which produces great events, without wandering into some irregularities? If the French revolution should cost no farther bloodshed, it must be allowed, notwithstanding a few shocking instances of public vengeance, that the liberty of twenty-four millions of people will have been purchased at a far cheaper rate than could ever have been expected from the former experience of the world.

L E T T E R XI.

WE are just returned from Versailles, where I could not help fancying I saw, in the back ground of that magnificent abode of a despot, the gloomy dungeons of the Bastille, which still haunt my imagination, and prevented my being much dazzled by the splendour of this superb palace.

We

We were shewn the passages through which the Queen escaped from her own apartment to the King's, on the memorable night when the *Poissardes* visited Versailles, and also the balcony at which she stood with the Dauphin in her arms, when, after having remained a few hours concealed in some secret recess of the palace, it was thought proper to comply with the desire of the crowd, who repeatedly demanded her presence. I could not help moralizing a little, on being told that the apartment to which this balcony belongs, is the very room in which Louis the Fourteenth died; little suspecting what a scene would, in the course of a few years, be acted on that spot.

All the bread which could be procured in the town of Versailles, was distributed among the *Poissardes*; who, with savage ferocity, held up their morsels of bread on their bloody pikes, towards the balcony where the Queen stood, crying, in a tone of defiance, * "Nous avons du pain."

During the whole of the journey from Versailles to Paris, the Queen held the Dauphin in her arms, who had been previously taught to put his infant hands together, and attempt to soften the enraged multitude by repeating, † "Grace pour maman!"

Monf. de la Fayette prevented the whole Gardes du Corps from being massacred at Versailles, by calling to the incensed people, ‡ "Le Roi vous demande grace pour ses Gardes du

* We now have bread.

† Spare mama!

‡ The King begs of you to spare his body-guards.

Corps."

Corps." The voice of *Monf. de la Fayette* was listened to, and obeyed. The *Gardes du Corps* were spared; with whom, before they set out for Paris, the people exchanged clothes, giving them also national cockades; and as a farther protection from danger, part of the croud mounted on the horses of the *Gardes du Corps*, each man taking an officer behind him. Before the King came out of *La Maison de Ville*, *Monf. de la Fayette* appeared, and told the multitude, who had preserved an indignant silence the whole way from *Verfailles* to Paris, that the King had expressed sentiments of the strongest affection for his people, and had accepted the national cockade; and that he (*Monf. de la Fayette*) hoped, when his Majesty came out of *la Maison de Ville*, they would testify their gratitude. In a few minutes the King appeared, and was received with the loudest acclamations.

When the Queen was lately asked to give her deposition on the attempt which, it is said, was made to assassinate her, by the *Poissardes* at *Verfailles*, she answered, with great prudence, " * *J'ai tout vu, tout entendu, et tout oublié!*"

The King is now extremely popular, and the people sing in the streets to the old tune of " † *Vive Henri quatre! &c.*" " *Vive Louis seize!*"

The Queen is, I am told, much altered lately in her appearance, but she is still a fine woman.

* I saw every thing, heard every thing, and have forgot every thing.

† Long live Henry the fourth. Long live Lewis the Sixteenth.

Madame is a beautiful girl; and the Dauphin, who is about seven years of age, is the idol of the people. They expect that he will be educated in the principles of the new constitution, and will be taught to consider himself less a king than a citizen. He appears to be a sweet engaging child, and I have just heard one of his sayings repeated. He has a collection of animals, which he feeds with his own hand. A few days ago, an ungrateful rabbit, who was his first favourite, bit his finger when he was giving him food. The Prince, while smarting with the pain, called out to his *petit lapin, "Tu es Aristocrate." One of the attendants enquired, "Eh! Monseigneur, qu'est-ce que c'est qu'un Aristocrate." "Ce sont ceux," answered the Prince, "qui font de la peine à Papa."

The King lately called the Queen, en badinage, Madame Capet; to which she retorted very readily, by giving his Majesty the appellation of "Monsieur † Capot."

When Les gardes Françoises laid down their arms at Versailles, their officers endeavoured to persuade them to take them up. An officer of my acquaintance told me, that he said to his soldiers, † "Mes enfans, vous allez donc me

* Little rabbit, Thou art an Aristocrate.—And pray, my Lord, what is an Aristocrate?—Those who make my papa uneasy.

† Capot is the French term at picquet, when the game is lost.

‡ My friends, you are going then to forsake me; I possess none of your affection.—Captain, they answered, we all love you; and, if you will lead us against our enemies, we are all ready to follow you: but we will never fire at our fellow citizens.

quitter,

quitter, vous ne m'aimez plus?" "Mon officier," they answered, " nous vous aimons tous, si il s'agit d'aller contre nos ennemis, nous sommes tous prêts a vous suivre, mais nous ne tirerons jamais contre nos compatriotes." Since that period, whenever any of les gardes Francoises appear, they are followed by the acclamations of the people, and "* Vive les Gardes Francoises !" resounds from every quarter.

While we were sitting, after dinner, at the inn at Versailles, the door was suddenly opened, and a Franciscan friar entered the room. He had so strong a resemblance to Sterne's monk, that I am persuaded he must be a descendant of the same family. We could not, like Sterne, bestow immortality; but we gave some alms: and the venerable old monk, after thanking us with affecting simplicity, added, spreading out his hands with a slow and solemn movement, † " Que la paix soit avec vous," and then departed. I have been frequently put in mind of Sterne since my arrival in France; and the first post-boy I saw in jack-boots, appeared to me a very classical figure, by recalling the idea of La Fleur mounted on his bidet.

* Long live the French guards.

† Peace be with you.

L E T T E R XII.

WE have been at all the Theatres, and I am charmed with the comic actors. The tragic performers afforded me much less pleasure. Before we can admire Madame Vestris, the first tragic actress of Paris, we must have lost the impression (a thing impossible) of Mrs. Siddons's performance; who, instead of "tearing a passion to rage," like Madame Vestris, only tears the hearts of the audience with sympathy.

Most of the pieces we have seen at the French theatres have been little comedies relative to the circumstances of the times, and, on that account, preferred, in this moment of enthusiasm, to all the wit of Moliere. These little pieces might perhaps read coldly enough in your study, but have a most charming effect with an accompaniment of applause from some hundreds of the national guards, the real actors in the scenes represented. Between the acts national songs are played, in which the whole audience join in chorus. There is one air, in particular, which is so universal a favourite, that it is called "Le Carrillon National:" the burden of the song is * "C'a ira." It is sung not only at every theatre, and in every street of Paris, but in every town and village of France, by man, woman, and child. "C'a ira" is every where the signal of pleasure, the beloved sound which ani-

* I will go on.

mates

mates every bosom with delight, and of which every ear is enamoured. And I have heard the most serious political conversations end by a sportive assurance, in allusion to this song, que "C'a ira!"

Giornowiche, the celebrated player on the violin, who was so much the fashion last winter at London, I am told, sometimes amused himself at Paris, by getting up into one of the trees of the Palais Royal, after it was dark, and calling forth tones from his violin, fit to "take the prison'd soul, and lap it in Elysium." He has frequently detained some thousands of people half the night in the Palais Royal, who, before they discovered the performer, used to call out in rapture, "Bravo, bravo: *c'est mieux que Giornowiche."

I am just returned from seeing the Gobe-lin tapestry, which appears the work of magic. It gave me pleasure to see two pictures of Henry the Fourth. In one he is placed at supper with the miller's family; and in the other, he is embracing Sully, who is brought forward on a couch, after having been wounded in battle. Nothing has afforded me more delight, since I came to France, than the honours which are paid to my favourite hero, Henry the Fourth, whom I prefer to all the Alexanders and Frederics that ever existed. They may be terribly sublime, if you will, and have great claims to my admiration; but as for my love, all that portion of it which I bestow on heroes, is already in Henry's possession.

* This is better than Giornowiche.

Little

Little statues of Henry the Fourth and Sully are very common. Sully is represented kneeling at the feet of this amiable Prince, who holds out his hand to him; and on the base of the statue, are written the words which Sully records in his Memoirs: * "Mais levez vous, levez vous donc, Sully, on croiroit que je vous pardonne."

While the statue of Henry the Fourth, on the Pont Neuf, is illuminated and decorated with national ribbon, that of Louis the Fourteenth, in the Place Victoire, is stripped of its former ostentatious ornaments; the nations, which were represented enchained at his feet, having been removed since the revolution. The figure of Fame is, however, still left hovering behind the statue of the King, with a crown of laurel in her hand, which it is generally supposed, she is going to place upon his head. But I have heard of a French wit, who enquired whether it was really her intention to place the laurel on his Majesty's head, or whether she had just taken it off.

In our ride this morning, we stopped at the Place Royal, where I was diverted by reading, on the front of a little shop under the piazzas, these words: "Robelin, † *ecrivain*.—Memoires et lettres écrites à juste prix, à la nation." I am told, that *Monf. Robelin* is in very flourishing business; and perhaps I might have had re-

* But rise, pray rise, Sully; they will believe I am forgiving you.

† *Writer*.—Memoirs and letters written at a moderate price, for the Nation.

course

course to him for assistance in my correspondence with you, if I did not leave Paris to-morrow. You shall hear from me from Rouen.

LETTER XIII.

WE had a most agreeable journey from Paris to Rouen, travelling a hundred miles along the borders of the Seine, through a beautiful country, richly wooded, and finely diversified by hill and valley. We passed several magnificent chateaus, and saw many a spire belonging to Gothic edifices, which, it would seem, were built of such lasting materials, with the moral purpose of leading the mind to reflect on the comparatively short duration of human life. Frequently an old venerable cross, placed at the side of the road by the piety of remote ages, and never passed by Roman Catholics without some mark of respect, throws a kind of religious sanctity over the landscape.

We stopped to look at the immense machine which conveys water to Versailles and Marly. The water is raised, by means of this machine, sixty feet, and is carried the distance of five hundred. I never heard a sound which filled my mind with more horror than the noise occasioned by the movements of this tremendous machine; while, at the same time, the vast chasms, where
the

the water foams with angry violence, make the brain giddy, and I was glad to leave these images of terror.

Part of our journey was performed by moonlight, which slept most sweetly upon the bank, and spread over the landscape those softened graces which I will not attempt to describe, lest my pen should stray into rhyme.

We passed the chateau of Rosni, a noble domain given to Sully by Henry the Fourth; a testimony of that friendship which reflects equal honour on the King and the Minister.

About three leagues from Rouen stands a convent, of which Abelard was for some time the superior. It is still inhabited by a few monks, and is called Le Convent de deux Amans. Had it been the monastery of the Paraclete, the residence of Eloisa, I should have hastened to visit the spot,

“ Where, o’er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
 “ Long sounding isles, and intermingled graves,
 “ Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
 “ A death-like silence, and a dread repose;
 “ Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
 “ Shades ev’ry flow’r, and darkens ev’ry green,
 “ Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
 “ And breathes a browner horror on the woods ”

If it were not very difficult to be angry with such a poet as Pope, particularly after having just transcribed these exquisite lines, I should be so when I recollect how clearly Mr. Berington shows, in his History of Abelard and Eloisa, the cruel injustice done by Pope to the sentiments of Eloisa, who is too often made to speak a very different language in the poem, from that of her genuine letters.

On

On our way to Rouen we slept at Gallon, a town about five leagues distant. Our inn was close to the castle, which formerly belonged to the Archbishop of Rouen, and which is now the property of the nation. The castle is a venerable gothic building, with a fine orangery, and parks which extend several leagues. The Archbishop, who is the Cardinal de la Rochefoucault, brother to that distinguished patriot the ci-devant Duc de la Rochefoucault, has lost a very considerable revenue since the revolution. He had an immense train of servants, whom it is said he dismissed, upon the diminution of his income, with all possible gentleness, giving horses to one, a carriage to another, and endeavouring to bestow on all some little alleviation of the pain they felt at quitting so good a master: It is impossible not to regret that the property of the Cardinal de la Rochefoucault is diminished, by whom it was only employed in dispensing happiness.

After visiting the castle, I returned somewhat in mournful mood to the inn, where there was nothing calculated to convey one chearful idea. The ceiling of our apartment was crossed with old bare beams; the tapestry, with which the room was hung, displayed, like the dress of Otway's old woman, "variety of wretchedness;" the canopied beds were of coarse dirty stuff: two pictures, in tawdry gilt frames, slandered the sweet countenances of the Dauphin and Madame; and the floor was paved with brick. In short, one can scarcely imagine a scene more remote from England, in accommodation and comfort, than the country inns of France: yet,

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in this habitation, where an Englishman would have been inclined to hang himself, was my rest disturbed half the night by the merry songs which were sung in an adjoining apartment, as gloomy as my own. But those local circumstances, which affect English nerves, never disturb the peace of that happy people, by whom, whether engaged in taking the Bastille, or sitting with their friends after supper, * tout se fait en chantant.

L E T T E R X I V .

ROUEN is one of the largest and most commercial towns of France. It is situated on the banks of the Seine, has a fine quay, and a singular bridge, of barges placed close together, with planks fixed upon them: the bridge rises and sinks with the tide, and opens for vessels to pass.

The streets of Rouen are so narrow, dark, and frightful, that, to borrow an expression from Madame Sevigné, † “elles abusent de la permission qu’ont les rues Françoises d’être laides.” There are many figures of Saints to be seen

* Every thing is done singing.

† “They abuse the permission the French streets have of being ugly.”

from

from these ugly streets, placed in little niches in the walls. The Virgin Mary is seated in one of these niches, with the infant in her arms; and in the neighbourhood is St. Anne, who has the credit of having taught the Virgin to read. Every night the general darkness of the town is a little dispelled by the lamps which the people place in the niches, * " pour éclairer les Saints."

Rouen is surrounded by some boulevards, that form very beautiful walks. On the top of the hill of St. Catharine, which overlooks the town, are the ruins of a fort called St. Michell, from which Henry the Fourth besieged Rouen. I love to be put in mind of Henry the Fourth, and am therefore very well pleased, that whenever I go to walk, I can fix my eyes on the hill of St. Catharine.

I always feel a little ashamed of my country, when I pass the spot where the Maid of Orleans was executed, and on which her statue stands, a monument of our disgrace. The ashes of her persecutor, John Duke of Bedford, repose at no great distance, within a tomb of black marble, in the cathedral, which was built by the English. One cannot feel much respect for the judgment of our ancestors, in choosing, of all places under the sun, the cathedral of Rouen for the tomb of him whose name is transmitted to us with the epithet of the *good* Duke of Bedford: for you have scarcely left the cathedral, before the statue of Jeane d'Arc stares you in the face, and seems to cast a most formidable shade over the *good* Duke's virtues.

* " To light the Saints."

The

The cathedral is a very magnificent edifice, and the great bell is ten feet high, and weighs thirty-six thousand pounds. But in France it is not what is *antient*, but what is *modern*, that most powerfully engages attention. Nothing in this fine old cathedral interested me so much as the consecrated banner, which since the Federation, has been placed over the altar, and on which is inscribed, “* Vivons libres, ou mourons!” I hope every Frenchman, who enters the cathedral of Rouen, while he reads the inscription on this consecrated banner, repeats from the bottom of his soul, “ Vivons libres, ou mourons!” But the French will, I trust, escape the horrors of civil war, notwithstanding the gloomy forebodings of the enemies of the new constitution.

A people just delivered from the yoke of oppression, will surely have little inclination to resume their shackles; to rebuild the dungeons they have so lately demolished; to close again those gloomy monastic gates which are now thrown open; to exchange their new courts of judicature, founded on the basis of justice and humanity, for the caprice of power, and the dark iniquity of letters de cachet; to quench the fair star of liberty, which has arisen on their hemisphere, and suffer themselves to be once more guided by the meteor of despotism.

A very considerable number, even among the nobility of France, have had the virtue to support the cause of freedom; and, forgetting the

* Let us live free, or die!

little

little considerations of vanity, which have some importance in the ordinary course of human affairs, but which are lost and annihilated when their mind is animated by any great sentiment, they have chosen to become the benefactors rather than the oppressors of their country; the citizens of a free state, instead of the slaves of a despotic monarch. They will no longer bear arms to gratify the ambition, or the caprice of a minister; they will no longer exert that impetuous and gallant spirit, for which they have ever been distinguished, in any cause unworthy of its efforts. The fire of valour, which they have too often employed for the purposes of destruction, will henceforth be directed to more generous ends. They will chuse another path to renown. Instead of attempting to take the citadel of glory by storm, they will prefer the fame of an honourable defence, and, renouncing the sanguinary laurel, strive, with more exalted enthusiasm, to obtain the civic wreath. Yes, the French nation will inviolably guard, will transmit to posterity the sacred rights of freedom. Future ages will celebrate, with grateful commemoration, the fourteenth of July; and strangers, when they visit France, will hasten with impatience to the Champ de Mars, filled with that enthusiasm which is awakened by the view of a place where any great scene has been acted. I think I hear them exclaim, "Here the Federation was held! here an assembled nation devoted themselves to freedom!" I fancy I see them pointing out the spot on which the altar of the country stood. I see them eagerly searching for the place where they have heard it recorded,
that

that the National Assembly were seated! I think of these things, and then repeat to myself with transport, "I, was a spectator of the Federation!"

But these meditations have led me to travel through the space of so many centuries, that it is really difficult to get back again to the present times. Did you expect that I should ever dip my pen in politics, who used to take so small an interest in public affairs, that I recollect a gentleman of my acquaintance surprized me not a little, by informing me of the war between the Turks and the Ruffians, at a time when all the people of Europe, except myself, had been two years in possession of this intelligence?

If, however, my love of the French revolution requires an apology, you shall receive one in a very short time; for I am going to Mons. du F——'s chateau, and will send you from thence the history of his misfortunes. They were the inflictions of tyranny, and you will rejoice with me that tyranny is no more.

Before I close my letter, I shall mention a singular privilege of the church of Rouen, which is the power of setting free a murderer every year on the day of Ascension. It seems that in the time of King Dagobert, who reigned in the sixth century, a horrible and unrelenting dragon desolated the country, sparing neither man nor beast. St. Romain, who was then bishop of Rouen, asked for two criminals to assist him in an enterprize he had the courage to meditate against the dragon; and with these aides de camp he sallied forth, killed the monster, and delivered the country. In consequence of
this

this miracle, Dagobert gave the successors of St. Romain the privilege of setting a murderer free every year on Ascension-day. The bones of St. Romain are carried by the criminal in a gilt box through the streets: the figure of a hideous animal representing the dragon, though it is suspected of slandering his countenance, accompanies these venerable bones. and has generally a young living wolf placed in its maw, except when it is * jour maigre, and then the dragon is provided with a large fish. The counsellors of the parliament, dressed in their scarlet robes, attend this procession to a church, where high mass is said; and, these ceremonies being performed, the criminal is set at liberty. But it is only when there are some strong alleviating circumstances in the case of the offender, that he is suffered in this manner to evade the punishment of his crimes.

Yesterday, in a little town called Sotte Ville, joined to Rouen by the bridge, a political dispute arose between the Curé and his parishioners. The enraged Curé exclaimed, † “Vous êtes une assemblée d’anes.” To which one of the parishioners answered, with great calmness, ‡ “Oui, Monf. le Curé, et vous en êtes le pasteur.”

* Fast-day.

† You are an assembly of asses.

‡ Yes, Sir, and you are our preachers.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

I HEARD * *La messe militaire*, on Sunday last, at a church where all the national guard of Rouen attended. The service began with the loudest thunder of drums and trumpets, and seemed more like a signal for battle than for devotion; but the music soon softened into the most soothing sounds, which flowed from the organ, clarinets, flutes and hautboys; the priests chanted, and the people made responses. The wax tapers were lighted, holy water was sprinkled on the ground, incense was burnt at the altar, and the elevation of the host was announced by the sound of the drum; upon which the people knelt down, and the priest prostrated his face towards the earth. There is something affecting in the pomp and solemnity of these ceremonies. Indeed, the Roman Catholic worship, though a sad stumbling-block to reason, is striking to the imagination. I have more than once heard the service for the dead performed, and never can hear it without emotion; without feeling that in those melancholy separations, which bury every hope of the survivor in the relentless grave, the heart that can delude itself with the belief, that its prayers may avail any thing to the departed object of its affections, must find consolation in thus uniting a tribute of tenderness, with the performance of a religious duty.

* The military mass.

We

We have been at several convents at Rouen. The first to which we went was a convent of benedictine nuns. When we had entered the gates we rang a bell, and a servant appeared, and desired us to go up stairs to the parloir. We opened a wrong door, and found, in a room grated across the middle with iron bars, a young man sitting on one side of the grate, and a young nun on the other. I could not help thinking that the heart of this young man was placed in a perilous situation; for where can a young woman appear so interesting, as when seen within that gloomy barrier, which death alone can remove? What is there, in all the ostentation of female dress, so likely to affect a man of sensibility, as that dismal habit which seems so much at variance with youth and beauty, and is worn as the melancholy symbol of an eternal renunciation of the world and all its pleasures? We made an apology to the nun for our intrusion, and she directed us to another apartment, where, a few minutes after we had seated ourselves on one side of the grate, La Depositaire entered on the other, and told us that the Abbess, whom we had desired to see, was not yet risen from dinner, and La Depositaire hoped we would wait a little. * "Parceque," said she, "Madame l'Abbesse etoit obligée hier de se lever de table de bonne heure, et elle se trouvoit une peu incommodée." You must observe that the Abbesse dined at three o'clock, and it was now past six. At length this lady, who was so fond of long dinners, appeared.

* Because, said she, the Abbess was obliged to rise from table very soon yesterday, and found herself a little indisposed.

She

She is a woman of fifty, but is still handsome & has a frank agreeable countenance, fine eyes, and had put on her veil in a very becoming manner. We wished to be admitted to the interior part of the convent, and with this view a French gentleman, who was of our party, * “ se mit à conter des histoires à Madame l’Abbesse.”

He told her that my sister and I, though English women, were catholics, and wished to be received into the convent, and even, if it had been possible, to take the vows. The Abbess enquired if he was quite sure of our being catholics; upon which the gentleman, a little puzzled what to answer, insinuated that *Monf. du F——* had probably the merit of our conversion. “ But I have heard,” said the Abbess, “ from Madame ——, that *Monf. du F——* has become a protestant himself.” *Monf. du F——*, who is truth itself, avowed his principles without hesitation; while the Abbess, turning to *La Depositaire*, exclaimed, † *Mais comme *Monf. est aimable ! quel beaux sentiments ! Ah *Monf. vous êtes trop bon pour que Dieu vous laisse dans l’erreur.* “ St. Augustin,” continued she, “ had once some doubts; I hope you will be a second St. Augustin: myself, and all my community, will pray for your conversion.”* *La Depositaire*, who was a tall thin old woman, with a sharp malignant countenance, added, casting a look on *Monf. du F——* full of the contempt of superior knowledge, “ It is not surprising that a young man, after passing several years*

* Told a great many fables to the Abbess.

† How amiable he is! what noble sentiments! Ah, Sir, you are too good for God to leave you in error.

in England, that country of heretics, should find his faith somewhat shaken; but he only wants to be enlightened by *Monf. le Curé de —*, who will immediately dissipate all his doubts."

From the Convent of the Benedictines we went to that of the Carmelites, where religion, which was meant to be a source of happiness in this world, as well as in the next, wears an aspect of the most gloomy horror. When we entered the convent, it seemed the residence of silence and solitude: no voice was heard, no human creature appeared; and when we rang the bell, a person, whom we could not see, enquired, through a hole in the wall, what we wanted. On being informed that we wished to speak to the Superieure, putting her hand through the hole, she gave us a key, and desired us to unlock the door of the parloir. This we accordingly did; and in a few minutes the Superieure came to a thick double grate, with a curtain drawn at the inside, to prevent the possibility of being seen. Our French gentleman again talked of our desire to enter the convent, and begged to know the rules. A hollow voice answered, that the Carmelites rose at four in the morning in summer, and five in winter:—"Obedient slumbers, that can wake and weep!"—That they slept in their coffins, upon straw, and every morning dug a shovel-full of earth for their graves; that they walked to their devotional exercises upon their knees; that when any of their friends visited them, if they spoke, they were not suffered to be seen, or if they were seen, they were not suffered to speak; that with them it was * *toujours maigre*, and they only tasted food twice a day.

* Always a fast.

Our

Our Frenchman said, “ † Il faut Madame que ces demoisellès réfléchissent, si cela leur convient.” The poor Carmelite agreed that the matter required some reflection, and we departed.

As we returned home meditating on the lot of a Carmelite, we met in the street three nuns walking in the habit of their order. Upon enquiry, we were told that they had been forced by their parents to take the veil, and, since the decree of the National Assembly, giving them liberty, they had obtained permission to pay a visit for three months to some friends who sympathized in their unhappiness, and were now on their journey.

The monks and nuns must in a short time decide whether they will finally leave their cloisters or not; and the religious houses which are vacated will be sold. In the department of Rouen a calculation has been made, that, after paying every monk seven hundred, and every nun five hundred livres a year, out of the revenues of the religious houses, the department will gain sixty thousand livres a year. The monks and nuns above sixty years of age, who chuse to leave their convents, will be allowed an annual pension of nine hundred livres.

A letter was read in the National Assembly, a few days ago, from a priest, intreating that the clergy might have permission to marry; a privilege which it is thought the Assembly will soon authorize. † “ On a bouleversé tout,” said an

* These young ladies, Madam, must consider whether these regulations will suit them.

† They have overturned every thing.

old

old Curé, a fierce Aristocrate, with whom I was in company, * “ Et meme on veut porter la profanation si loin que de marier les pretres.” It is conjectured, however, that the younger part of the clergy think of this measure with less horror than the old Curé.

We arrived last night at Monf. du F——’s chateau, without having visited, during our stay at Rouen, the tomb of William the Conqueror, who is buried at Caen, a town twelve leagues distant. But I have been too lately at the Champ de Mars, to travel twelve leagues in order to see the tomb of a tyrant.

Upon Monf. du F——’s arrival at the chateau, all his tenants with their wives and daughters, came to pay their respects to Mon Seigneur, and were addressed by Monf. and Madame with those endearing epithets which give such a charm to the French language, and are so much more rejoicing to the heart than our formal appellations. Here a peasant girl is termed, by the lady of the chateau, * “ Ma bonne amie, Ma petite, Mon enfant ;” while those pretty monosyllables † tu, ta, &c. used only to the nearest relations, and to servants, impress the mind with the idea of that affectionate familiarity, which so gracefully softens the distance of situation, and excites in the dependant, not presumption, but gratitude. ‡ Et comment te porte tu, La Voie ?” said Monf. du F—— to one of his farmers. * Aidez bien

* My good friend, My little girl, my child.

† Thou, thy, &c.

‡ And how do you do, La Voie ?

* Pretty well, my Lord ; but I had a fever last Easter, at your service.

Mon

Mon Seigneur," replied he; " mais j'eus la fièvre a Pacque, à votre service."

LETTER XVI.

EMBRACE the first hours of leisure, which I have found since my arrival at the chateau, to send you the history of my friends.

Antoine Augustin Thomas du F——, eldest son of the Baron du F——, Counsellor of the Parliament of Normandy, was born on the fifteenth of July, 1750. His early years were embittered by the severity of his father, who was of a disposition that preferred the exercise of domestic tyranny to the blessings of social happiness, and chose rather to be dreaded than beloved. The endearing name of father conveyed no transport to *his* heart, which, being wrapt up in stern insensibility, was cold even to the common feelings of nature.

The baron's austerity was not indeed confined to his son, but extended to all his dependants. Formed by nature for the support of the antient government of France, he maintained his aristocratic rights with unrelenting severity, ruled his feudal tenures with a rod of iron, and considered the lower order of people as a set of beings whose existence was tolerated merely for the use of the nobility. The poor, he believed, were only

only born for suffering; and he determined, as far as in him lay, not to deprive them of their natural inheritance. On the whole, if it were the great purpose of human life to be hated, perhaps no person ever attained that end more completely than the Baron Du F——.

His son discovered early a taste for literature, and received an education suitable to his rank and fortune. As he advanced in life, the treatment he experienced from his father became more and more intolerable to him, as, far from inheriting the same character, he possessed the most amiable dispositions, and the most feeling heart.

His mother, feeble alike in mind and body, submitted with the helplessness, and almost with the thoughtlessness of a child, to the imperious will of her husband. Their family was increased by two more sons, and two daughters; but these children, being several years younger than *Monf. Du F——*, were not of an age to afford him the consolations of friendship; and the young man would have found his situation intolerable, but for the sympathy of a person, in whose society every evil was forgotten.

This person, his attachment to whom has tinged the colour of his life, was the youngest of eight children, of a respectable family of Bourgeois at Rouen. There is great reason to believe that her father was descended from the younger branch of a noble family of the same name, and bearing the same arms. But, unhappily, some links were wanting in this chain of honourable parentage. The claim to nobility could not be traced to the entire satisfaction of the Baron; who, though he would have dispensed with

with any moral qualities in favour of rank, considered obscure birth as a radical stain, which could not be wiped off by all the virtues under heaven. He looked upon marriage as merely a convention of interest, and children as a property, of which it was reasonable for parents to make the most in their power.

The father of Mad^{elle} Monique C—— was a farmer, and died three months before the birth of this child; who, with several other children, was educated with the utmost care by their mother, a woman of sense and virtue, beloved by all to whom she was known. It seemed as if this respectable woman had, after the death of her husband, only supported life for the sake of her infant family, from whom she was snatched by death, the moment her maternal cares became no longer necessary; her youngest daughter, Monique, having, at this period, just attained her twentieth year. Upon the death of her mother, Monique went to live with an aunt, with whom she remained only a very short time, being invited by Madame du F——, to whom she was well known, to come and live with her as an humble companion, to read to her when she was disposed to listen, and to enliven the sullen grandeur of the chateau, by her animating vivacity.

This young person had cultivated her excellent understanding by reading, and her heart stood in no need of cultivation. Monf. Du F—— found in the charms of her conversation, and in the sympathy of her friendship, the most soothing consolation under the rigor of parental tyranny. Living several years beneath the same
roof,

roof, he had constant opportunities of observing her disposition and character; and the passion with which she at length inspired him, was founded on the lasting basis of esteem.

If it was ever pardonable to deviate from that law, in the code of interest and etiquette, which forbids the heart to listen to its best emotions; which, stifling every generous sentiment of pure disinterested attachment, sacrifices love at the shrine of avarice or ambition; the virtues of Monique were such as might excuse this deviation. Yes, the character, the conduct of this amiable person, have nobly justified her lover's choice. How long might he have vainly sought, in the highest classes of society, a mind so elevated above the common mass!—a mind that, endowed with the most exquisite sensibility, has had sufficient firmness to sustain, with a calm and equal spirit, every transition of fortune; the most severe trials of adversity, and perhaps what is still more difficult to bear, the trial of high prosperity.

Monf. Du F—— had been taught, by his early misfortunes, that domestic happiness was the first good of life. He had already found, by experience, the insufficiency of rank and fortune to confer enjoyment; and he determined to seek it in the bosom of conjugal felicity. He determined to pass his life with her whose society now seemed essential not only to his happiness, but to his very existence.

At the solemn hour of midnight, the young couple went to a church, where they were met by a priest whom Monf. Du F—— had made

the confident of his attachment, and by whom the marriage ceremony was performed.

Some time after, when the situation of his wife obliged *Monf. Du F*— to acknowledge their marriage to his mother, she assured her son that she would willingly consent to receive his wife as her daughter, but for the dread of his father's resentment. *Madame Du F*—, with tears of regret, parted with *Monique*, whom she placed under the protection of her brothers: they conducted her to *Caen*, where she was soon after delivered of a son.

The *Baron Du F*— was absent while these things were passing; he had been suspected of being the author of a pamphlet written against the princes of the blood, and an order was issued to seize his papers, and conduct him to the *Bastille*; but he found means to escape into *Holland*, where he remained nearly two years. Having made his peace with the ministry, he prepared to come home, but before he returned, *Monf. Du F*— received intelligence that his father, irritated almost to madness by the information of his marriage, was making application for a *lettre de cachet*, in order to confine his daughter-in-law for the rest of her life, and had also obtained power to have his son seized and imprisoned. Upon this *Monf. Du F*— and his wife fled with precipitation to *Geneva*, leaving their infant at nurse near *Caen*. The *Genevois* seemed to think that the unfortunate situation of these strangers, gave them a claim to all the offices of friendship. After an interval of many years, I have never heard *Monf. or Madame Du F*— recall the kindness they received from that amia-
ble

ble people, without tears of tendernefs and gratitude.

Meanwhile the Baron, having difcovered the place of his fon's retreat, obtained, in the name of the King, permiffion from the cantons of Berne and Friburg to arreft them at Laufanne, where they had retired for fome months. The wife of Le Seigneur Bailiff fecretly gave the young people notice of this defign, and on the thirtieth of January, 1775, they had juft time to make their efcape, with only a few livres in their pockets, and the cloaths in which they were drefled. Monf. Du F——, upon his firft going to Switzerland, had lent thirty louis to a friend in diftreff. He now, in this moment of neceffity, defired to be repaid, and was promifed the money within a month: mean time, he and his wife wandered from town to town, without finding any place where they could remain in fecurity. They had fpent all their fmall ftock of money, and were almoft without clothes: but at the expiration of the appointed time, the thirty louis were paid, and with this fund Monf. and Madame Du F—— determined to take fhelter in the only country which could afford them a fafe afylum from perfecution, and immediately fet off for England, travelling through Germany, and part of Holland, to avoid paffing through France.

They embarked at Rotterdam, and, after a long and gloomy paffage, arrived late at night at London. A young man, who was their fellow paffenger, had the charity to procure them a lodging in a garret, and directed them where to purchafe a few ready-made clothes. When they

had remained in this lodging the time necessary for becoming parishioners, their bans were published in the church of St. Anne, Westminster, where they were married by the Curate of the parish. They then went to the chapel of the French Ambassador, and were again married by his Chaplain; after which Monf. Du F—— told me, * *Les deux epoux vinrent faire maigre chaire à leur petite chambre.*"

Monf. Du F—— endeavoured to obtain a situation at a school, to teach the French language; but before such a situation could be found, his wife was delivered of a girl. Not having sufficient money to hire a nurse, he attended her himself. At this period they endured all the horrors of absolute want. Unknown and unpitied, without help or support, in a foreign country, and in the depth of a severe winter, they almost perished with cold and hunger. The unhappy mother lay stretched upon the same bed with her new-born infant, who in vain implored her succour, want of food having dried up that source of nourishment. The woman, at whose house they lodged, and whom they had for some weeks been unable to pay, after many threatenings, at length told them that they must depart the next morning. Madame Du F—— was at this time scarcely able to walk across her chamber, and the ground was covered with snow. They had already exhausted every resource; they had sold their watches, their clothes, to satisfy the cravings of hunger; every mode of relief was fled—

* The new married couple kept a fast in their little apartment.

every

every avenue of hope was closed—and they determined to go with their infant to the suburbs of the town, and there seated on a stone, wait with patience for the deliverance of death. With what anguish did this unfortunate couple prepare to leave their last miserable retreat! With how many bitter tears did they bathe that wretched infant, whom they could no longer save from perishing!

Oh, my dear, my ever beloved friends! when I recollect that I am not at this moment indulging the melancholy cast of my own disposition, by painting imaginary distress; when I recollect not only that these were real sufferings, but that they were sustained by *you*! my mind is overwhelmed with its own sensations.—The paper is blotted by my tears—and I can hold my pen no longer.

LETTER XVII.

* “**T**HE moral world,
Which though to us it seem perplex'd, moves on
In higher order; fitted, and impell'd,
By Wisdom's finest hand, and issuing all
In universal good.”

Monf. and Madame du F—— were relieved from this extremity of distress at a moment so

* Thomson.

critical,

critical, and by means so unexpected, that it seems the hand of Heaven visibly interposed in behalf of oppressed virtue. Early in the morning of that fatal day when they were to leave their last sad shelter, *Monf. du F—* went out, and, in the utmost distraction of mind, wandered through some of the streets in the neighbourhood. He was stopped by a gentleman whom he had known at Geneva, and who told him that he was then in search of his lodging, having a letter to deliver to him from a Genevois clergyman. *Monf. du F—* opened the letter, in which he was informed by his friend, that, fearing he might be involved in difficulties, he had transmitted ten guineas to a banker in London, and intreated *Monf. du F—* would accept that small relief, which was all he could afford, as a testimony of friendship. *Monf. du F—* flew to the banker's, received the money as the gift of Heaven, and then hastening to his wife and child, bade them live a little longer.

A short time after, he obtained a situation as French usher at a school; and *Madame du F—*, when she had a little recovered her strength, put out her infant to nurse, and procured the place of French teacher at a boarding-school.— They were now enabled to support their child, and to repay the generous assistance of their kind friend at Geneva. At this period they heard of the death of their son, whom they left at Caen.

Monf. and Madame du F— passed two years in this situation, when they were again plunged into the deepest distress. A French jeweller was commissioned by the *Baron du F—*,

to

to go to his son and propose to him conditions of reconciliation. This man told *Monf. du F*—— that his father was just recovered from a severe and dangerous illness, and that his daughter had lately died.—These things, he said, had led him to reflect with some pain on the severity he had exercised towards his son; that the feelings of a parent were awakened in his bosom; and that if *Monf. du F*—— would throw himself at his father's feet, and ask forgiveness, he would not fail to obtain it, and would be allowed a pension on which he might live with his wife in England. In confirmation of these assurances, this man produced several letters which he had received from the Baron to that effect; who, as a farther proof of his sincerity, had given this agent seven hundred pounds to put into the hands of *Monf. du F*—— for the support of his wife and child during his absence. The agent told him, that he had not been able to bring the money to England, but would immediately give him three drafts upon a merchant of reputation in London, with whom he had connections in business; the first draft payable in three months, the second in six, and the third in nine.

Monf. du F—— long deliberated upon these proposals. He knew too well the vindictive spirit of his father, not to feel some dread of putting himself into his power. But his agent continued to give him the most solemn assurances of safety; and *Monf. du F*—— thought it was not improbable that his sister's death might have softened the mind of his father. He reflected that his marriage had disappointed those ambitious hopes

hopes of a great alliance, which his father had fondly indulged, and to whom he owed at least, the reparation of hastening to implore his forgiveness when he was willing to bestow it. What also weighed strongly on his mind was the consideration that the sum which his father had offered to deposit for the use of his wife, would, in case any sinister accident should befall him, afford a small provision for her and his infant.

The result of these deliberations was, that *Monf. du F——* determined (and who can much blame his want of prudence?) he determined to confide in a father!—to trust in that instinctive affection, which, far from being connected with any peculiar sensibility of mind, it requires only to be a parent to feel—an affection, which, not confined to the human heart, softens the ferociousness of the tyger, and speaks with a voice that is heard amidst the howlings of the desert. *Monf. du F——*, after the repeated promises of his father, almost considered that suspicion which still hung upon his mind as a crime. But lest it might be possible that this agent was commissioned to deceive him, he endeavoured to melt him into compassion for his situation. He went to the village where his child was at nurse, and, bringing her six miles in his arms, presented her to this man, telling him, that the fate of that poor infant rested upon his integrity. The man took the innocent creature in his arm, kissed her, and then, returning her to her father, renewed all his former assurances. *Monf. du F——* listened and believed. Alas! how difficult is it for a good heart to suspect human nature of crimes

crimes which make one blush for the species ! How hard is it for a mind glowing with benevolence, to believe that the bosom of another harbours the malignity of a demon !

Monf. du F—— now fixed the time for his departure with his father's agent, who was to accompany him to Normandy. Madame du F—— saw the preparations for his journey with anguish which she could ill conceal. But she felt that the delicacy of her situation forbade her interference. It was she who made him an alien from his family, and an exile from his country. It was for her, that renouncing rank, fortune, friends, and connections, all that is esteemed most valuable in life, he had suffered the last extremity of want, and now submitted to a state of drudgery and dependance. Would he not have a right to reproach her weakness, if she attempted to oppose his reconciliation with his father, and exerted that influence which she possessed over his mind, in order to detain him in a situation so remote from his former expectation ? She was, therefore, sensible, that the duty, the gratitude she owed her husband, now required on her part the absolute sacrifice of her own feelings: she suffered without complaint, and endeavoured to resign herself to the will of Heaven.

The day before his departure, Monf. du F—— went to take leave of his little girl. At this moment a dark and melancholy presage seemed to agitate his mind. He pressed the child for a long while to his bosom, and bathed it with his tears. The nurse eagerly enquired what was the matter, and assured him that the child was perfectly well. Monf. du F—— had no

power to reply : he continued clasping his infant in his arms, and at length, tearing himself from her in silence, he rushed out of the house.

When the morning of his departure came, Madame du F——, addressing herself to his fellow-traveller, said to him, with a voice of supplication, “ I entrust you, Sir, with my husband, with the father of my poor infant, our sole protector and support !—have compassion on the widow and the orphan !” The man, casting upon her a gloomy look, gave her a cold answer, which made her soul shrink within her. When Monf. du F—— got into the Brighthelmstone stage, he was unable to bid her farewell ; but when the carriage drove off, he put his head out of the window, and continued looking after her, while she fixed her eyes on him, and might have repeated with Imogen,

- “ I would have broke mine eye-strings ;
 “ Crack'd them, but to look upon him ; till the diminution
 “ Of space had pointed him as sharp as my needle ;
 “ Nay, followed him, till he had melted from
 “ The smallness of a gnat to air ; and then—
 “ Then turn'd mine eye and wept !”

When the carriage was out of sight, she summoned all her strength, and walked with trembling steps to the school where she lived as a teacher. With much difficulty she reached the door ; but her limbs could support her no longer, and she fell down senseless at the threshold—She was carried into the house, and restored to life and the sensations of misery.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

MONS. du F—— arrived at his father's chateau in Normandy, in June 1778, and was received by *Monf. le Baron*, and all his family, with the most affectionate cordiality. In much exultation of mind, he dispatched a letter to *Madame du F——*, containing this agreeable intelligence; but his letter was far from producing in her mind the effect he desired. A deep melancholy had seized her thoughts, and her foreboding heart refused to sympathize in his joy. Short, indeed, was its duration. He had not been many days at the chateau, when he perceived, with surprize, and consternation, that his steps were continually watched by two servants armed with fufees.

His father now shewed him an arret, which, on the fourth of June, 1776, he had obtained from the Parliament of Rouen against his marriage. The Baron then ordered his son to accompany him to his house at Rouen, whither they went, attended by several servants. That evening, when the attendants withdrew after supper, the Baron, entirely throwing off the mask of civility and kindness, which he had worn in such opposition to his nature, reproached his son in terms of the utmost bitterness, for his past conduct, inveighed against his marriage, and, after having exhausted every expression of
rage

rage and repentment, at length suffered him to retire to his own apartment.

There the unhappy *Monf. du F*—, absorbed in the most gloomy reflections, lamented in vain that fatal credulity which had led him to put himself into the power of his implacable father. At the hour of midnight his meditations were interrupted by the sound of feet approaching his chamber; and in a few moments the door was thrown open, and his father, attended by a servant armed, and two * *Cavaliers de Marechauffée*, entered the room. Resistance and supplication were alike unavailing. *Monf. du F*—’s papers were seized; a few louis d’ors, which constituted all the money he possessed, were taken from him; and he was conducted in the dead of night, July the 7th, 1778, to *St. Yon*, a convent used as a place of confinement near *Rouen*, where he was thrown into a dungeon.

A week after his father entered the dungeon. You will perhaps conclude that his hard heart felt at length the relentings of a parent. You will at least suppose, that his imagination being haunted, and his conscience tormented with the image of a son stretched on the floor of this subterraneous cell, he could support the idea no longer, and hastened to give repose to his own mind by releasing his captive. Far different were the motives of his visit. He considered that such was his son’s attachment to his wife, that, so long as he believed he had left her in possession of seven hundred pounds, he would

* Officers of justice.

find

find comfort from that consideration, even in the depth of his dungeon. His father, therefore, hastened to remove an error from the mind of his son, which left the measure of his woes unfilled. Nor did he chuse to yield to another the office of inflicting a pang sharper than captivity; but himself informed his son, that the merchant, who was to pay the seven hundred pounds to his wife, was declared a bankrupt.

A short time after, the Baron du F—— commenced a suit at law against that agent of iniquity whom he had employed to deceive his son, and who, practising a refinement of treachery of which the Baron was not aware, had kept the seven hundred pounds, with which he was intrusted, and given drafts upon a merchant who he knew would fail before the time of payment. Not being able to prosecute this affair without a power of attorney from his son, the Baron applied to him for that purpose. But *Monf. du F——*, being firmly resolved not to deprive his wife of the chance of recovering the money for herself and her child, could by no intreaties or menaces be led to comply. In vain his father, who had consented to allow him a few books, ordered him to be deprived of that resource, and that his confinement should be rendered still more rigorous; he continued inflexible.

Monf. du F—— remained in his prison without meeting with the smallest mark of sympathy from any one of his family, tho' his second brother, *Monf. de B——*, was now eighteen years of age; an age, at which the sordid considerations of interest, how much soever they may affect our conduct at a more advanced period of life,
can

can seldom stifle those warm and generous feelings which seem to belong to youth. It might have been expected that this young man would have abhorred the prospect of possessing a fortune which was the just inheritance of his brother, and which could only be obtained by detaining that brother in perpetual captivity. Even admitting that his inexorable father prohibited his visiting the prison of his brother, his heart should have told him, that disobedience, in this instance, would have been virtue : Or, was it not sufficient to remain a passive spectator of injustice, without becoming, as he afterwards did, the agent of cruelty inflicted on a brother ?

Where are the words that can convey an adequate idea of the sufferings of Madame du F—— during this period ? Three weeks after her husband's departure from England, she heard the general report of the town of Rouen, that the Baron du F—— had obtained a letter de cachet against his son, and thrown him into prison. This was all she heard of her husband for the space of two years. Ignorant of the place of his confinement, uncertain if he still lived, perhaps her miseries were even more poignant than his. In the dismal solitude of a prison, his pains were alleviated by the soothing reflection that he suffered for her he loved ; while that very idea was to her the most bitter aggravation of distress. Her days passed in anguish, which can only be conceived where it has been felt, and her nights were disturbed by the gloomy wanderings of fancy. Sometimes she saw him in her dreams chained to the floor of his dungeon, his bosom bathed in blood, and his countenance disfigured by

by death. Sometimes she saw him hastening towards her, when at the moment that he was going to embrace her, they were fiercely torn asunder. Madame du F—— was naturally of a delicate constitution, and grief of mind reduced her to such a deplorable state of weakness, that it was with infinite difficulty she performed the duties of her situation. For herself, she would have welcomed death with thankfulness; but she considered that her child now depended entirely on her labours for support: and this was a motive sufficiently powerful to prompt her to the careful preservation of her own life, though it had long become a burden. The child was three years old when her father left England; recollected him perfectly; and, whenever her mother went to visit her, used to call with eagerness for her papa. The enquiry, in the voice of her child, of “When shall I see my dear, dear papa?” was heard by this unhappy mother with a degree of agony which it were vain indeed to describe.

L E T T E R X I X .

MONS. du F—— was repeatedly offered his liberty, but upon conditions which he abhorred. He was required for ever to renounce his wife; who, while she remained with her child in a distant country, was to receive from his father a small

small pension, as an equivalent for the pangs of disappointed affection, of disgrace and dishonour. With the indignation of offended virtue he spurned at these insulting propositions, and endeavoured to prepare his mind for the endurance of perpetual captivity.

Nor can imagination form an idea of a scene more dreadful than his prison, where he perceived with horror that the greatest number of those prisoners who had been many years in confinement, had an appearance of frenzy in their looks, which shewed that reason had been too weak for the long struggle with calamity, and had at last yielded to despair. In a cell adjoining *Monf. du F——*'s, was an old man who had been confined nearly forty years. His grey beard hung down to his waist, and, during the day, he was chained by his neck to the wall. He was never allowed to leave his cell, and never spoke; but *Monf. du F——* used to hear the rattling of his chains.

The prisoners, a few excepted, were generally brought from their cells at the hour of noon, and dined together. But this gloomy repast was served in uninterrupted silence. They were not suffered to utter one word, and the penalty of transgressing this rule was a rigorous confinement of several weeks. As soon as this comfortless meal was finished, the prisoners were instantly obliged to return to their dungeons, in which they were locked up till the same hour the following day. *Monf. du F——*, in his damp and melancholy cell, passed two winters without fire, and suffered so severely from cold, that he was obliged to wrap himself up in the few clothes
which

which covered his bed. Nor was he allowed any light, except that which during the short day beamed through the small grated window in the ceiling of his dungeon.

Is it not difficult to believe that these sufferings were inflicted by a father? A father!—that name which I cannot trace without emotion; which conveys all the ideas of protection, of security, of tenderness;—that dear relation to which, in general, children owe their prosperity, their enjoyments, and even their virtues!—Alas, the unhappy *Monf. du F*— owed nothing to *his* father, but that life, which from its earliest period his cruelty had embittered, and which he now condemned to languish in miseries that death only could heal.

A young gentleman, who was confined in a cell on one side of *Monf. du F*—’s, contrived to make a small hole through the wall; and these companions in misfortune, by placing themselves close to the hole, could converse together in whispers. But the monks were not long in discovering this, and effectually deprived them of so great an indulgence, by removing them to distant cells. These unrelenting Monks, who performed with such fidelity their office of tormenting their fellow creatures, who never relaxed in one article of persecution, and adhered with scrupulous rigour to the code of cruelty, were called, * “*Les Freres de la sainte Charite.*” One among them deserved the appellation. This good old Monk used to visit the prisoners by stealth, and endeavour to administer comfort to

* The Brothers of the holy Charity.

their

their affliction. Often he repeated to *Monf. du F——*, * “ *Mon cher frere, consolez vous ; mettez votre confiance en Dieu, vos maux seront finis !*”

Monf. du F—— remained two years in prison without receiving any intelligence of his wife, on whose account he suffered the most distracting anxiety. He had reason to apprehend that her frame, which had already been enfeebled by her misfortunes, would sink beneath this additional load of misery, and that she would perhaps be rendered unable to procure that little pittance, which might preserve herself and her child from want. At length one of his fellow-prisoners, who was going to regain his liberty, took charge of a letter to *Madame du F——*, and flattered him with the hope of finding some means of transmitting to him an answer.

The letter paints so naturally the situation of his mind, that I have translated some extracts from it.

“ My thoughts (he says) are unceasingly occupied about you, and my dear little girl. I am for ever recalling the blessed moments when I had the happiness of being near you, and at that recollection my tears refuse to be controuled. How could I consent to separate myself from what was most dear to me in the world ? No motive less powerful than that of seeking your welfare, and that of my child, could have determined me—and alas ! I have not accomplished this end. I know too well

* My dear brother be comforted ; place your confidence in God, your afflictions will have an end.

“ that

“ that you have never received that sum of mo-
 “ ney which I thought I had secured for you,
 “ and for which I risked the first blessing of
 “ life. What fills my mind with the greatest
 “ horror, in the solitude of my prison, is the
 “ fear that you are suffering difficulties in a fo-
 “ reign country. Here I remain ignorant of
 “ your fate, and can only offer to Heaven the
 “ most ardent vows for your welfare.

“ What joy would a letter from you give
 “ me ! but I dare not flatter myself with the
 “ hope of such sweet consolation. All I can
 “ assure myself of is, that though separated, per-
 “ haps for ever, our souls are united by the most
 “ tender friendship and attachment. Perhaps I
 “ may not find it possible to write to you again
 “ for a long while : but be assured that no me-
 “ naces, no sufferings, no dungeons shall ever
 “ shake my fidelity to you, and that I shall love
 “ you to the last hour of my existence. I find
 “ a consolation in the reflection that it is for you
 “ I suffer. If Providence ever permits us to
 “ meet again, that moment will efface the re-
 “ membrance of all my calamities. Live, my
 “ dearest wife, in that hope. I conjure you,
 “ preserve your life for my sake, and for the
 “ sake of our dear little girl ! Embrace her
 “ tenderly for me, and desire her also to em-
 “ brace you for her poor papa. I need not re-
 “ commend my child to the care of so tender a
 “ mother ; but I conjure you to inspire her
 “ mind with the deepest sense of religion. If
 “ she is born to inherit the misfortunes of her
 “ father, this will be her best source of conso-
 “ lation.

“ Whatever

“ Whatever offers may be made you by my
 “ father, I exhort you never have the weakneſs
 “ to liſten to them, but preferve your rights,
 “ and thoſe of my dear little girl, which, per-
 “ haps, may one day be of ſome value. If you
 “ are ſtill at Mrs. D——’s boarding ſchool, tell
 “ her that I recommend my wife and child to
 “ her compaſſion.—But what am I ſaying ?
 “ I am ignorant if you are ſtill with her, igno-
 “ rant whether the deareſt objects of my affec-
 “ tion ſtill live ! But I truſt that Providence
 “ has preferved you. Adieu ! May God Al-
 “ mighty bleſs you, and my child ! I never
 “ ceaſe imploring him to have pity on the wi-
 “ dow and the orphan in a land of ſtrangers.”

 L E T T E R XX.

YOU, my dear friend, who have felt the ten-
 der attachments of love and friendſhip, and
 the painful anxieties which abſence occaſions,
 even amidſt ſcenes of variety and pleaſure ; who
 underſtand the value at which tidings from thoſe
 we love is computed in the arithmetic of the
 heart ; who have heard with almoſt uncontrou-
 able emotion the poſtman’s rap at the door ;
 have trembling ſeen the well-known hand which
 excited ſenſations that almoſt deprived you of
 power to break the ſeal which ſeemed the talif-
 man

man of happiness : you can judge of the feelings of *Mons. du F*— when he received by means of the same friend who had conveyed his letter, an answer from his wife. But the person who brought the letter to his dungeon, dreading the risk of a discovery, insisted, that after having read it, he should return it to him immediately. *Mons. du F*— pressed the letter to his heart, bathed it with his tears, and implored the indulgence of keeping it at least till the next morning. He was allowed to do so, and read it till every word was imprinted on his memory ; and, after enjoying the sad luxury of holding it that night on his bosom, was forced the next morning to relinquish his treasure.

On the 10th of October, 1780, the Baron *Du F*— came to the convent, and ordered the monks to bring his son from his dungeon to the parloir, and leave them together. With the utmost reluctance *Mons. du F*— obeyed this summons, having long lost all hope of softening the obdurate heart of his father. When the Monks withdrew, the Baron began upbraiding him in the most bitter terms, for his obstinate resistance to his will, which, he informed him, had availed nothing, as he had gained his suit at law, and recovered the seven hundred pounds. *Mons. du F*— replied, that the pain he felt from his intelligence would have been far more acute, had his wife been deprived, with his concurrence, of the money which was promised for her subsistence, and on the reliance of which promise he had been tempted to leave England. His father then enquired if he still persisted in his adherence to the disgraceful connection he had

had formed; to which his son answered, that not merely were his affections interested, but that his honour obliged him to maintain, with inviolable fidelity, a solemn and sacred engagement. The rage of the Baron, at these words, became unbounded. He stamped the ground with his feet; he aimed a stroke at his son, who, taking advantage of this moment of frenzy, determined to attempt his escape; and, rushing out of the apartment, and avoiding that side of the convent which the monks inhabited, he endeavoured to find his way to the garden, but missed the passage which led to it. He then flew up a stair-case, from which he heard the voice of his father calling for assistance. Finding that all the doors which he passed were shut, he continued ascending till he reached the top of the building, where meeting with no other opening than a hole made in the sloping roof to let in light to a garret, he climbed up with much difficulty, and then putting his feet through the hole, and letting his body out by degrees, he supported himself for a moment on the roof, and deliberated on what he was about to do. But his mind was, at this crisis, wrought up to a pitch of desperation, which mocked the suggestions of fear. He quitted his hold, and, flinging himself from a height of nearly fifty feet, became insensible before he reached the ground, where he lay weltering in his blood, and to all appearance dead.

He had fallen on the high road leading from Rouen to Caen. Some people who were passing gathered round him, and one person having washed the blood from his face, instantly recognized his features, and exclaimed to the
astonished

astonished crowd, that he was the eldest son of the Baron Du F——. Upon examining his body, it was found that he had broken his arm, his thigh, his ankle-bone, and his heel, besides having received many violent bruises. He still remained in a state of insensibility; and, while these charitable strangers were using their efforts to restore him to life, the monk hastened from their convent, snatched their victim from those good Samaritans who would have poured oil and wine into his wounds, and carried him to the infirmary of the convent, where he remained some weeks before he recovered his senses; after which he lay stretched upon a bed for three months, suffering agonies of pain.

His father, who had been the jailor, and almost the murderer of his son, heard of these sufferings without remorse, nor did he ever see him more. But, though he was sufficiently obdurate to bear unmoved the calamities he had inflicted on his child, though he could check the upbraidings of his own conscience, he could not silence the voice of public indignation. The report that *Monf. du F——* had been found lying on the road bathed in blood, and had in that condition been dragged to the prison of *S. You*, was soon spread through the town of *Rouen*. Every one sympathized in the fate of this unfortunate young man, and execrated the tyranny of his unrelenting father.

The universal clamour reached the ear of his brother, *Monf. De B——*, who now, for the first time, out of respect to the public opinion, took a measure which his heart had never dictated during the long captivity of his brother,
that

that of visiting him in prison. *Monf. de B—*'s design in these visits was merely to appease the public; for small indeed was the consolation they afforded to his brother. He did not come to bathe with tears the bed where that unhappy young man lay stretched in pain and anguish; to lament the severity of his father; to offer him all the consolation of fraternal tenderness:—he came to warn him against indulging a hope of ever regaining his liberty—he came to pierce his soul with “hard unkindness’ altered eye, which mocks the tear it forc’d to flow!”

I will not attempt to describe the wretchedness of *Madame du F—*, when she heard the report of her husband’s situation. Your heart will conceive what she suffered far better than I can relate it. Three months after his fall, *Monf. du F—* contrived, through the assistance of the charitable old monk, to send her a few lines written with his left hand. “My fall,” (he says) “has made my captivity known, and has led the whole town of Rouen to take an interest in my misfortunes. Perhaps I shall have reason to bless the accident, which may possibly prove the means of procuring me my liberty, and uniting me again to you! —In the mean time, I trust that Providence will watch with paternal goodness over the two objects of my most tender affection. Do not, my dearest wife, suffer the thoughts of my situation to prey too much upon your mind. My arm is almost well: my thigh and foot are not quite cured; but I am getting better.

“ I could

“ I could not suppress my tears on reading
 “ that part of your letter wherein you tell me
 “ that my dear little girl often asks for her papa.
 “ —Kiss her for me a thousand times, and tell
 “ her that her papa is always thinking of her
 “ and dear mama. I am well convinced that
 “ you will give her the best education your lit-
 “ tle pittance can afford. But above all, I
 “ beseech you, inspire her young mind with
 “ sentiments of piety: teach her to love her
 “ Creator: that is the most essential of all les-
 “ sons. Adieu, dearest and most beloved of
 “ woman!—Is there a period in reserve when
 “ we shall meet again? Oh how amply will
 “ that moment compensate for all our misfor-
 “ tunes!”

 L E T T E R X X I .

AT length the Parliament of Rouen began
 to interest itself in the cause of Monf. du F——
 The circumstances of his confinement were
 mentioned in that Assembly, and the President
 sent his Secretary to Monf. du F——’s prison,
 who had now quitted his bed, and was able to
 walk with the assistance of crutches. By the
 advice of the President, Monf. du F——
 addressed some letters to the Parliament, re-
 presenting his situation in the most pathetic
 terms,

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terms, and imploring their interference in his behalf.

It is here necessary to mention, that *Monf. de Bel B——*, *Procureur General de Rouen*, being intimately connected with the *Baron du F——*'s family, had ventured to demonstrate his friendship for the *Baron*, by confining his son nearly three years on his own authority and without any *lettre de cachet*. And, though *Monf. de Bel B——* well knew, that every species of oppression was connived at, under the shelter of *lettres de cachet*, he was sensible that it was only beneath their auspices that the exercise of tyranny was permitted: and in this particular instance, not having been cruel * *selon les regles*, he apprehended, that if ever *Monf. du F——* regained his liberty, he might be made responsible for his conduct. He therefore, exerted all his influence, and with too much success, to frustrate the benevolent intention of the *President of the Parliament*, respecting *Monf. du F——*. His letters were indeed read in that *Assembly*, and ordered to be registered, where they still remain a record of the pusillanimity of those men, who suffered the authority of *Monf. de Bel B——* to overcome the voice of humanity; who acknowledge the atrocity of the *Baron du F——*'s conduct, and yet were deaf to the supplications of his son, while, from the depth of his dungeon, he called upon them for protection and redress.

May the fate of the captive, in the land of France, no more hang suspended on the frail

* According to rules.

thread

thread of the pity, or the caprice of individuals ! May justice erect, on eternal foundations, her protecting sanctuary for the oppressed ; and may humanity and mercy be the graceful decorations of her temple !

The Baron du F——— perceived that, notwithstanding his machinations had prevented the Parliament of Rouen from taking any effectual measures towards liberating his son, it would be impossible to silence the murmurs of the public, while he remained confined at St. Yon. He determined, therefore, to remove him to some distant prison, where his name and family were unknown ; and where, beyond the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Rouen, his groans might rise unpitied and unavenged. But the Baron, not daring, amidst the general clamour, to remove his son by force, endeavoured to draw him artfully into the snare he had prepared.

M. de B—— was sent to his brother's prison, where he represented to him, that, though he must not indulge the least hope of ever regaining his liberty, yet, if he would write a letter to Monf. M——, keeper of the seals, desiring to be removed to some other place, his confinement should be made far less rigorous. Monf. du F—— was now in a state of desperation, that rendered him almost careless of his fate. He perceived that the Parliament had renounced his cause. He saw no possibility to escape from St. Yon ; and flattered himself, that in a place where he was less closely confined it might perhaps be practicable ; and therefore he consented to write the letter required, which Monf. de B—— conveyed in triumph to his father. There were,
however,

however, some expressions in the letter which the Baron disapproved, on which account he returned it, desiring that those expressions might be changed. But, during the interval of his brother's absence, *Monf. du F——* had reflected on the rash imprudence of confiding in the promises of those by whom he had been so cruelly deceived. No sooner, therefore, did *Monf. de B——* put the letter again into his hands, than he tore it into pieces, and peremptorily refused to write another.

Soon after this, *Monf. du B——*, the ambassador of the tyrant, again returned to his brother with fresh credentials, and declared to him, that if he would write to the keeper of the seals, desiring to be removed from *St. Yon*, he should, in one fortnight after his removal, be restored to liberty. Upon *Monf. du F——*'s asserting that he could no longer confide in the promises made him by his family, his brother, in a formal written engagement, to which he signed his name, gave him the most solemn assurance, that this promise should be fulfilled with fidelity, *Monf. du F——* desired a few days for deliberation, and, during that interval, found means of consulting a magistrate of *Rouen* who was his friend, and who advised him to comply with the terms that were offered, after having caused several copies of the written engagement to be taken, and certified by such of the prisoners at *St. Yon* as were likely to regain their freedom; a precaution necessary, lest his own copy should be torn from his hands.

Thus, having neither trusted to the affection, the mercy, or the remorse of those within whose

hosoms such sentiments were extinguished; having bargained, by a written agreement, with a father and a brother, for his release from the horrors of perpetual captivity, *Monf. du F*— wrote the letter required.

Soon after, an order was sent from Versailles for his release from the prison of St. Yon, and with it a *lettre de cachet*, whereby he was exiled to Beauvais, with a command not to leave that town. *Monf. de B*—, acting as a * *Cavaliere de la Marechauffee*, conducted his brother to this place of exile, and there left him. A short time after, *Monf. du F*— received an intimation, from that magistrate of Rouen who had interested himself in his misfortunes, that his father was on the point of obtaining another *lettre de cachet*, to remove him from Beauvais, to some prison in the south of France, where he might never more be heard of. This gentleman added, that *Monf. du F*— had not one moment to lose, and advised him immediately to attempt his escape.

Early on the morning after he received this intelligence, *Monf. du F*—, who had the liberty to walk about the town, fled from Beauvais. The person who brought him the letter from the magistrate, waited for him at a little distance from the town, and accompanied him on his journey. When they reached Lille in Flanders, not having a passport, they were obliged to wait from eleven o'clock at night till ten the next morning, before they could obtain permission from the Governor to proceed on

* An officer of justice.

their journey. *Monf. du F*— concluded that he was purfued, and fuffered the moft dreadful apprehenfions of being overtaken. His companion, with fome addrefs, at length obtained a paffport, and attended him as far as *Oftend*. The wind proving contrary, he was detained two days in a ftate of the moft diftracting inquietude, and concealed himfelf on board the veffel in which he had taken his paffage for *England*. At length the wind became favourable; the veffel failed, and arrived late in the night at *Margate*. *Monf. du F*—, when he reached the *English* fhore, knelt down, and, in a tranfport of joy, kifled the earth of that dear country which had twice proved his afylum.

He then enquired when the ftage-coach fet off for *London*, and was told that it went at fo early an hour the next morning that he could not go till the day after, as he muft wait till his portmanteau was examined by the cuftom-houfe officers, who were now in bed. The delay of a few hours in feeing his wife and child, after fuch an abfence, after fuch fufferings, was not to be endured. In a violent agitation of mind, he fnatched up his portmanteau, and was going to fling it into the fea, when he was prevented by the people near him, who faid, that if he would pay the fees, his portmanteau fhould be fent after him. He eagerly complied with their demands, and fet out for *London*. As he drew near, his anxiety, his impatience, his emotion increafed. His prefent fituation appeared to him like one of thofe delicious dreams, which fometimes vifited the darknefs of his dungeon, and for a while reftored him, in imagination, to thofe

those he loved. Scarcely could he persuade himself that he was beyond the reach of oppression; that he was in a land of freedom; that he was hastening every moment towards his wife and child. When he entered London, his sensations became almost too strong to bear. He was in the very same place which his wife and child inhabited—but were they yet alive? were they in health? had Heaven indeed reserved for him the transport of holding them once more to his bosom, of mixing his tears with theirs? When he knocked at the door of the house where he expected to hear of Madame du F——, he had scarcely power to articulate his enquiries after her and his child. He was told that they were in health, but that Madame du F——, being in a situation six miles from London, he could not see her till the next morning. Monsieur du F—— had not been in a bed for several nights, and was almost overcome with agitation and fatigue. He, however, instantly set out on foot for the habitation of his wife, announced himself to the mistress of the family, and remained in another apartment, while she, after making Madame du F—— promise that she would listen to her with calmness, told her, that there was a probability of her husband's return to England. He heard the sobs, the exclamations, of his wife at this intelligence—he could refrain no longer—he rushed into the room—he flew into her arms—he continued pressing her in silence to his bosom. She was unable to shed a tear; and it was not till after he had long endeavoured to sooth her by his tenderness, and had talked to her of her child, that she obtained relief from weeping.

F 4

She

She then, with the most violent emotion, again and again repeated the same enquiries, and was a considerable time before she recovered any degree of composure.

All the fortune *Monf. du F*— possessed when he reached London, was one half guinea; but his wife had, during his absence, saved ten guineas out of her little salary. You will easily imagine how valuable this hoard became in her estimation, when she could apply it to the precious use of relieving the necessities of her husband. *Monf. du F*— went to London the next day, and hired a little garret: there, with a few books, a rush-light, and some straw in which he wrapped his legs to supply the want of fire, he recollected not the splendour to which he had once been accustomed, but the dungeon from which he had escaped. He saw his wife and child once a week; and, in those solitary moments, when books failed to sooth his thoughts, he anticipated the hour in which he should again meet the objects most dear to his heart, and passed the intervals of time in philosophic resignation. His clothes being too shabby to admit of his appearing in the day, he issued from his little shed when it was dark, and endeavoured to warm himself by the exercise of walking.

Unfortunately he caught the small-pox, and his disorder rose to such a height, that his life was despaired of. In his delirium, he used to recapitulate the sad story of his misfortunes; and when he saw any person near his bed-side, would call out with the utmost vehemence, * “*Qu'en fasse sortir tous les Francois!*” Af-

* Make all the French go out.

ter

ter having been for some days in the most imminent danger, *Monf. du F*— recovered from his disease.

LETTER XXII.

SIX months after *Monf. du F*—’s return to England, his family found themselves compelled to silence the public clamours, by allowing him a small annual pension. Upon this, *Madame du F*— quitted her place, and came to live with her husband and her child in an obscure lodging. Their little income received some addition by means of teaching the French language in a few private families.

A young lady, who came to pay me a visit at London in 1785, desired to take some lessons in French, and *Madame du F*— was recommended to us for that purpose. We soon perceived in her conversation every mark of a cultivated mind, and of an amiable disposition. She at length told us the history of her misfortunes, with the pathetic eloquence of her own charming language; and, after having heard that recital, it required but common humanity, to treat her with the respect due to the unhappy, and to feel for her sorrows that sympathy to which they had such claim. How much has the sensibility of

F 5

Monf.

Monf. and Madame du F—— over-rated thofe proofs of esteem and friendship which we were enabled to fhew them in their adverfity !—But I muft not anticipate.

On the feventh of October, 1787, the Baron died, leaving, befides Monf. du F——, two other fons, and a daughter.

I muft here mention, that at the time when Monf. du F—— was confined to his bed in the prifon of St. Yon, from the confequences of his fall, his father, in order to avoid the clamours at Rouen, went for fome weeks to Paris. He there made a will, difinheriting his eldeft fon. By the old laws of France, however, a father could not punifh his fon more than once for the fame offence. Nor was there any thing in fo mild a claufe that could much encourage difobedience ; fince this fingle punifhment, of which the mercy of the law was careful to avoid repetition, might be extended to refidence for life in a dungeon. Such was evidently the intention of the Baron du F—— : and, though his fon, difappointing this intention, had efcaped with only three years of captivity, and fome broken limbs, the benignant law above-mentioned interpoled to prevent farther punifhment, and left the Baron without any legal right to deprive Monf. du F—— of his inheritance. His brothers, being fenfible of this, wrote to inform him of his father's death, and recal him to France. He refufed to go while the lettre de cachet remained in force againft him. The Baron having left all his papers fealed up, which his younger fons could not open but in the prefence of their brother, they obtained the revocation of the lettre de

de cachet, and sent it to Mons. du F——, who immediately set off for France.

The Baron's estate amounted to about four thousand pounds a year. Willing to avoid a tedious litigation with his brothers, Mons. du F—— consented to divide with them this property. But he soon found reason to repent of his imprudent generosity; those very brothers, on whom he had bestowed an equal share of his fortune, refusing to concur with him in his application to the parliament of Rouen for the revocation of the arret against his marriage. Mons. du F——, surpris'd and shocked at their refusal, began to entertain some apprehensions of his personal safety; and dreading that, supported by the authority of his mother, another lettre de cachet might be obtained against him, he hastened back to England. Nor was it till after he had received assurances from several of the magistrates of Rouen, that they would be responsible for the safety of his person, that he again ventured to return to France, accompanied by Madame and Mademoiselle du F——, in order to obtain the revocation of the arret. On their arrival at Rouen, finding that the parliament was exiled, and that the business could not be prosecuted at that time, they again came back to pass the winter in England.

At this period his mother died; and in the following summer Mons. and Madame du F—— arrived in France, at the great epocha of French liberty, on the 15th of July, 1789, the very day after that on which the Bastille was taken. It was then that Mons. du F—— felt himself in security on his native shore.—It was then that his

his domestic comforts were no longer embittered with the dread of being torn from his family by a separation more terrible than death itself.—It was then that he no more feared that his repose at night would be broken by the entrance of ruffians prepared to drag him to dungeons, the darkness of which was never visited by the blessed beams of day!

He immediately took possession of his chateau, and only waits for the appointment of the new judges, to solicit the revocation of the arret against his marriage, and to secure the inheritance of his estate to Mademoiselle du F——, his only daughter, who is now fifteen years of age, and is that very child who was born in the bosom of adversity, and whose infancy was exposed to all the miseries of want. May she never know the afflictions of her parents, but may she inherit their virtues!

Under the antient government of France, there might be some doubts of Monf. du F——'s obtaining the revocation of the arret against his marriage. Beneath the iron hand of despotism, justice and virtue might have been overthrown. But happier omens belong to the new constitution of France. The judges will commence their high office with that dignity becoming so important a trust, by cancelling an act of the most flagrant oppression. They will confirm that solemn, that sacred engagement which Monf. and Madame du F—— have three times vowed at the altar of God!—which has been sanctioned by laws human and divine—which has been ratified in earth and in heaven.

No sooner had Monf. and Madame du F——
taken

taken possession of their property, than they seemed eager to convince us, how little this change of fortune was capable of obliterating, for one moment, the remembrance of the friends of their adversity. With all the earnestness of affection they invited us to France, and appeared to think their prosperity incomplete, and their happiness imperfect, till we accepted the invitation. You will believe that we are not insensible witnesses of the delightful change in their fortune. We have the joy of seeing them, not only possessing all the comforts of affluence, but universal respect and esteem.

Monf. du F—— endeavours to banish misery from his possessions. His tenants consider him as a father, and, “when the eye sees him it blesses him.” I said to one of the peasants whom I met in my walk yesterday, * “Je suis charmée de voir que Monf. est si bien aimé ici.” —“Oh pour ça, oui Madame, et à bonne raison, car il ne nous fait que du bien !”

Such is the history of Monf. du F——. Has it not the air of a romance? and are you not glad that the denouement is happy?—Does not the old Baron die exactly in the right place; at the very page one would chuse?—Or, if I sometimes wish that he had lived a little longer, it is only from that desire of retribution, which, in cases of injustice and oppression, it is so natural to feel.—It is only because the knowledge of the overthrow of the antient government would have

* I am happy to see that Monsieur is so much beloved.—Oh, yes, Madam, and well he may, he does us nothing but good.

been

been a sufficient punishment to him for all his cruelty. He would have sickened at the sight of general happiness. The idea of liberty being extended to the lower ranks, while, at the same time, tyranny was deprived of its privileges, he would have found insupportable; and would have abhorred a country, which could no longer boast of a Bastille; a country where iron cages were broken down, where dungeons were thrown open; and where justice was henceforth to shed a clear and steady light, without one dark shade of relief from lettres de cachet.

But peace be to his ashes! If the recollection of his evil deeds excites my indignation, it is far otherwise with Monsi. and Madame du F——. Never did I hear their lips utter an expression of resentment, or disrespect, towards his memory; and never did I, with that warmth which belongs to my friendship for them, involuntarily pass a censure on his conduct, without being made sensible, by their behaviour, that I had done wrong.

Adieu!

LETTER XXIII.

I AM glad you think that a friend's having been persecuted, imprisoned, maimed, and almost

most murdered under the antient government of France, is a good excuse for loving the revolution. What, indeed, but friendship, could have led my attention from the annals of imagination to the records of politics; from the poetry to the prose of human life? In vain might Aristocrates have explained to me the rights of kings, and Democrates have descanted on the rights of the people. How many fine-spun threads of reasoning would my wandering thoughts have broken; and how difficult should I have found it to arrange arguments and inferences in the cells of my brain! But however dull the faculties of my head, I can assure you, that when a proposition is addressed to my heart, I have some quickness of perception. I can then decide, in one moment, points upon which philosophers and legislators have differed in all ages: nor could I be more convinced of the truth of any demonstration in Euclid, than I am, that, that system of politics must be the best, by which those I love are made happy.

Monf. du F——'s chateau is near the little town of Forges, celebrated for its mineral waters, and much resorted to in summer on that account. We went to the fountain on pretence of drinking the waters, but in reality to see the company. The first morning we made our appearance, the ladies presented us with nosegays of fine spreading purple heath which they called * Bouquets à la fontaine.

I was told, before I left England, that I should find that French liberty had destroyed

* Nosegays of the fountain.

French

French urbanity. But every thing I have seen and heard, since my arrival in France, has contradicted this assertion, and led me to believe that the French will carefully preserve, from the wreck of their monarchical government, the old charter they have so long held of superiority in politeness. I am persuaded the most determined Democrats of the nation, whatever other privileges they may chuse to exercise, will always suffer the privilege of being rude to lie dormant.

In every country it is social pleasure that sheds the most delicious flowers which grow on the path of life; but in France she covers the whole way with roses, and the traveller can scarcely mark its ruggedness. Happy are a people, so fond of talking as the French, in possessing a language modelled to all the charming purposes of conversation. Their turn of expression is a dress that hangs so gracefully on gay ideas, that you are apt to suppose that wit, a quality parsimoniously distributed in other countries, is in France as common as the gift of speech. Perhaps that brilliant phraseology, which dazzles a foreigner, may be familiar and common to a French ear: but how much ingenuity must we allow to a people, who have formed a language, of which the common-place phrases give you the idea of wit!

You, who are a reader of Madame Brulart's works, will know, that I am here on a sort of classic ground. The Abbaye de Bobec is but a few miles distant from this chateau, and I walk every day in the forest where Michel and Jaqueline erected their little hut; which you may remember, having unfortunately built too low to admit
of

of their standing upright, they comforted themselves with the reflection, * "Qu'on ne peut pas penser à tout:" and, when they were once seated in their dwelling, in which it was a vain attempt to stand, expatiated on the comforts of being † "chez soi." Upon enquiry, I have heard that poor Jaqueline, three years after the happy change in her fortune, was killed by a stroke of lightning, and that Michel (as he was bound to do, being the hero of a romance) died of grief.

The Abbé de Bobec has much reputation in this part of the country for wisdom; but a French gentleman, who dined with him yesterday, told me this morning, ‡ "Il m'a donné une indigestion de bon sens." This is something in the style of a young Frenchman, who went to visit an acquaintance of his at Rotterdam, and has ever since called that worthy gentleman, § "La raison continue (comme on dit la fièvre continue) avec des redoublemens."

An alarm has been spread but without any foundation, that the Austrian troops were marching to invade France. It puts me in mind of the old trick of the Roman patricians, who, whenever the plebeians grew refractory, called out, that the Equi and the Volsci were coming: the Equi and the Volsci, however, never came.

* One cannot think of every thing.

† At home.

‡ He gave me an indigestion of good sense.

§ Reasoning continued, as you would speak of a fever with fresh paroxysms.

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

WE have had a fête at the chateau, on the day of St. Augustin, who is *Monf. du F——*'s patron; and, though *Monf.* is become a protestant, I hope he will always show this mark of respect to his old friend St. Augustin. Indeed I am persuaded that Luther and Calvin, if they had been of our party, would have reconciled their minds to these charming rites of superstition.

The ceremonies began with a discharge of *fusées*, after which *Mademoiselle du F——* entered the saloon, where a great croud were assembled, with a crown of flowers in her hand, and addressed her father in these words:—* “*Mon*
 “ *tres cher papa, pourrois-je profiter d’ua mo-*
 “ *ment plus favorable pour vous souhaiter une*
 “ *bonne fête, que celui ou nos bons, et vrais*

“ *My dearest papa, can I chuse a more favourable mo-*
 “ *ment to wish you an agreeable fête than this, when our best,*
 “ *our faithful friends are here assembled, and join with me*
 “ *in celebrating this happy day? It is in the midst of your*
 “ *possessions, my dear papa, it is in your chateau, that Di-*
 “ *vine Providence has re-united us, to declare your virtues,*
 “ *and the heroic fortitude with which you have supported*
 “ *your misfortunes. The storm is past, and you can now, my*
 “ *dear papa enjoy the happiness you so well deserve, and the*
 “ *esteem of every amiable mind. May your child contribute*
 “ *to your felicity! May the Supreme Being hear the prayers*
 “ *which I address to him for the preservation of a tender fa-*
 “ *ther, to whom I offer my duty, my gratitude, and the best*
 “ *affections of my heart!*”

“ *amis*

"amis sont ici rassemblés, et s'unissent a moi
 "pour celebrer cet heureux jour? C'est
 "dans vos biens cher papa, c'est dans vo-
 "tre chateau que la Divine Providence nous
 "réunit, pour chanter vos vertus, et ce cou-
 "rage héroïque qui vous a fait supporter tous
 "vos *Malheurs*. L'orage est passé, jouissez
 "maintenant cher papa du bonheur que vous
 "meritez si bien-de l'estime que vous vous êtes
 "acquis dans tous les cœurs sensibles. Que
 "votre chere enfant contribue a votre félicité,
 "que l'Eternel daigne exaucer les vœux que je
 "lui adresse pour la conservation et le bonheur
 "d'un tendre pere, a qui j'offre mes hommages,
 "ma reconnoissance, et les sentimens d'un cœur
 "qui vous est tout dévoué."

She then placed the crown of flowers upon
 his head, and he embraced her tenderly. A
 number of ladies advanced, presented him with a
 nosegays, and were embraced in their turn.

We had seen, while we were at Paris, a
 charming little piece performed at the Theatre
 de Monsieur, called, "La Federation, ou La
 Famille Patriotique." Madame du F—— sent
 for a copy of this piece, and it was now per-
 formed by the company assembled at the chateau.
 The tenants, with their wives and daughters,
 formed the most considerable part of the audi-
 ence, and I believe no play, in antient or mo-
 dern times, was ever acted with more applause.
 My sister took a part in the performance, which
 I declined doing, till I recollected that one of
 the principal characters was a statue; upon
 which, I consented to perform *le beau role de

* The fine part of the statue.

la statue. And, in the last scene, I, being the representative of liberty, appeared with all her usual attributes, and guarding the consecrated banners of the nation, which were placed on an altar, on which was inscribed, in transparent letters, * "A la Liberté, 14 Juillet, 1789." One of the performers pointing to the statue, says, † "Chaque peuple à décoré cette idole de quelques attributs qui lui sont particuliers.—Ce bonnet sur-tout est devenu un emblème éloquent.—Ne pourrions-nous pas en ajouter d'autres qui deviendront peut-être aussi célèbres!" He then unfolds a scarf of national ribband, which had been placed at the foot of the altar, and adds, ‡ "Cette noble echarpe!—Ces couleurs si bien assorties ne sont-elles pas dignes de figurer aussi parmi les attributs de la Liberté?" The scarf was thrown over my shoulder, and the piece concluded with § Le Carillon National: after a grand chorus of ¶ *ça ira*, the performers ranged themselves in order, and *ça ira* was danced. *Ca ira* hung on every lip, *ça ira* glowed on every countenance! Thus do the French, lest they should be tempted, by pleasure, to forget one moment the cause of liberty, bind it to their remembrance in the hour of festivity, with fillets and scarfs of national ribband; connect it with

* To Liberty, July 14th, 1789.

† Every nation has decorated this idol with some peculiar attributes.—This cap has been long one of her most eloquent emblems.—Can we not add some others, which may, perhaps, become no less celebrated?

‡ That noble scarf!—are not its auspicious colours worthy of appearing amongst the attributes of Liberty?

§ The national bells.

¶ It will go on.

the

the sound of the viol and the harp, and appoint it not merely to regulate the great movements of government, but to mold the figure of the dance. When the cotillon was finished, some beautiful fire-works were played off, and we then went to supper. * “Vous êtes bien placée Monf.” said Madame du F—— to a young Frenchman, who was seated between my sister and me at table. † “Madame,” answered he, in a stile truly French, “me voila heureux pour la premiere fois, a vingt trois ans.

After supper we returned to the saloon, where the gentlemen danced with the peasant girls, and the ladies with the peasants. A more joyous scene, or a set of happier countenances, my eyes never beheld. When I recollected the former situation of my friends, the spectacle before me seemed an enchanting vision: I could not forbear, the whole evening, comparing the past with the present, and, while I meant to be exceedingly merry, I felt that tears, which would not be suppressed, were gushing from my eyes—but they were tears of luxury.

* You are well placed, Sir.

† I am made happy, Madam, for the first time, at three and twenty years of age.

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

A Decree has passed in the National Assembly, instituting rewards for literary merit. The proposal met with great opposition from one of the members, I do not wish to remember his name, who said the state stood in need of husbandmen, not poets; as if the state would be encumbered by having both. This gentleman thinks, that, provided wheat and oats flourish, the culture of *mind* may be dispensed with; and that, if the spade and harrow are sharpened, the quill of genius may be stripped of all its feathers. * Mais, vive l'Assemblée Nationale!—they have determined never to abolish the nobility of the muses, or deprive the fine-arts † *de-leurs droits honorifiques*.

Apropos of poets.—The French have conquered many old prejudices, but their prejudice against Shakespeare still exists. They well know, that though in England, it is our policy, or our pleasure, to have an opposition on every other subject, we have not one dissenting voice about Shakespeare; and therefore they allow that he may, perhaps, deserve to be the idol of the British nation, a sort of household god whom we delight to honour; but they have gods of their own to whom they pay homage, and have little

* Long live the National Assembly.

† Of their honorary rights.

idea

idea that Shakespeare was not only the glory of England, but of human nature. It would be a hopeless attempt to convince them, that the genius of their boasted Corneille has something of the proud and affected greatness of Lewis the Fourteenth, while that of Shakespeare has more affinity to the noble dignified simplicity of Henry the Fourth. They repeat, till you are weary of the remark, that French tragedies are regular dramas, while Shakespeare's plays are monstrous. This reminds me of Boileau's answer to an author who had brought him a play to read, of which Boileau disapproved. Sir, exclaimed the enraged author, I defy malice to say that my piece transgresses any one of the rules. "Why Sir," replied Boileau, "it transgresses the first rule of all, that of keeping the reader awake."

The young gentleman who, as I mentioned to you, was confined at St. Yon, in the cell adjoining *Monf. du F——*'s, and with whom he used to converse in whispers through a hole in the wall, is come to pay a visit at the chateau. This young man went very early into the army: but, at the age of twenty, his father being at St. Domingo, and his mother considering her son as a spy upon her conduct, which was such as struck from inspection, obtained a letter de cachet against him, and he was confined three years at St. Yon. He has told me, that, after the first year, he lost all hope of ever regaining his liberty. A morbid melancholy seized his mind; he lay stretched on the same bed for two years; and sometimes refused to taste food for several days together. When his father, at his
return

return from St. Domingo, came to liberate him, he was so feeble that he was unable to walk.

His father again left France, and the brother of this young man has suffered a fate even more severe than himself. At the age of fifteen, he was guilty of some indiscretions, which incurred the resentment of his unrelenting mother, and another letter de cachet was obtained.—“Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts?”—He was confined ten years, and only released when all prisons were thrown open, by order of the National Assembly. But for this unhappy young man their mercy came too late—His reason was gone for ever! and he was led out of his prison, at the age of five and twenty, a maniac. When the sensibility with which his brother relates these family misfortunes melts us into tears, we are told, * que la tristesse, est la maladie du charbon Anglois, and will never be tolerated in France.

You will not be surprized to hear that *Monf. du F*— has, with great complacency, relinquished his title; and that, being a *ci-devant captive*, as well as a *ci-devant Baron*, he feels that the enjoyment of personal security, the sweetness of domestic comfort, in short, that the common rights of man are of more value than he ever found the rights of nobility in the solitude of his dungeon. He is ready to acknowledge, that confinement in a subterraneous cell, a fall from a height of fifty feet, and the fracture of his limbs, are things which even the title of *Baron* can scarcely counterbalance; and he there-

* Melancholy is the disease of English coal fires.

fore

fore drinks a libation, every day after dinner, * "à la santé de l'Assemblée Nationale, though they have deprived him of the soothing epithet of Mon-Seigneur. We, however, shall soon cease to pledge him in this toast. The day of our departure draws near. We must leave the charming society at the chateau—we must leave the peasants dance under the shade of the old elms, while the setting sun pours streams of liquid gold through the foliage—we must leave † Le maitre de violon, qui se ride en riant, avec sa malheureuse figure.—All this must we leave! —To-morrow is the last day of our residence at the chateau. What a desolate word is that monosyllable of *last*—how sad, how emphatical its meaning!—There is something in it which gives the most indifferent things an interest in our affections.—I am sure I could write a volume with this little word for my text; but I may as well explain myself in one line—I am sorry to leave France!

LETTER XXVI.

London.

WE left France early in September, that we might avoid the equinoctial gales, but were so

* To the health of the National Assembly.

† The player on the violin, who, with his miserable figure, has become wrinkled from laughing.

unfortunate as to meet, in our passage from Dieppe to Brighton, with a very violent storm. We were two days and two nights at sea, and beat four and twenty hours off the coast of Brighton; and it would be difficult for you, who have formed your calculations of time on dry land, to guess what is the length of four and twenty hours in a storm at sea. At last, with great difficulty, we landed on the beach, where we found several of our friends and acquaintance, who, supposing that we might be among the passengers, sympathized with our danger, and were anxious for our preservation.

Before the storm became so serious as to exclude every idea but that of preparing to die with composure, I could not help being diverted with the comments on French customs, and French politics, which passed in the cabin. "Ah," says one man to his companion, "one had need to go to France, to know how to like old England when one gets back again."—"For my part," rejoined another, "I've never been able to get drunk once the whole time I was in France—not a drop of porter to be had—and as for their victuals, they call a bit of meat of a pound and a half, a fine piece of roast beef."—"And pray," added he, turning to one of the sailors, "What do you think of their National Assembly?"—"Why," says the sailor, "if I ben't mistaken, the National Assembly has got some points of from the wind."

I own it has surprized me not a little, since I came to London, to find that most of my acquaintance are of the same opinion with the sailor. Every visitor brings me intelligence from
France

France full of dismay and horror. I hear of nothing but crimes, assassinations, torture, and death. I am told that every day witnesses a conspiracy; that every town is the scene of a massacre; that every street is blackened with a gallows, and every highway deluged with blood. I hear these things, and repeat to myself, Is this the picture of France? Are these the images of that universal joy, which called tears into my eyes, and made my heart throb with sympathy?—To me, the land which these mighty magicians have suddenly covered with darkness, where, waving their evil wand, they have reared the dismal scaffold, have clotted the knife of the assassin with gore, have called forth the shriek of despair, and the agony of torture; to me, this land of desolation appeared dressed in additional beauty beneath the genial smile of liberty. The woods seem to cast a more refreshing shade, and the lawns to wear a brighter verdure, while the carols of freedom burst from the cottage of the peasant, and the voice of joy resounded on the hill, and in the valley.

Must I be told that my mind is perverted, that I am become dead to all sensations of sympathy, because I do not weep with those who have lost part of their superfluities, rather than rejoice that the oppressed are protected, that the wronged are redressed, that the captive is set at liberty, and that the poor have bread? Did the universal parent of the human race, implant the feelings of pity in the heart, that they should be confined to the artificial wants of vanity, the ideal deprivations of greatness; that they should be fixed beneath the dome of the palace, or

locked within the gate of the chateau ; without extending one commiserating sigh to the wretched hamlet, as if its famished inhabitants, though not ennobled by *man*, did not bear, at least, the ensigns of nobility stamped on our nature by God ?

Must I hear the charming societies, in which I found all the elegant graces of the most polished manners, all the amiable urbanity of liberal and cultivated minds, compared with the most rude, ferocious, and barbarous levellers that ever existed ? Really, some of my English acquaintance, whatever objections they may have to republican principles, do, in their discussions of French politics, adopt a most free and republican style of censure. Nothing can be more democratical than their mode of expression, or display a more levelling spirit, than their unqualified contempt of *all* the leaders of the revolution.

It is not my intention to shiver lances, in every society I enter, in the cause of the National Assembly. Yet I cannot help remarking, that, since that Assembly does not presume to set itself up as an example to this country, we seem to have very little right to be furiously angry, because they think proper to try another system of government themselves. Why should they not be suffered to make an experiment in politics ? I have always been told, that the improvement of every science depends upon experiment. But I now hear that, instead of their new attempt to form the great machine of society upon a simple principle of general amity, upon the **FEDERATION** of its members, they ought

ought to have repaired the feudal wheels and springs, by which their ancestors directed its movements. Yet if mankind had always observed this retrograde motion, it would surely have led them to few acquisitions in virtue, or in knowledge; and we might even have been worshipping the idols of paganism at this moment. To forbid, under the pains and penalties of reproach, all attempts of the human mind to advance to greater perfection, seems to be proscribing every art and science. And we cannot much wonder that the French, having received so small a legacy of public happiness from their forefathers, and being sensible of the poverty of their own patrimony, should try new methods of transmitting a richer inheritance to their posterity.

Perhaps the improvements which mankind may be capable of making in the art of politics, may have some resemblance to those they have made in the art of navigation. Perhaps our political plans may hitherto have been somewhat like those ill-constructed mishapen vessels, which, unfit to combat with the winds and waves, were only used by the ancients to convey the warriors of one country to despoil and ravage another neighbouring state; which only served to produce an intercourse of hostility; a communication of injury, an exchange of rapine and devastation.—But it may possibly be within the compass of human ability to form a system of politics, which, like a modern ship of discovery, built upon principles that defy the opposition of the tempestuous elements (“and passions are the elements of life”—) instead of yielding

yielding to their fury makes them subservient to its purpose, and sailing sublimely over the untracked ocean, unites those together whom nature seemed for ever to have separated, and throws a line of connection across the divided world.

One cause of the general dislike in which the French revolution is held in this country, is the exaggerated stories which are carefully circulated by such of the aristocrats as have taken refuge in England. They are not all, however, persons of this description. There is now a young gentleman in London, nephew to the Bishop de Sens, who has lost his fortune, his rank, all his high expectations, and yet who has the generosity to applaud the revolution, and the magnanimity to reconcile himself to personal calamities, from the consideration of general good; and who is "faithful found" to his country, "among the faithless." I hope this amiable young Frenchman will live to witness, and to share the honours, the prosperity of that regenerated country: and I also hope that the National Assembly of France will answer the objections of its adversaries in the manner most becoming its own dignity, by forming such a constitution as will render the French nation virtuous, flourishing, and happy.

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

I AGAIN take up the pen to write to you at the Chateau of Monf. du F—, from which place I last year sent you the history of his misfortunes; those misfortunes which have led me to love, as well as admire, the revolution. For you know we are so framed that, while we contemplate the deliverance of millions with a sublime emotion of wonder and exultation, the tears of tenderness, the throbbings of sympathy, are reserved for the moment when we select one happy family from the great national groups, and when, amidst the loud acclamations of an innumerable multitude, we can distinguish the soothing sounds of domestic felicity. I have beheld with awful astonishment the sun of liberty spreading its broad blaze over the French hemisphere; but I have traced with inexpressible delight that benignant beam which has chased every cloud of calamity from the dwelling of Monf. du F—.

It seems the recompense of my French patriotism that I have on several occasions had the good fortune to witness those scenes of general felicity, in which it requires but common sensibility to partake. I went to Rouen the very day before the King accepted the constitution. When the courier arrived with this intelligence, the cannons were immediately fired, the bells of all the churches rung, and the people

ple displayed their joy by crowding the streets with bonfires, at the distance of every eight or ten yards. I observed some of the people, who were too poor to contribute a portion of wood, bring for their offering, a part of an old bedstead, a leg of a broken chair, &c. to feed the flame.

Strangers stopped, and congratulated one another in the streets, which resounded with cries of exultation, among which the sounds of * *Vive le Roi des François,*" were almost lost amidst those of † *"Vive la nation."* " *C'est la nation qui triomphe. C'est la constitution qui triomphe.*"

In the afternoon *Te Deum* was sung in the cathedral. The eight hundred electors of the department, who were at that time assembled at Rouen, walked in procession, attended by all the officers of the administration, and several battalions of the national guard. An immense multitude filled every part of the cathedral; the sounds of the organ and the drums, the voices of the choir, and the acclamations of the people, were mingled together, and rolled through the long aisles of the building. It was impossible to witness this religious solemnity, and reflect on the greatness of the occasion which had called so immense a multitude together, that of having completed the glorious work of a free government, without catching the enthusiasm which beat high in every bosom.

† * Long live the King of the French.

† Long live the nation. It is the nation that triumphs. It is the constitution that triumphs.

Indeed

against reason and philosophy. The patriots declare that the pope by so doing will prove that he has more power than the whole National Assembly, * "car il fera rougir l' Abbé Maury."

LETTER XXVIII.

WE left our friends in Normandy a fortnight ago, and have pitched our tent at Orleans. Our journey furnished many agreeable subjects of reflection to my mind, which you well know has strongly caught the contagion of French patriotism.

On the windows of every inn at which we stopped, we saw the little lamps still fixed, which had been lighted at the fêtes given in every town upon the completion of the constitution. In all the villages through which we passed, I read, inscribed in great characters, † "La liberté, ou la mort." In several places I heard that the workmen had contributed so many days labour towards the expence of sending men to the frontiers. In short, wherever we journeyed, liberty seemed to have run like electric fire along the country, and pervaded every object in its passage. Do you think all the Austrians of the earth will subdue

* For he will make the Abbé Maury *redden*.

† Liberty or death.

this

this people? Oh no: nothing is more true than, that a people are free whenever with one unanimous sublime sentiment they determine to be so. By the way, I have heard Homer laughed at by some critics, for making an army of thirty thousand men repeat at the same time the same sentiment; yet something of this sort actually happened at the taking of the Bastille. The cannoneers called out to the people to retire; * “ Car, disoient-ils, vous périrez inutilement.” The people, as if animated by one soul, instantly replied— † “ Non, non, ce ne fera pas inutilement; nous remplirons le fossé de nos cadavres.”

When we drew near Orleans, we saw the country, as far as the eye could reach, covered with grapes, and men, women, and children employed in gathering the vintage. This scene gave me a new image of plenty, a new aspect of the riches of nature, which it was impossible to contemplate without the most pleasing emotion. But a description of the vintage will perhaps read better in verse, than prose; and I shall therefore send you a copy of a rhyming letter which I have written to my friend Dr. Moore on this subject. . Adieu.

* Fer said they, you will perish in vain.

† No, no, it will not be in vain! we will fill up the ditch with our dead bodies.

To Dr. MOORE, in answer to a Poetical Epistle written by him, in Wales,
to HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

W HILE in long exile far from you I roam,
To sooth my heart with images of home,
For me, my friend, with rich poetic grace,
The landscapes of my native isle you trace ;
Her cultur'd meadows, and her lavish shades,
Her winding rivers, and her verdant glades ;
Far, as where frowning on the flood below,
The rough Welsh mountain lifts its craggy brow ;
Where nature throws aside her softer charms,
And with sublimer views the bosom warms.

Meanwhile, my steps have stray'd where Autumn
yields

A purple harvest on the sunny fields ;
Where, bending with their luscious weight, recline
The loaded branches of the clust'ring vine ;
There, on the Loire's sweet banks, a joyful band
Cull'd the rich produce of the fruitful land ;
The youthful peasant, and the village maid,
And feeble age and childhood lent their aid,
The labours of the morning done, they haste
Where the light dinner in the field is plac'd ;
Around the soup of herbs a circle make,
And all from one vast dish at once partake ;
The vintage-baskets serve, revers'd, for chairs,
And the gay meal is crown'd with tuneless airs ;
For each in turn must sing with all his might ;
And some their carols pour in nature's spite.

Delightful

K

Delightful land! Ah, now with gen'ral voice
 Thy village sons and daughters may rejoice.
 Thy happy peasant, now no more a slave,
 Forbade to taste one good that nature gave,
 Views with the anguish of indignant pain
 The bounteous harvest spread for him in vain.
 Oppression's cruel hand shall dare no more
 To seize with iron gripe his scanty store;
 And from his famish'd infants wring those spoils,
 The hard-earn'd produce of his useful toils:
 For now on Gallia's plain the peasant knows
 Those equal rights impartial Heav'n bestows.
 He now, by freedom's ray illumin'd, taught,
 Some self-respect, some energy of thought,
 Discerns the blessings that to all belong,
 And lives to guard his humble shed from wrong.

Auspicious Liberty! in vain thy foes
 Deride thy ardour, and thy force oppose;
 In vain refuse to mark thy spreading light,
 While, like the mole, they hide their heads in night:
 Or hope their eloquence with taper-ray;
 Can dim the blaze of philosophic day;
 Those reasoners who pretend that each abuse,
 Sanction'd by precedent, has some blest use.
 Does then some chemic power to time belong,
 Extracting, by some process, right from wrong?
 Must feudal governments for ever last?
 Those Gothic piles, the work of ages past;
 Nor may obtrusive reason boldly scan,
 Far less reform the rude mishapen plan;
 The winding labyrinths, the hostile towers,
 Whence danger threatens, and where horror low'rs
 The jealous draw-bridge, and the moat profound,
 The lonely dungeon in the cavern'd ground;
 The fullen dome above those central caves,
 Where lives one tyrant, and a host of slaves?

Ah

Ah, Freedom, on this renovated shore,
 That fabric frights the moral world no more !
 Shook to its basis, by thy powerful spell,
 Its triple-walls in massy fragments fell ;
 While, rising from the hideous wreck, appears
 The temple thy firm arm sublimely rears ;
 Of fair proportions, and of simple grace,
 A mansion worthy of the human race.
 For me, the witness of those scenes, whose birth
 Forms a new era in the storied earth ;
 Oft while with glowing breast those scenes I view,
 They lead, ah friend, below'd, my thoughts to you !
 Ah, still each fine emotion they impart,
 With your idea mingles in my heart ;
 You, whose warm bosom, whose expanded mind,
 Have shar'd this glorious triumph of mankind ;
 You, whom I oft have heard, with gen'rous zeal,
 With all that truth can urge, or pity feel,
 Refute the pompous argument that tried
 The common cause of millions to deride ;
 With reason's force the plautive sophist hit,
 Or dart on folly the quick flash of wit.
 Too swift, my friend, the moments wing'd their
 flight,
 That gave at once instruction and delight ;
 That ever from your ample stores of thought
 To my small stock some new accession brought.
 How oft remembrance, while this bosom bleeds,
 My pensive fancy to your dwelling leads ;
 Where, round your cheerful hearth, I weeping trace
 The social circle, and my vacant place ! —
 When to that dwelling friendship's tie endears,
 When shall I hasten with the " joy of tears ?"
 That joy whose keen sensation swells to pain, —
 And strives to utter what it feels, in vain.

LETTER

LETTER XXIX.

ORLEANS is a very antient town, built, or rather rebuilt, by the Emperor Aurelian, upon the ruins of another town, called Genabium. It takes its present name of Orleans, or the golden city, from the Emperor Aurelian. This town is large and handsome. The principal street, which extends the whole length of the town, is regularly built, and is clean, cheerful, and well lighted every night, by lamps hung across it. Here is a noble cathedral of exquisite workmanship, and of which the first stone was laid by Henry the Fourth; a circumstance which makes me contemplate the building with additional pleasure. Henry the Fourth is, you know, the only hero, ancient or modern, of whom I am at all enamoured; and my admiration of him has been lately considerably increased by the perusal of a charming little book, entitled, * "De l'Amour de Henri quatre pour les Lettres."—There was but this wanting to complete my enthusiasm for Henry the Fourth. I should find it difficult, indeed, to avoid loving a hero who united a taste for letters with all the great, and all the amiable qualities. A little incident, which I have just heard, is one proof, among many others, of the love and veneration in which his memory has long been held in France.—Ten

* The love of Henry the Fourth for Literature.

years

years before the revolution, a gentleman walking along the Pont Neuf, was accosted by a beggar, who implored his charity. * "Au nom de Dieu! Monsieur," said the beggar—"de la Sainte Vierge!"—The gentleman walked on: the beggar called upon half the saints in the calendar; the gentleman remained inexorable. At length they passed the statue of Henry the Fourth. † "Au nom de Henri quatre! Monsieur," said the beggar. "Au nom de Henri quatre!" repeated the gentleman, starting from his reverie: "voici un louis, mon ami."—But I must lead you from the Pont Neuf to a magnificent bridge built within these few years, at Orleans, across the river Loire. This river, which, in general, glides slowly and gently along its beautiful banks, sometimes receiving in its bosom the torrents which fall from the mountains of Auvergne, assumes a very different character, overflows its banks, bears away bridges in its course, spreads itself over the adjacent country, and not only fills the streets in the lower part of the town of Orleans, but even the houses; and the poor people who inhabit them have been sometimes obliged to save themselves in their garrets, and receive provisions brought to them in boats, and handed up to them upon the point of pikes. Usually, however, in order to prevent these evils, whenever the Loire begins to rise, a courier is dispatched to give notice of its approach. The courier, in general, gallops fas-

* In the name of God!—of the Holy Virgin!

† In the name of Henry the Fourth, Sir. In the name of Henry the Fourth! Here is a louis, my friend.

ter

ter than the river, and by this means the people are prepared for its reception.

We have lodgings in the Place du Martroy, in a spacious handsome house which formerly belonged to Monf. d'Orleans, and where the archives of his family were deposited. But having lost, since the revolution, the extensive domains which he possessed round this town, his seignorial rights over the forest of Orleans, a forest of fifty miles in extent, he has thought proper to sell this house, in consequence of which we are extremely well lodged. Do not, however, be surpris'd if I am not very methodical in the details I shall send you, and if you should find my ideas somewhat more indistinct than usual; for I assure you the things I hear and see, from the window at which I am writing, are sufficient to confuse a stronger head than mine. You shall judge. Before our windows, which overlook the Place du Martroy, there are at this moment two musicians mounted on chairs; one plays on the violin, while the other sings a very merry patriotic song, and the people join in chorus. At a little distance there arriv'd half an hour ago a mountebank, preceded by a trumpet, a drum, and a French-horn. He is now haranguing an immense croud who surround his cabriolet, with a degree of impetuosity, and a violence of gesticulation, which belong only to a Frenchman. He is at some distance from the window, so that I lose much of his eloquence; but I have seen him display a fine chapelet, which he declares was given to him by the empress of all the Russias; and I have heard him boast the efficacious qualities of a certain precious pill, of which he
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is in possession, and which, he says, cures * “*toutes les maladies, et plusieurs autres.*” To resist a pill of such extraordinary virtue is impossible: the poor people lift up their hands; he feels their pulses, orders for every complaint a box of pills, and receives the little paper money, called *bons*, in return. Not far from the mountebank is a man with a puppet-show, in which, for one liard, many surprising things are to be seen: † “*Vous allez voir, messieurs,*” says he, in a voice which makes itself heard in spite of the music, the chorus and the mountebank; “*Vous allez voir la séance de la constitution! Voici le roi dans son fauteuil; voici*”—But he is interrupted by the beating of a drum, which calls the crowd to a little stage, where a man and a woman are going to act a comedy. Near the comedians is a fortune-teller, who, placing one end of a long pipe at the ear of those who wish to learn their destiny, and putting the other end into his own mouth, explains, in a voice only heard by the person concerned, the book of fate, reveals the secrets of futurity, and lavishes wealth and prosperity at the moderate price of *deux sous*.—Pleasure and business are united on the *Place du Martroy*; for not only does it present fine sights, and resound with patriotic songs, but there, by way of interlude, the corn-market is held: gowns, petticoats, sweetmeats, grapes, and *Baskilles* of sugar are also sold in little booths erected for that purpose, and which somewhat

* All diseases, and a great many others.

† You shall see, gentlemen—you shall see the sitting of the constitution! Here is the king in his chair of state.

disfi-

disfigure the square. But the French are an amiable, accommodating people, and permit many things of this kind which would not be suffered in England. When I was at the National Assembly, I remarked that the passages on each side were filled with little shops, where books, paper, &c. are sold. I believe, if this were attempted in the avenues to the House of Commons, our honourable senators would very soon order the passages, as they sometimes do the gallery, to be *cleared*. But let us return for a moment to the Place du Martroy, where at present the people leave the musicians, the mountebank, the puppet-show man, the comedians, and the fortune-teller, and fly to meet the brave protectors of their country. The volunteers of the department are just arrived in their way to the frontiers, and are to be lodged in the houses of their fellow-citizens, by whom they are received with all the enthusiasm of patriotism. Several peasants too old to fight for their country have offered to assist in maintaining, by the sweat of their brow, the wives and children of those who are gone to the frontiers.

The French revolution is not only sublime in a general view, but is often beautiful when considered in detail. Its history abounds with circumstances that would embellish the page of the Greek or Roman annals. But the old remark, that no man is a hero to his valet de chambre, may be applied to great events, as well as great characters. The French revolution is viewed too near to excite the same veneration in the present age which it will probably awaken in the minds of posterity. It wants that mellowed tint
which

which is produced by time. Succeeding generations will perhaps associate the Tennis-court of Versailles, and the Champ de Mars, with the Forum and the Capitol. For the prejudices which now obscure the revolution are mortal, and will die with the present race, and posterity will view it through a clearer medium. Posterity will not demand, contrary to what appears the law of our nature, "universal good," un-mixed with "partial evil;" but will contemplate the revolution in the same manner, as we gaze at a sublime landscape, of which the general effect is great and noble, and where some little points of asperity, some minute deformities, are lost in the overwhelming majesty of the whole.

L E T T E R X X X .

IT is at present what is called the bel air in France, to take a journey to Brussels. The people of distinction go to show their importance, and people of no distinction go in imitation of others. A young Frenchman; the son of a person who was formerly in power, went lately to join the emigrants, and was much astonished, upon his arrival at Brussels, to find, that instead of being well received, the aristocrats were inclined to put him to death. The reason of this was, that they recollected he had, some years before the
 revolu-

revolution, on a particular occasion, espoused the interests of the people. * “ Il faut bien s'examiner,” said the gentleman who related this circumstance, “ avant d'aller à Bruxelles, si dans quelque moment de la vie, on a senti de l'amour pour ses concitoyens, ou fait une belle action.” I received a letter a few days ago from a friend of mine at Paris, which mentions the departure of a pretty young woman for Germany, with whom I had a slight acquaintance. Her own titles to nobility were very new, and very inconsiderable; but she was acquainted with some women of high rank who had fled to Germany. She came to a relation's house, one morning, at the hour of breakfast, and, almost breathless with agitation, told her that she was instantly going to leave France. “ I know,” said she, “ that my movements are watched; but I have taken every possible precaution for my own safety, and intend to travel through by-roads.” “ My dear cousin,” replied her relation, “ what a wild plan is this!—Why will you leave us? Be assured you are in perfect safety—nobody thinks of *you*.” † “ Ah! je vous demande pardon,” replied the young woman; “ on a des yeux sur moi.” “ Well,” said her cousin, “ if you are absolutely determined to go, at least stay and breakfast with me; here is some *café à la crème*.” “ Ah, my dear cousin,” replied the young woman, in a most pathetic accent, “ du *café à la crème*!—I dare not taste it upon any

* You must examine yourself carefully before you go to Brussels, if in some moment of your life you have felt any love for your fellow-citizens, or performed a good action.

† Ah! I beg your pardon—they have their eyes upon me; account

account—If madame la duchesse de ———, or madame la comtesse, were to hear of it, they would never forgive me—they know that *café à la crème* does me harm; and they interest themselves so much in my health, that they have strictly forbidden my tasting it.”

Though the great mass of the French nation, sufficiently enlightened to discern their real interests, cherish with fond enthusiasm the blessings of liberty, it is not surprising that a revolution, which has levelled every distinction that vanity loves to create; exposed the folly of every prejudice that pride had inculcated, and that servility had learned to revere; and which has made a step towards perfection so rapid, so astonishing in the progress of human reason—it is not surprising that such a revolution should have many enemies among that class of persons whose vanity, ambition, or interest, are affected by the suppression of those abuses and errors, from which they enjoyed the most partial advantages. Some excuse may, perhaps, be found in the weakness of human nature, and the prejudices of education, for the aristocracy of *Monf. d’Artois*, or *Monf. de Condé*. But the aristocracy to which common sense can give no quarter, is that which you sometimes find in the persons of the *bon, ci-devant tiers état*; that class which by the revolution is raised from contempt and degradation, into importance and respect.

A beautiful young woman, formerly a duchess, with whom I was in company at Paris, told me she had remarked, that even the seasons were changed since the revolution, and that the
the

the climate of France had become stormy and disagreeable. I could only smile at her folly, and pity it. But when the wife of a merchant, or shopkeeper, talks in the same style, you feel provoked, instead of diverted, by her absurdity.

The bishop of Orléans, who is descended from the ancient nobility of France, has distinguished himself by his patriotism; but there are at Orleans a hundred and fifty chanoines, who are far from being patriots. These chanoines enjoyed each two or three thousand livres a year for chanting Latin hymns in the cathedral. The cathedral being now transformed into a parish-church, these hymns are no longer sung; and the chanoines are reduced to live upon half their former income. These hundred and fifty chanoines had certainly a hundred and fifty cooks, and these cooks probably have families. The chanoines and the cooks have both lost their places, and consequently they and their families are aristocrates.

By the way, I have found out that an aristocrate always begins a political conversation by assuring you that he is not an aristocrate. He will tell you, "that there certainly were intolerable abuses in the old government, and that no person wished more sincerely than himself to see those abuses reformed. But," he will add, "to take away the king's power, to deprive the nobility of their privileges, and the clergy of their revenues, is pushing things to an extremity, at which every honest mind shudders. If the National Assembly had made a reform without injuring these orders of the state, they would

would have been applauded by the whole world." This reminds me of a passage in *Monf. Beaumarchais' comedy of the Follies of a Day*. "I was told," says Figaro, on the subject of writing a book, "that if I took care to say nothing of politics, nothing of morality, of governments, of the clergy, or of persons in power, and then submitted my book to the inspection of the keeper of the seals, and obtained an 'approbation,' and 'privilege,' I might, after using these precautions, write with the most perfect freedom."

An old Frenchman, past threescore years and ten, was asked lately how he liked the revolution. * "La révolution," said he, "me ruine, et me tue, mais elle me fait vivre."

The volunteers left Orléans this morning, in order to proceed to the frontiers. They were drawn up on the Place du Martroy, and, after affectionately embracing their friends, and wiping away a few tears, which probably the recollection of home excited, they ordered, by way of cordial, the reviving air of *ça ira*, and marched off, singing in chorus.

* The revolution ruins me, and kills me, but it makes me live.

L E T -

LETTER XXXI.

THE principal article of commerce at Orleans, is that of refining sugar. We went yesterday to see the process. In one stage of its progress the sugar is clarified with the blood of oxen: it is poured into vessels of an immense size, and appears a liquid of a deep red. I own those frightful reservoirs struck my imagination as if stained with the blood of Africans.

The long train of calamities which are the portion of that unhappy race, crowded in sad succession upon my mind, and I observed, with a degree of horror which I could not repress, the process of luxury obtained for the inhabitants of one part of the globe, by the wrongs, the agonies, the despair of the inhabitants of another part.—Alas! why is there so much more misery in this world than benevolence can cure? Why, in the public discussions in France and in England, on the Slave Trade, are the possibilities of gain and loss calculated with such nice precision? Why are crimes and injustice, desolation and death, treated in a style so very mercantile that humanity listens in despair to their deliberations?

From thence we went to see a very considerable manufactory for spinning cotton, which has been established here by an English gentleman, to whom we are obliged for that cordial hospitality, which is the ancient and honourable

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characteristic of our country, and which is so peculiarly grateful to the heart when received in a land of strangers.

This manufacture, while it displays the wonderful power of mechanism, gives occasion also to the exercise of humanity, by employing not only a great number of men, but fourteen hundred women and children.

The gentleman to whom the manufacture belongs, related to me the following circumstance:—He happened to be in the National Assembly at Versailles, when the king declared that he would give orders for disbanding the army which surrounded Paris, and would himself come to the Maison de Ville, in compliance with the wishes of his people. Mr. F——, after taking a copy of the king's harangue with his pencil, immediately mounted his horse, and galloped to Paris, in order to carry this intelligence. At the Pont Neuf he was stopped, the bridle of his horse seized, and the people wanted to take him to la Maison de Ville. He told them that he was an Englishman, the friend of liberty, and had galloped all the way from Versailles, in order to bring them good news.

The people conducted him to the Palais Royal, and there he dismounted. A table was placed in the court of the Palais Royal, upon which he stood, and read over and over again the king's harangue. After having remained there a considerable time, he went into a coffee-house of the Palais Royal to refresh himself, and then enquired for his horse. The horse was not to be found. Mr. F—— left a note at the coffee-house, intreating that the person who had

had taken care of the Englishman's horse, while reading the king's speech, in the Palais Royal, would deliver him to the master of the coffee-house.

A few days after, an answer was sent to Mr. F——, informing him, that the English horse had gone back to Versailles, in order to conduct the king to Paris; and was again gone to the country upon business of importance to the nation, but that whenever he returned he should be sent to his master.

The horse accordingly arrived, but not without having suffered a little for his services to the state; and, though he was ever after particularly cherished by Mr. F——, he died in the second year of French liberty; and I have some thoughts of writing his epitaph.

Nothing, it is said, could exceed the astonishment and consternation of the French court, when the intelligence that the Bastille was taken reached Versailles. This event appeared so incredible that the courtiers could scarcely persuade themselves it was true. That the people should have the insolence to complain because they were threatened with famine—that, when the government had drawn an army to the gates of Paris in order to enforce submission, the Parisians should dare to rise into tumult—were things sufficiently extraordinary—but that they should, almost in the view of that army, take the Bastille, appeared to the court of Versailles as miraculous as if the course of nature had been changed, and the order of the universe broken.

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I lately

I lately heard an account of a conversation which passed at Versailles, on the morning of the 14th of July, 1789, and which proves how little the court were prepared for the memorable event of that immortal day.

A French gentleman, remarkable for his taciturnity and sang-froid, things that seldom enter into the composition of a Frenchman, had occasion to go from Paris to Versailles on that morning, in order to have a conference with the minister upon some private business. He found two of the ministers together; and when the particular object of his visit was discussed, one of the ministers said to him with a careless air, "Well, sir, are there still tumults at Paris?"

"The people talk of going to the garde-meubles," replied the gentleman.

"The garde-meubles!" repeated the minister: what, the king's garde-meubles."

"Yes, and they have already been at the Hôtel des Invalides."

"And for what purpose?" said the minister with increasing surprise.

"They seized upon all the arms," resumed the gentleman; preserving his usual sang-froid; "and if a man has two fuses, he gives one to his neighbour."

"Well," said the minister, shrugging up his shoulders, "and what did they do next?"

"Why, I believe," said the gentleman, "they then went to the district."

"The district!" exclaimed the minister: "pray what is the district?"

"An

"An invention of yesterday," replied the gentleman: "the people have also another invention of the same date, I believe, which they call a permanent committee, and they have now got cannon."

"Cannon!" repeated the minister; "and pray what do they propose to do with cannon?"

"Why, they talk of taking the Bastille."

"Very good!—excellent!" said the minister, bursting into a violent fit of laughter: "this is really a pleasant conceit enough. And pray who is at the head of this rabble?"

"I really do not know," said the gentleman coldly: "but all the people in Paris seem to be of the same mind."

"Well," said the minister, turning to his colleague, "I think we had better not mention these disagreeable matters to the king."

Notwithstanding this precaution however, the king a few hours after was let into the whole secret.

L E T T E R XXXII.

THE statue of the celebrated Jeanne d'Arc, the maid of Orléans, is erected in the principal street of the town. Wherever I travel in France, it seems as if I were haunted by this Jeanne d'Arc. I left her lately at Rouen, and
here

here I find her at Orléans ; and in both places I fancy she looks at me with an air of reproach. This monument, erected at Orléans, in honour of her exploits, by Charles the Seventh, is a striking testimony of the barbarous state of the arts at that period. The Virgin Mary is placed in the middle of the monument, holding a dead Christ on her knees : on one side is Charles the Seventh kneeling, and on the other the Maid of Orleans in the same attitude. Their figures are so rude, mishapen, and grotesque, that it requires some deliberation to determine which is Charles the Seventh, and which is the Maid of Orleans.

Every year on the eighth of May, the day on which Jeanne d'Arc chased the English, and raised the siege of Orléans, there is a solemn procession in this town, in commemoration of that event. The bishop, attended by all the clergy, the magistrates, and the troops, walk in procession to the cathedral. The principal figure in this procession is a young boy, dressed in a fantastic manner, who is the representative of the Maid of Orléans. Prayers of thanksgiving for the deliverance of the town are said at the cathedral, after which a sermon is preached, wherein the magnanimous virtues of Jeanne d'Arc are celebrated ; and, by way of giving relief to the picture, the preacher never fails to paint in the darkest colours the crimes of the English, and their detestable cruelty towards this heroine, to whom, as Mr. Hume the historian justly remarks, the more generous superstition of the ancients would have erected altars. When the guilt of our nation has been made sufficiently

sufficiently manifest, the sermon concludes, a hymn is sung, and the day ends with a public entertainment. But I must not neglect to mention a charming institution established by Mons. d'Orléans in honour of Jeanne d'Arc. The curés of Orléans each choose from their respective parishes, the young girl whom they consider as the most amiable, the most modest, the most virtuous. Among these girls she who is most distinguished for those qualities which are the best ornament of her sex, is married on this day to the lover of her choice, with a portion of fifteen hundred livres, bestowed by Mons. d'Orléans. Is it possible, do you think, to make a more amiable use of fifteen hundred livres, than thus to render them the means of conferring happiness on love and virtue?

A hat which belonged to the Maid of Orléans is still religiously kept in a convent in this place. How Jeanne d'Arc's hat got into this convent, I know not; for, when I asked to see it, I was told that no woman could be admitted within those walls. Perhaps the reverend fathers relaxed from the usual severity of their order in favour of so extraordinary a woman as Jeanne d'Arc: but the rest of her sex must not expect the same indulgence, and I shall certainly leave Orleans without having seen the hat.

LETTER XXXIII.

THE wife of Jean Jaques Rousseau is a native of Orléans, where her family now live. This woman, though certainly no congenial spirit with Jean Jaques, has, I am told, caught from him much elevation of sentiment, and pride of independence. You can, in short, perceive that she has been the companion of a great man. I heard lately an incident characteristic enough of Rousseau. At a friend's house, at dinner, he praised the wine : his friend sent him fifty bottles. Rousseau felt himself offended ; but as the present was offered by an old friend, he determined to accept ten bottles, and returned forty. A short time after he invited his friend and his family to supper. When they arrived they found Rousseau very busy turning the spit. " How extraordinary is it," exclaimed his friend, " to see the first genius of Europe employed in turning a spit !" " Why," answered Rousseau, with great simplicity and sang-froid, " if I were not to turn the spit, you would certainly lose your supper : my wife is gone to buy a salad, and the spit must be turned." At supper Rousseau produced, for the first time, the wine which his friend had sent him : but no sooner had he tasted it, than he suddenly put the glass from his lips, exclaiming with the most violent emotion, that it was not the same wine he had drank at his friend's

friend's house, who he perceived had a design to poison him. In vain his friend protested his innocence : Rousseau's imagination, once possessed by this idea,

—“ displaced the mirth ; broke the good
“ Meeting with most admir'd disorder.”

SHAKSPEARE.

His friend was immediately obliged to retire, and they never met again.

You, who are an admirer of Rousseau, will be pleased to hear of a tribute of enthusiasm paid to his memory lately by two of our countrymen. These young Englishmen went to visit the tomb of this lover of nature, which is placed in a beautiful little island on the estate of Mons. Girardin. Not long before their arrival, some profane mortal had dared to insult the sacred ashes of Jean Jaques ; and Mons. Girardin, filled with indignation at this atrocious conduct, had given orders, that no person, without a particular admission from himself, should henceforth be permitted to visit the island. In vain our young Englishmen made protestations of their profound veneration for Rousseau ; in vain they implored Monsieur Girardin's boatman to conduct them across the stream. The boatman, surly as Charon himself, adhered inflexibly to the orders of his master. The young Englishmen, finding him inexorable, threw off their clothes, jumped into the stream, and swam to the island.—The gentleman who related to me this circumstance, told me, that he and a friend had visited together this island, and, kneeling at the tomb of Rousseau, had burnt a book, published a short time after his death by Diderot, in

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which

which he had treated the memory of Rousseau with the most cruel indignity: and this he had done from a very unworthy motive. He had heard that the Confessions of Rousseau were going to be published; and concluding that he should be ill treated in those Confessions, on account of his quarrel with Rousseau, he determined to be beforehand in abuse. But when the Confessions were published, it was found that the feeling heart of Jean Jaques could not detach itself from his former friend, who had always continued to possess a place in his affections.—Mons. Girardin was absent from home, when the sacrifice of Diderot's book was offered at Rousseau's tomb. When he returned, his boatman told him, that during his absence two gentlemen had performed some withcraft or other at the tomb; that he had observed them at a little distance; that they had struck a stone, brought out a flame, and kept it burning an extraordinary length of time. Mons. Girardin enquired into the meaning of these mysterious rites, and received an account of the sacrifice.

The celebrated opera-dancer, Mademoiselle Theodore, whose talents I am told are not confined to superior excellence in dancing, had an enthusiastic admiration of Rousseau. She always carried a volume of his works in her pocket to the rehearsals at the opera, and used to read in the pauses of the dance. One day having heard that Rousseau was in want of a cook, she dressed herself in a coarse stuff gown, a coloured apron, and a cloth cap, and went in this disguise to offer him her services.

After

After Rousseau's death, Mademoiselle Theodore made a pilgrimage to his grave; and there, in the true spirit of enthusiastic homage, cutting off one of the long tresses of her fine hair, she hung it as an offering upon his tomb.

LETTER XXXIV.

A BLACKSMITH came to our lodgings this morning, to mend the lock of a door. I asked him if he would not willingly leave his trade to fight for the liberty of his country.

* "Oui, madame," said he, "il faut combattre pour la liberté, parceque si on est tué, c'est l'affaire d'un instant, et c'est fini; au lieu qu'étant esclave on s'ennuye toute la vie."

This is market-day at Orléans, and I have just been standing with a little circle of country-people, who, after the business of the market was done, ranged themselves round an old woman, who had the advantage over the rest of the groupe, of having attained the accomplishment of reading. She read to them a newspaper, to which the audience listened with such eager at-

* Yes, madam, we must fight for liberty, because if one is killed, it is the affair of a moment; instead of that, being a slave, you are weary all your life.

tention,

tention, as reminded me of that animated picture of our divine poet, when he describes

—————“ a smith,
 “ The whilst his iron did on the anvil cool,
 “ With open mouth swallowing a taylor’s news.”

The old woman received a liard for her trouble from each of her auditors, and they are now discussing the conduct of their legislators, and arranging the fabric of their new government, with that noble freedom of debate which gives

“ An hour’s importance to the poor man’s heart.”

One subject of complaint among the aristocrats is, that, since the revolution, they are obliged to drive through the streets with caution: the life of a citizen is now considered as of some value, and the poor people on foot cannot be trampled upon, by the horses of the rich people in carriages, with the same impunity as formerly. * “ C’est si incommode,” said an aristocrate to me lately, “ quand je vais dans ma voiture en campagne; le peuple ne se range pas comme autrefois—ces gens-là font d’une insolence incroyable—on est obligé de prendre bien garde de ne les pas écraser, et cela demande du tems.” Madame du Pompadour, mistress to Lewis XV. who always travelled with great expedition, was passing through Orléans, when her coachman drove over a poor woman, whom age and infirmity prevented from getting time

* It is so inconvenient, when I go to the country in my carriage; the people will not get out of the way as they used to do—they are really become intolerably insolent—you are obliged to take such care not to run over them, and that costs so much time.

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enough

enough out of the way, and she was killed upon the spot. The coachman stopped the carriage, and the servants told their mistress that the poor woman was killed. * "Eh bien," said she, with the most perfect sang-froid, and flinging a louis d'or out of the window, "voilà de quoi la faire enterrer: allez, cocher." Is it possible to hear of every feeling of humanity being thus insulted, without a degree of indignation which can only be soothed by the reflection that such monstrous evils exist no longer? Is it possible to hear this incident without rejoicing, that a system of government which led to such depravation of mind is laid in ruins? For my part, I confess myself so hardened a patriot, that I rejoice to see the lower order of people in this country have lost somewhat of that too obsequious politeness for which they were once distinguished; and that whenever they find themselves in the slightest degree offended, they assume a tone of manly independence. While we were walking yesterday along the very square where the poor old woman was killed, I heard a day-labourer say, in an angry tone of voice, to a gentleman, by whom he thought himself ill-treated, † "Monsieur, nous sommes égaux—je suis citoyen, monsieur, tout comme un autre." Some of our company were shocked at his insolence, while I, recollecting the poor old woman, could not help repeating to myself, ‡ "Ah!

* Well, here is something to bury her—go on, coachman.

† Sir, we are equals—I am a citizen, sir, as well as another.

‡ Ah! my friend, never forget that you are a citizen as well as another.

mon

mon ami, n'oubliez jamais que vous êtes citoyen *tout* comme un autre."

A number of poor people in Orleans gain their livelihood by conveying goods in little carts from the quay to the houses of the merchants. This little cart forms the stock in trade of a poor family, together with an ass, who is an animal that can accommodate himself to a slight dinner, without complaining. The ass is placed between the shafts; on one side is the master of the cart, on the other his wife: and all their children, to whatever number they amount, ranged in front, and holding a long cord, which is tied to the cart, assist in drawing it along.

I never see these little family processions without a melancholy emotion. It seems to me a hard lot, to be forced to gain scanty bread by dragging along this wretched cart from morning till night. But, fortunately, the poor people themselves are of a different opinion: I perceive no marks of sadness on their countenances; and when the cart returns empty, and allows them a little respite from labour, I frequently hear them singing *ça ira*, with all the exultation of true patriots.

The blessings of the revolution have reached even their little shed. If they are poor, they know they cannot be oppressed; and feel, no doubt, with conscious pride and pleasure, that they also are now "citoyens, * *tout* comme un autre."

* As well as another.

Two gentlemen were conversing together this morning upon public affairs. After discussing many political points, one of them said to the other, whom he perceived to be a little violent in his sentiments, † “ Mais après tout, il faut de la modération.”

“ On parle tant de la modération,” answered the democrat, in the most angry tone in the world : “ ma foi, monsieur, on n’a pas pris la Bastille avec de la limonade.”

L E T T E R XXXV.

I HAVE been to visit a chateau about a league from Orléans ; part of which was built by the celebrated Lord Bolingbroke, and in which he passed some years of his exile, with his wife, the niece of Madame de Maintenon. Before the windows of the chateau rises a beautiful small river, called le Loiret, which, after a winding course of three leagues, through a charming country, falls into the Loire. The grounds of this chateau are in some parts formed into long alleys, shaded by venerable trees, in others spread into lawns, through which the clear

* But after all we must have some moderation.—They speak so much of moderation—Faith, sir, the Bastille was not taken with lemonade.

Loiret

Loiret pursues its way. Lord Bolingbroke probably found this retirement well adapted for philosophical contemplation, and had there sufficient leisure to

“ Expatiate free on all this scene of man,
“ A mighty maze, but not without a plan.”

In this retreat he wrote the Patriot King. A company of French and English were dining with Lord Bolingbroke at this place, when the news arrived of the death of the Duke of Marlborough, his ancient enemy. Some of the company had fervility enough to pay their court to Lord Bolingbroke, by mentioning some circumstances to the disadvantage of the Duke of Marlborough. At length a Frenchman, who was present, asked Lord Bolingbroke his opinion of him. “ Sir,” said he, “ Marlborough was so great a man, that I have forgot all his faults.”—The Loiret deserves to be considered as a sort of classical river: for, if a famous English philosopher had his dwelling at its source, a far more amiable French philosopher lived some time at the mouth of this little stream: a philosopher, of whom not only his own country, but human nature may be proud; and whose writings tend to awaken the purest affections, the most soothing emotions, of the human heart. This writer was Fenelon, the mild, the persuasive preacher of virtue. I have read Gresset’s charming poem of Ver-Vert, with particular pleasure, on the banks of that river, which his hero in evil hour sailed down; when the nuns of Nantes, hearing of his renown, write

—————“ à la

—————“ à la supérieure,
 “ Pour la prier que l’oiseau plein d’attraits
 “ Soit pour un tems amené par la Loire,
 “ Et que, conduit au rivage Nautais,
 “ Lui-même il puisse y jouir de sa gloire,
 “ Et se prêter à de tendres souhaits.”

The happy playful irony of this poem is perhaps unrivalled, except by Pope’s Rape of the Lock, which, to all the sprightly graces, the agreeable raillery of Ver-Vert, adds the charm of the most enchanting poetic machinery.

Every Sunday evening, during the month of October, as soon as it is dark, four men, dressed in black, walk through the town of Orléans; and at the corner of every street ring a loud heavy bell, which sends forth a most dismal sound; after which they call upon the people to remember the dead, and pray for the repose of their souls. Nothing can be more gloomy than this superstitious ceremony, which lasts till after All-Saints day, when a solemn service for the dead is performed in all the Roman Catholic churches.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXXVI.

WHEN a French girl is intended for the wife of a merchant, she is carefully instructed in arithmetic, after she leaves the convent, where she is usually taught little more than to count her beads. After she is married she acts as her husband's first clerk, and passes the whole day in his counting-house. Some advantages arise from this practice; since a French woman, if her husband dies, is capable of carrying on his business till her children are of a proper age to succeed to it; and in the mean time she knows exactly the state of his affairs. Whereas, the wife of an English merchant, sometimes from being entirely ignorant of his real situation, indulges herself in a mode of living which hastens on his ruin, and receives like a thunder-stroke the intelligence that her riches were a dream, and that her husband is a bankrupt.

I am told that commerce was never so flourishing in France as it has been for a year past, not only in the capital, but throughout the whole kingdom. The advantages which some have been enabled to gain from the paper money has led them to extraordinary enterprise, and the loss which others have sustained has produced extraordinary industry and activity. Commerce has benefited in both cases. If the gold of France has vanished with the noblesse, it is not of gold only that that class of persons have disburthened their

their country. They have also carried away with them that immense load of prejudices which has so long oppressed this nation, and which, by connecting degradation and contempt with commerce, deprived the country of the best use and improvement of its riches. If the French money has "made unto itself wings, and fled away," so also has the *corvée*, the *gabelle*, the arbitrary impositions, the seignorial rights, the enormous taxes which the poor paid to the rich, and which produced famine, where nature had scattered plenty; while they have left behind them the blessings of liberty, equal taxation, mild laws, trial by jury, the spirit of commerce. Paper money, when the crisis of the revolution is past, will, by a process only known to free states, be transformed into pure gold.

I have been at la Maison de Ville, in which house died Francis the Second, the husband of Mary Queen of Scots. He came to Orléans with Mary, to meet the States General: was suddenly taken ill while he was at mass, and died immediately.

The name of Mary Stuart is placed in the list of French female poets. Unfortunate Mary! When she wrote her poetic farewell to this country,

"Adieu, plaisant pays de France, &c."

she seems to have felt a sad presage of her future calamities; those calamities which make me forget every weakness of Mary, and every great quality of Elizabeth; qualities over which the fate of Mary has surely cast an everlasting shade.

At

At the *Maison de Ville* we saw a picture of *Jeanne d'Arc*, painted two hundred years ago. The countenance is uncommonly beautiful. It seems that nature, while she bestowed on the *Maid of Orléans* the heroic qualities of the other sex, did not deny her the soft attractions of her own.

There is also at the *Maison de Ville* the picture of *Doctor Petit*, who is a native of this place, and has acquired a very high reputation, and an ample fortune as a physician at *Paris*. He has lately built a handsome house at *Orléans*, for the purpose of furnishing advice and medicines gratis to the poor; and, with additional benevolence, to defend their little property from injustice, he has appointed lawyers who have a salary allowed them for pleading the cause of the indigent.

This public benefactor to his native city is the son of a taylor; and, in order to shew that he was superior to the prejudices which so long enslaved his country, he appointed the oldest taylor at *Orléans* in indigent circumstances to take care of this new institution.

Doctor Petit I suppose felt, that having arrived at eminence by a path of all others the most honourable, that of distinguished talents, he might be allowed to recollect, without blushing, the roture of his birth. Perhaps he thinks on this subject as *Boileau* did when he wrote—

—“ Fuffiez vous issus d’Hercule en droite ligne,
 “ Si vous ne faites voir qu’une bassesse indigne,
 “ Ce long amas d’aïeux que vous diffamez tous,
 “ Sont autant de témoins qui parlent contre vous.”

The

The late king of Prussia was told by one of his courtiers, that two ladies of high rank had a dispute about precedency, which was become so serious that it was necessary for his majesty to interpose his authority in deciding the question. * “ Eh bien !” said Frederic, qu'on donne le pas à la plus folle.”

L E T T E R XXXVII.

THERE is an university at Orléans, founded by Philippe le Bel, in 1312. If one can forgive a tyrant, who pursued his own aggrandizement, sometimes by the most perfidious policy, sometimes by the most cruel oppressions, and who first changed offences against the king, which until his reign were only considered as crimes of felony, into crimes of high treason, it must be in consideration of his having, in that barbarous age, done something for the cause of literature. In this instance it appears that he did not reason with his usual subtilty ; since the progress of literature is very unfavourable to the interests of tyranny. What example so memorable, and so recent, of this truth, as the event of the French revolution ? that glorious event which will probably in its consequences change the face of this earth, and will be marked in the

* Well—give the precedency to the greatest fool.

page

page of history as that luminous point of human annals, from which a better order of things is seen to arise: and this event has surely been the work of literature, of philosophy, of the enlarging views of mankind. Liberty springs as naturally from knowledge, as light from the sun; and the liberty which the French have acquired, and are determined to maintain, appears to be the deliberate, the noble, the august choice of reason. It has no resemblance to those fiery meteors which sometimes throw a transitory flash across that darkness which they have not sufficient power to dispel: it is the sublime effect of truth visiting the land, like the day-spring from on high, and, with a similar kind of influence over the moral world, warming the heart, in proportion as it enlightens the understanding.

The French, in forming their new constitution, have made an experiment in politics, and why should they be censured for so doing? While philosophy teaches the general utility of experimental science, who will be bold enough to assert, that the science of government alone has attained perfection, and is incapable of improvement? Who will say to the human understanding, on this one point only, thus far shalt thou go, and no farther? If the progression of reason in the art of government is forbidden, how miserable are the prospects of the human race! for small indeed is the portion of political happiness hitherto obtained by mankind.

But why do I attempt to justify the conduct of the French, when you know we have all heard that they have been guilty of the most fatal

fatal errors? They have shewn some disposition to reform the papal hierarchy, and to separate the artificial splendour of church establishments from the pure beams of that light which cometh from above. They have invaded the grand monuments of the dead, and thrown open the melancholy tombs of the living. They have led beauty from the solitary cell, where its charms might have bloomed in security, and have exposed those dangerous attractions to the love and admiration of society. They have drawn forth coins and medals, paintings and statues, from those venerable repositories where they had long lain buried with their past possessors. Their sacrilegious hands have disturbed the learned dust of libraries stored with theological controversies, and which displayed perhaps the weakness, as well as the strength of the human mind: and, instead of employing the mason, and the carpenter, in repairing the ravages of time on Gothic edifices, they have erected obelisks to a pagan divinity, not to be found in the monkish calendar, and degraded at Rome ever since the days of the ancient republic. But let us turn from the enumeration of their transgressions against that code of respectable prejudices, stamped with the authority of past ages, and which in the opinion of some people ought to be deemed no less irreversible than the decrees of the Medes and Persians.

I shall finish my letter with the remark of a lady formerly noble, with whom I was lately in company. Some person happened to mention the
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the philosophers of France ; * “ Ah ! ” said she, with great warmth, “ n’en parlez plus de ces gueux de philosophes ; ce font eux qui ont causé tous nos malheurs avec leurs écrits impertinens.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

WE left Orléans the beginning of December, and are come to pass the winter at Paris. Such of our acquaintances as are aristocrats tell us how much we ought to lament the evil destiny which has led us to Paris at present ; that the town has lost all its former éclat ; that all the good company are at Coblentz ; that the splendid equipages are laid aside ; that the public walks, where formerly none but persons comme il faut were suffered to enter, are now filled with people whom nobody knows ; and that, upon the whole, we may consider ourselves as most unfortunate travellers, who have come to see Paris at a time when there is nothing to be seen.

Notwithstanding this obliging pity of some of my acquaintances, I am rather disposed to con-

* Ah ! do not talk any more of those wretches of philosophers ; it is they who have occasioned all our misfortunes by their impertinent writings.

gratulate

gratulate myself that I have missed the fine equipages, the laced liveries, and the good company at Coblentz; while I have an opportunity of observing the effects of a revolution, so noble in its design, so astonishing in the sudden change produced in the sentiments of a whole nation, rising from the servility of abject servitude, to such an exalted spirit of freedom, that the contemplation inspires unwearied admiration and wonder.

I believe that the former magnificence of Paris, when its public places and public walks were crowded with persons distinguished by stars and ribbons, would have conveyed sensations very different, and far less delightful to my heart than those which I have felt amidst rejoicing multitudes, who had no other claim to distinction than virtue and patriotism, and no other decoration than the national cockade.

I have sometimes recollected, on those occasions, the fine lines of Addison.

“ Oh, Liberty, thou goddess heav’nly bright,
 “ Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight!
 “ Eternal pleasures in thy presence reign,
 “ And smiling Plenty leads thy wanton train;
 “ Eas’d of her load, Subjection grows more light,
 “ And Poverty looks cheerful in thy sight;
 “ Thou mak’st the gloomy face of nature gay,
 “ Giv’st beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day.”

I never witness these scenes of general felicity without indulging the hope that a period is approaching more favourable than any former period, to the general happiness of the human race: when the crooked subtleness of politics and the open violations of justice will alike

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pass away, and what has hitherto been considered as the fond speculation of the philosophers, the golden dream of the moralist, will become historical fact; when we shall no longer trace in the annals of history a sanguinary list of crimes; when ambition, deprived of all power of doing evil, will only be left the ability to do good, and be forbidden any longer to cover the earth with desolation; and when no path to glory will be left, but from the cultivation of human happiness.

Do not imagine, however, that the emigrants have left nothing behind them but public spirit and public virtue; and that all splendour, taste, and gaiety have fled with them to Coblenz. There are at present no less than twenty theatres at Paris, which are well filled every night; and at most of which you see charming acting. The grace, the sprightliness, the naïveté, the easy natural movements of their comic actors far surpass any thing our London theatres can boast. Let us resign to the French the palm of comedy, since the laurels of tragedy are all our own.—There is but one Siddons, one transcendent genius, who has every passion of the human heart at her command, and the sublime graces of whose performance it is impossible not to feel, but no less impossible to describe.

- “ Gesture, that marks with force, and feeling fraught,
- “ A scene in silence, and a will in thought;
- “ All perishable, like th’ electric fire,
- “ But strike the eye, and as they strike expire;
- “ Incense too pure a bodied frame to bear,
- “ Its fragrance charms the sense, and melts in air.”

Mademoiselle

Mademoiselle Clairon, the celebrated French tragic actress, not contented with the fame she had acquired, once attempted, contrary to the advice of her friends, to act the part of Merope, in Voltaire's tragedy; a part which Madame Dufmenil, the rival of Mademoiselle Clairon, had acted with extraordinary success. A friend of Mademoiselle Clairon's, who supped with her after the performance, said to her, "You have very fine tragic powers, but you must absolutely renounce the part of Merope; for there Madame Dufmenil is far superior to you." * "Ah oui!" said Mademoiselle Clairon, heaving a deep sigh, "la misérable! — elle a eu un enfant!"

Is it a proof of the superior refinement of the French, that they are fonder of theatrical amusements than the English? Or does it arise from that love of gaiety and pleasure, which is so much more prevalent in the French than the English character? A London tradesman, when the business of the day is over, sits down contentedly with his wife and children, and reads the newspaper. But a bourgeois at Paris usually concludes the day at one of the spectacles, and this without injuring his circumstances: as a taste for those amusements being universal at Paris, there are spectacles adapted to every purse, and pleasure may be had at a very cheap rate.

There are coffee-houses on the Boulevards, where the people, while they drink their wine, lemonade, or orgeat, are entertained with a play

* Ah, yes! the wretch—she has had a child!

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gratis.

gratis. Women, as well as men, are admitted to these coffee-houses; for the English idea of finding ease, comfort, or festivity, in societies where women are excluded, never enters into the imagination of a Frenchman.

Not that the same gallantry, the same constant attention to women now prevails which existed before the revolution.—Like Moliere's Doctor, "on a changé tout cela." The men, engrossed by political concerns which involve the fate of their country, and on which their own lives and fortunes depend, have no longer leisure or inclination to devote as much time as they did formerly to the women; and I think the French ladies stand a fair chance of being soon almost as much neglected as the English. Not only the age of chivalry, but the age of *petits maîtres* is past.

The greatest simplicity in dress is observed, and is sometimes carried even to negligence. Every man seems at pains to shew that he has wasted as few moments as it was possible at his toilette, and that his mind is bent on higher cares than the embellishment of his person. I am told that this revolution in dress and manners, this subversion of the ancient laws of etiquette, has excited such a degree of surprise and wonder in the king's attendants at the Tuilleries, that, notwithstanding this is the fourth year of French liberty, those gentlemen have not yet got the better of their astonishment. Nothing, it is said, can exceed the minute curiosity, and the expressive looks, shrugs, and gestures, with which they examine the dress of the members of the National Assembly, when sent on deputations
to

to the king. It is known that these gentlemen in waiting, having no idea of dignity, unaccoutred with a sword and bag, were disposed to treat the deputations from the National Assembly with contempt, till Mirabeau took the trouble to give them a lesson on that subject.

He was sent at the head of a deputation of the National Assembly to the king. The attendants, instead of going to inform his majesty, that they desired an audience, kept them waiting in the antichamber. Mirabeau, however, did not wait long. He rose from his seat, and with that commanding aspect and emphatic tone which belonged to him, walking up to a *ci-devant* duke, he said, * “Monsieur, je vous *ordonne* d’aller dire au Roi que les représentans de la nation Française sont ici.” He was obeyed without one moment’s hesitation.

But to return to the theatres. The little comic pieces which are acted at the *petits spectacles* at Paris are far superior to our London after-pieces, which in general are full of coarse, broad humour, much more calculated to excite disgust than laughter.

Even Harlequin, at Paris, instead of confining himself, as he does at London, to manual wit, and feats of activity, assumes a character of naïveté diverting enough. In this style is the account he gives to a friend of his having fallen in love: † “Et même,” adds he, “je suis

* Sir, I *order* you to go and inform the king, that the representatives of the French nation are here.

† I am even half married.—But how?—Why I am ready, and there is nothing wanting but the consent of the young lady.

moitié

moitié marié." "Mais comment?" replies his friend.

"Ce que je le veux bien," says Harlequin, "et il ne manque que la consentement de la demoiselle."

The opera at Paris infinitely surpasses, in the splendour of its decorations, the illusion of the machinery, and the charm of the dancing, the opera at London. But you know I am no enthusiastic admirer of this fashionable amusement. I always find at an opera such an air of burlesque, something so artificial, nature and simplicity so completely banished, that, notwithstanding I love music passionately, I cannot help sometimes feeling that the music at an opera "plays round the head, but comes not to the heart." And I am inclined to think with Lord Chesterfield, that, in order to be pleased with that entertainment, you ought to leave your understanding with your half-guinea at the door.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

WE have been to see the magnificent Palais de Bourbon. This immense pile of building, with its numerous and spacious courts, now deserted, solitary, and silent, affords ample room for moralizing. The petit Palais in which the Prince de Conde usually lived, and where he frequently

quently entertained select parties of his friends, is fitted up with a degree of beauty, taste, and elegance, of which you can form no idea from any royal dwelling you have seen in England.

The Abbé de Mably, however, seems of opinion that, while our cottages are snug, warm, and comfortable, we have no reason to blush that the French bear away the palm from us in point of palaces. I have just read the Abbé de Mably's book, entitled, "Des Droites et des Devoirs du Citoyen," a work written several years ago, and in which the progress of the public mind in France, and the steps which led to the French revolution, are traced with so much simplicity, clearness, energy, and truth, that it seems rather the history of what has passed, than a prophecy of what was then to come.

When the Bastille was taken, this book, together with a large edition of another work of the Abbé de Mably's, entitled, "Des Observations sur l'Histoire de France," were found in an apartment appropriated to the purpose of containing such books as were judged improper for the eye of the public; and it is certain that the writings of the Abbé de Mably are sufficiently philosophical to have deserved, under the reign of despotism, being made prisoners of state.

We have also been to visit Rincy and Mouceaux, two houses belonging to the Duke of Orléans. Mouceaux is the most singular and enchanting spot I ever saw. You are led through long magnificent galleries, furnished with the most happy union of simplicity and elegance, and lighted

lighted by a thousand lamps to a hot-house formed into serpentine walks, where, in the middle of winter, and at a time when the ground was covered with snow, an infinite variety of flowers diffused the most delicious fragrance. The air was of the temperature of spring, a cascade falls over rocks with the most soothing murmurs, and this delightful spot leads to the dining apartment, from which you enjoy the beauties and fragrance of this elysian walk, where the charms of nature and the embellishments of art are blended together in a manner which I imagined was only to be found in the palaces of sylphs and fairies; personages, who, you know, are supposed to have a great deal more facility in raising splendid palaces than we mere mortals.

Rincy is a noble mansion, where M. d'Orléans, who has lived much in England, has united with the taste and grandeur of a French palace, the comforts and accommodations of an English house.

The grounds of Rincy are laid out in the English taste, are very beautiful, and of considerable extent. We dined with an English gentleman in the service of Mons. d'Orléans, and who lives in a charming house in his park.

In the morning we hunted a boar. This was the first time in my life I had ever been at a chase, and I find it an amusement so little suited to my taste, that I shall certainly never try it again. We rode in phaetons up and down the alleys of the woods, in search of this wretched animal, who at last yielded himself up to the dogs, and had his life spared till another day. I believe

lieve a French hunt is as little suited to the taste of an English fox-hunter, as it is to mine, but for a very different reason: here are neither inclosures to pass, nor six-barred gates to leap; there is neither danger to encounter, nor glory to be gained; and too small a chance of a broken neck to interest the passions of an English squire.

Since the revolution, such quantities of game have been destroyed, that this English gentleman has thought proper to preserve a number of the wild inhabitants of the forests from the general slaughter, by confining them in separate paddocks, where boars, hares, &c. are regularly fed: but I do not believe their good fare reconciles them to the loss of their liberty. I have no doubt they would prefer *jour maigre*, together with the unconfined range of the woods, to any *fête* within the paddock.

The English gentleman with whom we dined at Rincy, shewed me a little engraving of the descent of Messrs. Charles and Robert from their balloon. These aerial adventurers were followed on horseback by *Monf. d'Orléans*, and a great number of persons, among whom was this Englishman.

The balloon descended after a course of thirty miles; and the Englishman, getting the start of the other horsemen, seized a cord of the balloon as it descended, and then springing to embrace *Monf. Charles*, reminded him, that he was the first to meet him. But being obliged to express this sentiment in French, he could find in the agitation of the moment no other words than,

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“ *Moi*

* "Moi Charles premier." The French company were amused with the expression, and soon after an engraving appeared of the descent of the balloon, the train of gentlemen on horseback, the Englishman holding the cord, and these words below the print, "Moi Charles premier."

While the French princes are employing their revenues in training soldiers for the purpose of deluging their native country with blood, Mons. d'Orléans is spending a considerable part of his revenue in paying workmen who are making improvements at Rincy. Mons. d'Orléans has many enemies, who tell you that his patriotism is all affectation. However, since it has been uniform and constant, from the first period of the revolution, I know not on what ground this conjecture is founded: but this at least is certain, that it would save this nation many millions, and too probably a great profusion of blood, if the other French princes had distinguished themselves by the same kind of affectation.

With regard to the family of Mons. d'Orléans, whom, in consequence of my acquaintance with Madame de Sillery, I have the honour of knowing a little, I am firmly persuaded from my own observations, that their patriotism is pure, warm, and disinterested. They are too amiable for disguise, and the genuine feelings of their minds are easily discerned. "I am accused," says Madame de Sillery, in her last interesting publication, "of having taught the princes under my care to love the revolution: whereas

* I am Charles the first.

their

their love of the revolution is but the natural, the necessary effect of those principles which I had long ago inculcated in their minds."

To young persons who had been instructed that the chief privilege arising from their high rank, was that of affording them opportunities of more extensive benevolence; who had learned "the luxury of doing good," and imbibed the principles of general philanthropy towards the human race—to such young persons it was an easy task to make some sacrifices to the happiness of millions, and to love the revolution of their country.

L E T T E R XL.

I WENT on Christmas-day to hear high mass at the magnificent church of Notre Dame, where the colours are now displayed which used to float on the towers of the Bastille, before that gloomy fortress was taken.

Mass was performed by the archbishop of Paris, with great solemnity and devotion. Some parts of the music were fine, and I felt my mind raised and affected by it.

I often recollected, in the course of the day, with a tender and melancholy emotion, my distance from England, where that day is passed in a manner far more interesting than in France. With

With us, you know, it is spent in the bosom of your family, or consecrated to the friends and connections you love most, while formal visitors are excluded. This is not the case in France: the theatres are crowded with company, and the day passes in the usual amusements.

The last evening of the old year we went, about eight o'clock, to the Palais Royal, where the walks were filled with people, and most of the shops illuminated, particularly the confectioners, which in every part of Paris are splendidly lighted up on this evening, and make a more agreeable appearance than our pastry-cooks shops on Twelfth-night in London; where the sight of so much plum-cake as is then displayed becomes rather oppressive after ten years of age. The confectioners shops here are filled with ornamented glass boxes for sweetmeats, and a variety of pretty trinkets, which people buy, and present to their friends at this season.

A gentleman who called here this morning, told me an anecdote, which I shall relate to you.—A friend of his, formerly one of the garde du corps, and who very narrowly escaped from the fury of the people on the 6th of October, 1789, came a few days ago to Paris, and immediately sent for a hair-dresser. The officer, while he was dressing, told the man, that he thought he remembered his face. “Yes, sir,” said the hair-dresser; “and I recollect you perfectly—you were in the garde du corps; I saw you on the sixth of October.” * “Ma foi,” said

* Faith, I escaped very narrowly; I was very near being hanged.—Yes indeed, sir, and I held the cord.

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the officer, "j'ai échappé bel; j'étais bien près d'être pendu." "Oui vraiment, monsieur," replied the hair-dresser, "et moi j'ai tenu la corde."

I observe with pleasure a proof which the Parisians give of that general veneration for genius, which prevails in this city, by calling several of the streets of Paris after the names of celebrated men. Here is the quay of Voltaire, the street of Jean Jaques Rousseau, the street of Mirabeau, and, since the death of the Abbé Cerutti, a man of letters, and a patriot, the people have made the *ci-devant* street of Artois drop its aristocratical pretensions, and assume the name of Cerutti.

Why is no street, no square, in London named after Pope, Milton, or, to rise to the highest climax of human genius, after Shakespeare? We seem to have a strange dread in England of indulging any kind of enthusiasm, however laudable. We are very apt to wrap up our feelings in the unrelenting severity of wisdom on occasions when it would be far more amiable to give way to the impulse of the heart. You will see Frenchmen bathed in tears at a tragedy. An Englishman has quite as much sensibility to a generous or tender sentiment; but he thinks it would be unmanly to weep; and, though perhaps half choked with emotion, he scorns to be overcome, contrives to gain the victory over his feelings, and throws into his countenance as much apathy as he can well wish.

We have also such a profound dread of ridicule in England; we are so afraid of one another,

ther, that, instead of going into company with the hope of pleasing, we only entertain the humble desire of escaping censure. A French society, with a happy mixture of enthusiasm and nonchalance, ventures on a thousand traits of sentiment, and sprightly sallies, which make the hours pass away agreeably; but which an English company would not hazard for the world; but

——“ do a willful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;
——I do know of those,
That therefore only are reputed wise,
For saying nothing.”——

And yet I can find no other reason for the English going into company with their minds in complete armour, and their understandings always in a posture of defence, except, that an Englishman cannot bear to be laughed at, and that a Frenchman can; for I do not believe there is more good nature in France than in England. Writing upon this subject recalls powerfully to my heart the idea of those friends with whom I passed most of my time in London; of that society which absence can only serve to endear, by convincing me that its loss is irreparable.

I have heard a gentleman allege, that French and English conversation amounted to the same thing; for, said he, **“ Les Anglais ne disent rien, et les Français disent des riens.”*

* The English say *nothing*, and the French say *nothings*.

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There are no talents which I feel more disposed to envy than those of wit and eloquence in conversation; than the power of giving it a fresh flow when it grows languid; when, to use the beautiful image of Mrs. Piozzi, "the little stream of prattle ceases to murmur for want of a few pebbles to break its course." Apropos of eloquence—One evening at Streatham Park, some person asked Doctor Johnson, how he would choose to distribute the great offices of state which were at that time vacant, amongst the literary ladies of his acquaintance. "Mrs. Carter," said he, "shall be appointed Lord High Chancellor of England." "And what place will you give to the lady of this house?" somebody enquired. "We will give *her*," answered Johnson, "a seat in the House of Commons, and she will rise of herself."

L E T T E R XLI.

THERE were some commotions lately at Paris, on account of an attempt to monopolize sugar, which was already sold at an enormous price, and which the poor of Paris, who live as much upon coffee as the poor of London do upon tea, consider as one of the necessaries of life. For three nights the guards were trebled, and the town was lighted up for greater security. In a few days the commotion was entirely appeased, which

which I own had never given me the smallest alarm: for I always consider myself in perfect safety at Paris under the protection of the national guard, which the Parisians call, with truth, *la fauve-garde de la ville*. The national guards are so much respected by the people, that they find it easy to enforce obedience, and they generally make the wisest and most temperate use of their power.

I have been several times at the National Assembly. The debates in this second legislature are less interesting than those of the Constituent Assembly, where almost at every sitting some pillar of the ancient system was thrown down, and some part of the new fabric rose majestically from its ruins. Neither does this assembly display the same blaze of talents which astonished and dazzled in the former. She can boast of no Mirabeau, no transcendent genius

—————“ on the ample pinion,
That the Theban eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Thro' the azure depths of air—
Yet will she soar, and keep her equal way
————— how far above the great!”

And one may apply to the genius of this assembly what I lately read in a little collection of French letters, where the writer, speaking of the talents for poetry which prevail so generally in the southern provinces of France, the country of the Troubadours, says, “ Nobody has immense riches of genius in this country; but easy, even affluent fortunes are very common; and the sum of poetical wealth is upon the whole far more

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considerable than if a great deal were accumulated upon one head."

There is a sufficient stock of ability in the National Assembly, animated as it is by the most important and exalted objects. A member of the National Assembly knows that he is pleading not merely the cause of the people of France. He is speaking at the tribune of Europe, and he is pleading the cause of all the people of the earth. For it is now too late for the lovers of arbitrary power to consider the French revolution in the light in which they once affected to consider it. The time long ago is past, for terming that event an affair of accident, and the triumph of the rabble, which is found to have originated in the unanimous will of a great and enlightened nation, and has taught mankind a lesson, which perhaps the whole human race will be proud to learn.

I heard the decree passed in the National Assembly for confiscating the estates of the emigrants. They, and their chiefs the French princes, will probably soon tire the short-lived pity of foreign courts, and will be doomed to wander over Europe, as the adherents of the house of Stuart have done, poor, wretched, and abandoned. Yet how different the situation of the Scotch and French fugitives! How different the situation of the descendants of James the Second, and that of Lewis the Sixteenth! What are the misfortunes of Lewis the Sixteenth? He has been deprived of despotic power. What is his present situation? He is called by the consent of a free people to the crown of the greatest nation in Europe. The French emigrants are not, therefore, influenced by the same generous motives.

motives which led the adherents of the house of Stuart to take up arms, which could be no other than a disinterested attachment to that family, in defence of which they risked their lives and fortunes. The French emigrants, on the contrary, would deluge their native country with blood, sooner than renounce titles that were vain, and privileges that were odious.

LETTER XLII.

I HAVE been at the Jacobins, that society which has acted a part so distinguished in the French revolution, and in which every political question of importance is debated before it is brought forward in the National Assembly. The Jacobins have too much influence in the new system of French politics not to have many enemies. By those persons every crime, every enormity is attributed to this society; which, it is asserted, has not only the fate of France, but the fate of Europe in his hands. If the Emperor of Germany is hostile to the French nation, it is the fault of the Jacobins. Leopold felt the most tender and paternal interest in the prosperity of the new constitution: but he was forced to make a declaration of war against that formidable, that atrocious sect. To the Jacobins is owing every outrage committed by popular fury, and every treasonable design conceived by the aristocracy.

aristocratic factions. The Jacobins are the contrivers of all disorder, the levellers of all distinctions, and the enemies of all subordination. It is their intention to overturn the present system of government, and divide the French empire into eighty-three republics, governed by Jacobins.

Such is the cry, not merely of those who have the courage to profess themselves of the aristocratic party, but also of those, who, however they may regret the subversion of the old government, have sagacity enough to perceive that, like the age of chivalry, it is past for ever, and therefore prudently determine to attempt its restoration no more. The ancient system of abuses they find must be renounced, and therefore they limit their ambition to the conservation of as many errors, as many prejudices as possible. These persons talk to you of their profound respect for the new constitution, which they accuse the Jacobins of wishing to subvert. I believe, indeed, that if there are some points of the constitution which the Jacobins disapprove, they are those very points which these persons would bind on their posterity for ever. Even among the patriots there are many who think that, the constitution being now established, the deliberations of the Jacobins are no longer necessary, and who also think that that society leans too much towards republicanism.

There are in France several different sects of patriots; but the two leading parties are those who are reproachfully termed by each other, *enragés* and *modérés*; and the great features of difference between these parties seem to be that the *enragés* place the declaration of rights above the constitution, while the *modérés* place the constitution

tution above the declaration of rights. Each party is as dogmatical as the former doctors of the Sorbonne. But a Frenchman never disputes with calmness on any subject: it were therefore unreasonable to expect he should throw aside the natural impetuosity of his character, on the very points most likely to call it forth. This accounts, in some measure, for the violent tumults which sometimes arise in the National Assembly; while in our House of Commons debates are carried on with the most perfect good order and tranquillity. Another reason, however, may be assigned for this, besides the difference of national character. In the House of Commons our great orators may be as eloquent as they will; they may do honour to our nation, and to the age in which they live, by the energy, the sublimity of their talents; but every body knows that their eloquence does not influence even one solitary vote; and before a debate begins, all the world is well apprised how the business will end.

This is not the case in the National Assembly. There, arguments and votes have still a connection with each other; and therefore every point is discussed with vehemence.—But to return to the Jacobins.—If they have many enemies, the party of their friends is far more numerous. Those persons declare that they never enter the hall of the Jacobins without respect, because they consider it as the cradle and the sanctuary of French liberty. They are convinced that those watchful, vigilant, jealous, noisy Jacobins are its best guardians; and that but for the extensive influence which they have acquired, in

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consequence of their correspondence with the other patriotic societies, established in every part of the kingdom, with whom they constantly maintain a chain of connection, the infant liberty of France would have been crushed in its birth by its numerous and formidable enemies. The friends of the Jacobins believe that they are very far from intending to overthrow the present system, whatever speculative opinions some of the members of that society may have on the subject of government: but that, if the Jacobins should find that corruption is suffered to taint the purity of the new constitution and impede its march—if it should be found that the first National Assembly, after having formed that constitution upon the great and everlasting basis of the rights of man, and of which the Abbé Sieyès has the glory of having laid the corner-stone in drawing up the declaration of those rights—if it should be found that that assembly, after sustaining a long and laborious struggle, at length wearied of the conflict, should suffer the beautiful work they had created to be deformed in the revision of it—if it should be found that the constitution, in its present state, is like an ill-constructed carriage, and that it is in the power of the drivers to put some secret clogs upon the wheels, and prevent its going forward, while the patriots in vain lash up the horses—then, it is said, the Jacobins will warn the people of the threatened danger, with that bold, that ardent eloquence which belongs to the apostles of liberty.

I was at the Jacobins when the English, French, and American colours, fastened together

gether with bands of laurel and national ribbons, were placed in the hall. As soon as the colours appeared, the hall resounded with acclamations of more than two thousand persons who were present, and who immediately rose from their seats; the men waved their hats in the air, and from every quarter were re-echoed the cries of * "Vive la liberté — Vive l'Angleterre — Vive la France — Vivent les nations libres!" At the sight of those banners, so often the symbols of war, of desolation, of horror, now become the pledges of peace, of good will, of union between the nations, every heart seemed animated with a sacred enthusiasm, every bosom throbbled with sympathy, and every eye was melted with tears. The colours were fixed in the hall, and it was proposed by some of the members, and ordered by the society, that busts of Price, Franklin, Algernon Sidney, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and the Abbé de Mably, should be placed beneath the banners of the three nations.

The names of Milton, of Locke, and of Hambden, re-echoed through the hall, where it was proposed that their busts should also in a short time be placed. I heard with exultation the well-known names of these celebrated persons, and recollected with pride that I had the honour of belonging to the same country. Surely that nation which produced the writings of Milton and of Locke, which gave birth to Sidney and Hambden, in ages when the rest

* Long live liberty—Long live England—Long live France — Long live the nations that are free!

of

of Europe were slaves, has a claim to the everlasting gratitude and admiration of mankind.

In this enlightened period of the world more perfect systems of legislation may perhaps be formed than England can boast. *Her* Magna Charta was obtained not in the illumination of the eighteenth, but in the Gothic darkness of the twelfth century. *She* can never be deprived of the most glorious pre-eminence among the children of freedom; *she*, who cherished in her bosom the noble sentiments of liberty, when the nations around her were sunk in the most abject servitude. If those nations now find the path of freedom, it is by pursuing the track which England first explored.

The example of the revolution in America is supposed to have had considerable influence on the French nation: and from whom did the Americans imbibe their love of freedom? They loved it because they were of English race, and had studied the writings of English philosophers, and the examples of English patriots.

May England rectify the abuses and corruptions which have crept into her government by wise and temperate reformation—may she avoid those storms and convulsions which are only necessary to purify the moral, as well as the physical world, from any mighty and fatal contagion. While France has been obliged to correct *her* government by holding in one hand her philosophic declaration of rights, and grasping her unsheathed sword in the other—may England effect the same august purpose with no other arms than those of reason—may she,
I without

without interrupting her national prosperity, employ the most effectual means of securing its continuance — may she direct that full tide of wealth which rolls through the land, to visit it in more equal streams; and may there be “no leading into captivity, and no complaining in her streets!”

LETTER XLIII.

THE first National Assembly, amidst the greatness and extent of its labours, was obliged to leave to a succeeding assembly the task of instituting a plan of public education; a task which will soon occupy the present legislature, and will alone serve to immortalize it, if well performed.

It is said, that Monsieur Condorcet, a member of the present National Assembly, is at present employed on this object; and there can be no doubt that he will execute the work he has undertaken with that philosophical spirit, and that extensive knowledge, which he possesses in so conspicuous and eminent a degree.

How many soothing, how many comprehensive and sublime ideas does this plan of public education include! There is something infinitely agreeable and delightful to the imagination in the anticipation of that progress which the
 rising

rising generation in this country may make in reason, in philosophy, in virtue, and in happiness; and the improvement of the rising generation cannot but be highly interesting to the friends of the French revolution, since it seems peculiarly for them that that revolution has been made. They will best enjoy the benefits resulting from it. The present patriots of France may be said figuratively, as well as literally, to be placed in a field of battle: they have long-rooted prejudices to conquer; they have ancient errors to subdue; which perhaps are more difficult to be vanquished than the combined forces of Germany and of Prussia. In the august career of liberty, these patriots are encompassed with dangers, and beset with snares; and if they are now enabled to keep the field against those who were formerly their tyrants, it is by the determined, the unremitting contest they maintain with vice, viality, and corruption. But through the clouds and storms which now obscure the French horizon, it is easy to discern the clear, the bright perspective which unfolds itself to the rising race. We see that the blessings of enlightened freedom await them, and we rejoice that a suitable education will qualify them to enjoy their distinguished lot; that they will be made worthy of their high destiny, and fit guardians of that better order of things which they will be called upon to maintain.

Mirabeau had drawn out a plan of public instruction, which he meant to present to the National Assembly; and he intended, when this question was discussed, to propose at the same time the abolition of the literary academies, or

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rather corporations of Paris, which he considered as incompatible with the spirit of a free constitution, and as injuring instead of serving the cause of letters.

Monf. Chamfort, a member of the French academy, had, at Mirabeau's desire, written a discoursé on the subject of that academy, which the death of Mirabeau prevented his reading at the tribune of the National Assembly. It is a fact well known in France, that Mirabeau eagerly sought and accepted the assistance of such men as he thought were capable of furnishing him with ideas worthy of his own high reputation.— There was certainly a want of delicacy in thus wearing, without scruple, as he frequently did, these laurels which were the right of another. But since he could reconcile himself to borrowed applause, he was peculiarly fortunate in having Monf. Chamfort for his friend, who, with a mind well qualified to lend ideas to Mirabeau, unites a degree of reserve and delicacy, which led him to resign with readiness these claims to fame which Mirabeau, without hesitation, made his own. Monf. Chamfort is well known at Paris, not only as a man of the first literary talents, and as possessing the most brilliant powers of conversation, but is also distinguished for having felt and professed the most ardent love of liberty, many years before the revolution had brought principles of that kind into fashion.— What has made this circumstance well remembered, is, that the society in which this gentleman constantly avowed these sentiments, was that of the Prince of Condé; on whom it reflects some honour, that he had sufficient taste
to

to court *Monf. Chamfort's* society, and sufficient understanding to pardon the independence of his spirit.

In the discourse which *Monf. Chamfort* gave to *Mirabeau* upon the French academy, he paints with admirable acuteness, with all the force of genius, and all the wit of irony, the littleness, the inutility, the absurdities, and above all the abject spirit which has prevailed in that society; but there is one passage in this discourse upon "the prize of virtue," established in the French academy, which is in my opinion a model of fine writing, and I cannot resist transcribing part of it.

* "Et d'abord, laissant à part cette affiche, ce concours périodique, ce programme d'un prix

* And not to mention that public advertisement, that periodical annunciation of a prize of virtue *for the following year*, I read the terms of the institution, and I see this prize is destined for the virtues of such as are of the *indigent class of citizens*. What! has then the class of the opulent yielded the palm of virtue to the poor? No assuredly. That class pretends alike with the other to the display of virtue. But the rich will not accept the prize. No; the prize is gold, and the rich would consider themselves degraded by receiving it. I understand them; there is not enough; and they disdain to take it. The rich leave it to the poor. Do you then mean to pay, or to honour virtue? You surely neither pretend nor hope she can be paid. You mean then to honour her. It is well. Do not then begin by degrading her, in placing riches above indigent virtue. Oh, what a subversion of every moral idea, arising from that excess of corruption which it is calculated to increase! Mark the abyss from which we are delivered. Tell me in what corporation, in what society a gentleman would have been admitted who had accepted the prize of virtue, bestowed by a public assembly! There existed then amongst us even a *roture* in virtue. Take back that gold which cannot recompense a noble action of the rich. Render to virtue sufficient

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prix de vertu *pour l'année prochaine*, je lis les termes de la fondation, et je vois ce prix destiné aux vertus des citoyens *dans la classe indigente*. Quoi donc ? Qu'est-ce à dire ? La classe opulente a-t-elle relégué la vertu dans la classe des pauvres ? Non fans doute. Elle prétend bien, comme l'autre, pouvoir faire éclater des vertus. Elle ne veut donc pas du prix ? Non certes.—

ficient homage to believe that she alone can also recompense the poor, who, with an opulent conscience, can, as well as the rich, place a good action between Heaven and his own mind. Legislators, do not decree the divinity of gold, in giving it as a salary for those sublime cautions, those noble sacrifices which seem to place man in communion with his eternal Author. Your decree will be annulled—it is already annulled in the soul of the poor—yes, of the poor, in that moment when he ennobles himself by a generous action. Nothing is more general than the sentiment which attests this truth. Ah, have you not seen in those disasters, those evils which claim immediate succour—have you not seen the poor, when at the risk of life by some great act of courage he has saved one of his fellow-creatures, I mean the rich, the opulent, the happy, for the poor considers such as his fellow-creatures in the moment when they require his succour—have you not seen that when, in the first effusions of gratitude for his preterition, the rich has presented his benefactor with gold—have you never observed that indigent, that frier diefs, forlorn son of poverty draw back, and blush ? An hour before he would have implored your charity. Whence then arises this generous emotion of the mind ? It is that you profane his virtue, ungrateful as you are ! You corrupt your gratitude. He has performed a good action—he has enriched himself, and you treat him as if he were poor ! Instead of the divine satisfaction of having satisfied the most noble propensity of the soul, you substitute the idea of his material wants. You snatch him from heaven, where he felt that he had some interest, to earth, where he knows that he has none !

Oh, human nature, thus do they honour thee !—

When virtue lifts thee to thy most sublime elevation, they bring thee gold, they offer thee an alms !

Ce

Ce prix est de l'or ; le riche en l'acceptant se croirait avili. J'entends ; il n'y en a point assez ; il ne le prendrait pas. Le riche l'ose dire, et pourquoi ne le prendrait-il pas ? Le pauvre le prend bien ! Payez-vous la vertu ? ou bien, l'honorez-vous ? Vous ne la payez pas ; ce n'est ni votre prétention, ni votre espérance. Vous l'honorez donc ! Eh bien ! commencez par ne pas l'avilir en mettant la richesse au-dessus de la vertu indigente. O renversement de toutes les idées morales, né de l'excès de la corruption publique, et fait pour l'accroître encore ! Mesurons de l'œil l'abyme dont nous sortons : dans quel corps, dans quelle compagnie eût-il été admis, le ci-devant gentilhomme qui eût accepté le prix de vertu dans une assemblée publique ? Il y avoit parmi nous la routure de la vertu ! Retirez donc votre or, qui ne peut récompenser une belle action du riche. Rendez à la vertu cet hommage de croire que le pauvre aussi peut être payé par elle ; qu'il a, comme le riche, une conscience opulente et solvable ; qu'enfin il peut, comme le riche, placer une bonne action entre le ciel et lui. Législateurs, ne créez pas la divinité de l'or, en le donnant pour salaire à ces mouvemens sublimes, à ces grands sacrifices, qui semblent mettre l'homme en commerce avec son éternel Auteur. Il ferait annullé votre décret, il l'est d'avance dans l'ame du pauvre—oui, du pauvre, au moment où il vient de s'honorer par un acte généreux. Il est commun, il est par-tout le sentiment qui atteste cette vérité. Eh ! n'avez vous pas vu dans ces désastres qui provoquent le secours général—n'avez-vous pas vu quelqu'un de ces pauvres, lorsqu'au risque de ses jours et par un grand acte

acte de courage, il a sauvé l'un de ses semblables, je veux dire, le riche, l'opulent, l'heureux, car il les prend pour ses semblables. dès qu'il faut les secourir; lorsqu'après le péril et dans le reste des effusions de sa reconnaissance, le riche sauvé présente de l'or à son bienfaiteur, à cet indigent, à cet homme dénué; regardez celui-ci, comme il s'indigne, il recule, il s'étonne, il rougit—une heure auparavant il eût mendié. D'où lui vient ce noble mouvement? c'est que vous profanez son bienfait, ingrat que vous êtes! Vous corrompez votre reconnaissance. Il a fait du bien, il vient de s'enrichir, et vous le traitez en pauvre! Au plaisir céleste d'avoir satisfait le plus beau besoin de son ame, vous substituez la pensée d'un besoin matériel; vous le ramenez du ciel, où il est quelque chose, sur la terre, où il n'est rien. O nature humaine! voilà comme on t'honore! Quand la vertu t'élève à ta plus grande hauteur, c'est de l'or qu'on vient t'offrir, c'est l'aumône qu'on te présente!"

You will be disposed to believe, from the above specimen, that in France talents and patriotism are, as I have often told you, in strict alliance.

L E T T E R

LETTER XLIV.

THE Prince de Piemont conversing lately upon the commotions which agitate Europe at present, ended by saying, * “ Enfin, il faut que ceux qui veulent régner se dépêchent.” The minds of men, roused and animated by the most important and extraordinary movements, do, indeed, seem to lose sight a little of “ that divinity that hedges in a king.”

I am not, however, always occupied by these vast political discussions, but spend a part of every day at the Lycée, a charming institution, where learning seems stripped of its thorns and decorated with flowers, and where the gay and social Parisians cultivate science and the belles lettres, amidst the pleasures and attractions of society; while in England, where the art of being happy is certainly far less understood than in France, when we wish to acquire knowledge, we shut ourselves up for that purpose in sober meditation, and serious solitude. Perhaps, indeed, the knowledge gained by solitary study may be the most profound; but the knowledge acquired in society leaves on the mind the most agreeable impression.

The Lycée was formed in 1785, under the auspices of Monsieur the king's brother, and Monsieur d'Artois, and was soon resorted to not

* In short, those who wish to reign must make haste.

only

only by men of letters, but by the most fashionable persons of both sexes. Lectures are given at the Lycée by the most celebrated professors at Paris, on natural philosophy, chemistry, natural history, botany, history, and belles lettres; and the Greek, Italian, French and English languages are taught.

The Lycée drooped a little at the period of the revolution. In the violent convulsion of that moment, literature and arts were forgotten. But the Lycée soon revived; and though its former patrons are now at Coblenz, preparing an attempt, of which the lessons of history they received at the Lycée might have taught them the folly and impracticability, that of enslaving a people who are determined to be free; this institution is rising every day into higher celebrity from the eminent abilities of some of the professors. Of their knowledge in the different sciences they teach, I, in my ignorance, am little qualified to judge. But I can feel the charms of eloquence, and therefore find that chemistry, when taught by *Monf. Fourcroy*, is the most engaging, the most enchanting science in the world.

Monf. Garat, member of the first National Assembly, gives us lectures on Roman history, no less interesting than philosophical, and frequently makes such sublime applications to the revolution of France as call from my eyes the tears of delight and admiration.

Sometimes our studies are accompanied by fine music; and sometimes the *Abbé de Lille*, the first French poet, recites his harmonious verses.

Upon

Upon the whole, the pleasures of the Lycee are perfectly congenial to my taste; and it is to me by far the most agreeable of all the various resources which this great capital affords. I regret we have no such institution in London. What a relief would some people find in being able to escape, for an hour, from those everlasting evenings which are devoted to the dull vacuity of fashionable conversation, or the sad repetitions of card assemblies, and to store the furnished mind with a little stock of thought and sentiment, in such a society as the Lycée!

I am surprised to meet there with so few of my countrymen. Such of them as come to Paris in order to acquire the French language, would find at the Lycée not only the advantages of instruction, but of conversation; since the gentlemen form a sort of club every evening, when the journals of the day are read, and its politics discussed.

The Abbé Sicard has at different times explained to us, at the Lycée, the manner in which he instructs his deaf and dumb pupils, some of whom always accompany him. Nor can you imagine any thing more affecting than the sight of these unhappy young persons, condemned by nature to lose all that gives life its dearest value, the enjoyments of society, and to find "reason at one entrance quite shut out." But the melancholy which these reflections inspire is soothed, by observing that the pupils of the Abbé Sicard have not been left in this wretched condition. The Abbé shewed us with admirable ingenuity, and with that enthusiasm which it is so natural for a benevolent mind to feel in

the exercise of its powers, by what gradations he had led these children, whom he said, when first put under his care, he considered in the light of young savages brought from a remote country, and entirely ignorant of his language, from the knowledge of sensible objects, to moral and intellectual ideas.

One of his pupils, a young man about eighteen years of age, who accompanied him, appears to possess considerable talents, and answered some abstruse questions which were put to him by some of the company, with wonderful acuteness. He is the eldest of a family of five children at Bourdeaux, who are all deaf and dumb. Some time ago it was proposed to send for his sister to Paris, and place her also under the Abbé Sicard's care. The young man, who possesses uncommon sensibility, was in transports of joy at the thoughts of seeing his sister. In the fulness of his heart, he immediately wrote a long account of her talents and good qualities, and ended in these words: * "Et elle ne rit jamais sans nécessité." Is there not a great deal included in this original kind of eulogium?

I find little leisure for reading amidst the hurry of Paris; but I have contrived to snatch sufficient time for the perusal of a charming little book which was published some years ago at Paris, entitled *Joseph*, written in imitation of the *Death of Abel* by Gesner. This story of Joseph is painted with the most touching simplicity, and embellished with all the graces of

* And she never laughs but from necessity.

poetical

poetical language. Some of the most agreeable hours I have spent at Paris have been passed in the society of the author of this work, *Monf. Bitaube*, a Prussian gentleman, who to superior talents and learning unites the most amiable manners. He has also published a French translation of *Homer*, with which the late King of Prussia was so much pleased, that he used to say it had taught him to admire the old Grecian bard, for whom before he had felt little veneration. In general, the applause which a king bestows on a literary performance, may be thought of less value in the republic of letters, than the approbation of some heads not encircled with a crown: but the honour arising from the praises of a poet and philosopher like *Frederic the Second*, is entirely independent of his royal station.

L E T T E R XLV.

YOU have heard no doubt that we have had a fête at Paris, on account of the arrival of the *soldiers de Chateau-Vieux*: but to give you an idea of all the disturbance, animosity, quarrels, and contention, which preceded this *civic fête*, would be somewhat difficult. For a fortnight before it took place the whole town of Paris was thrown into the most violent agitation. The approach

approaching war seemed forgotten. Francis might threaten, and Prussia might arm; but all consideration of foreign affairs was laid aside, and the soldiers of Chateau-Vieux solely occupied the public attention. This Swiss regiment, called Chateau-Vieux, was one of those regiments which were encamped in the Champ de Mars before the revolution, and which were destined to massacre the Parisians, dissolve the states-general, and lay waste the city of Paris. But the soldiers of Chateau-Vieux disdained to act the part which had been assigned them in this bloody tragedy: they refused to become the assassins of the Parisians, and declared to their officers their resolution to break their arms in pieces, sooner than employ them against the citizens. That soldiers should dare before they drew their swords to deliberate whether the cause was just,—that when the word of command for murder was given, they should refuse to obey, because murder is a crime—was an example of morality, which, if it became contagious, would, it was immediately felt, prove absolutely destructive to the good old cause of arbitrary power; and it was resolved to punish the soldiers of Chateau-Vieux for having dared to *reason*, when *fighting* was the only thing for which they had received orders.

The regiment of Chateau-Vieux was sent to Nancy in that division which Bouillé commanded, and there Bouillé, who had already formed his plan of treason, attempted to light up the flames of civil war. He led the national guards, collected in haste from the neighbouring municipalities, against the citizens of Nancy. The
soldiers

soldiers of Chateau-Vieux, defended these citizens; both parties were in the most fatal error; a profusion of blood was shed; and Bouillé on this occasion acted a fit prelude to that design of betraying his country which he had formed at the very moment when he accepted the command of a considerable force, and had sworn fidelity to the new government. Compared to the baseness of such conduct, the bold open defiance of the party at Coblenz has something in it manly and honourable.

The day after the action at Nancy, when the streets were strewed with dead bodies, among which were two hundred soldiers of Chateau-Vieux, Bouillé assembled a council of war, which condemned twenty-two soldiers of this regiment to be hanged, and one to be broke upon the wheel. The last words of this victim were, * “*Bientôt Bouillé sera reconnu pour un traître—Vive la nation!*”—and his eyes closed themselves in death.

A few of the unfortunate soldiers of Chateau-Vieux still survived, and forty-two of them were condemned to the galleys, two of whom died on the seats to which they were chained. Forty still survived, and the National Assembly passed a decree for their deliverance. This decree remained long unexecuted; but, in the mean time, the soldiers of Chateau-Vieux received from the patriots of Brest, all the support and consolation which their situation admitted. The ladies of Brest visited the galley where they were

* Bouillé will soon be found to be a traitor—Long live the nation!

chained,

chained, and shed tears upon their fetters, while the patriots of Paris wearied the ministers with applications in their behalf, and the decree at length received the royal assent. The soldiers of Chateau-Vieux left Brest and came to Paris, in order to offer the tribute of their gratitude at the bar of the National Assembly, and to declare that the only use they desired to make of the liberty to which they were restored, was that of shedding the last drop of their blood for the French nation.

On their way from Brest to Paris, they were received in every town through which they passed with the most cordial welcome. They were considered as the victims of the common cause; fêtes were prepared for their reception; and blessings were poured forth upon the National Assembly for having restored them to liberty.

The people of Paris feeling the same impressions, determined also to prepare a fête for their reception. The citizens made a voluntary contribution for this purpose, and the plan of a very magnificent procession was formed. But here the tale of discord begins. The enemies of the public peace saw in this projected fête an opportunity of fomenting disorder and troubles, too favourable to be lost. Reports were rapidly circulated through Paris, that this triumphal entry of the soldiers of Chateau-Vieux was intended as an insult to the national guard, who had fought against them. Placards on this subject were pasted up in every street, hand-bills were distributed, incendiary pamphlets were published, the minds of the people became inflamed: it was asserted that the fête would end in a massacre—
in

in short, every thing was asserted that passion and party-rage could suggest.

The citizens, however, had gone too far to recede: the fête took place, and was the more singular and interesting from being stripped of much of its intended splendour. No person was suffered to carry arms, and the soldiers of *Château-Vieux*, instead of mounting a triumphal car which had been prepared for them, were mixed undistinguished with the crowd. The fête, however, notwithstanding the gloomy augurs which had preceded it, passed without the smallest disorder.

The people, who were assembled to the number of between three and four hundred thousand, formed their own police; and, finding some difficulty at setting out in marshalling the procession, every one being ambitious to have a place near the triumphal car of liberty, a gardener picked a wheat ear, with which the people consented to regulate the order of the march, and wherever the wheat-ear was carried, immediately ranged themselves in good order.

Thus marshalled by a wheat-ear, instead of being kept in their places as formerly by the point of bayonets, the people, whom their enemies had accused of the most dark and atrocious designs, advanced towards the *Champ de Mars*, indulging themselves in all the enthusiasm of simple and affectionate joy. They danced, they sung hymns to liberty, they filled the air with cries of, *Vive la nation!*

We saw the procession from the apartments of *Mons. Desormeaux*, in the *Palais de Bourbon*.

bon. This gentleman, who is a man of letters, was many years librarian to the Prince de Condé; but, instead of following that Prince to Coblenz, he has chosen to share the fortunes of his country. We have received from him all those polite attentions for which the French have so long been distinguished, and which I hope they will never lose; for why, in acquiring the great, should they renounce the amiable qualities?—But to return to the fête. The people do not always reason very logically; and therefore, instead of concluding, as they ought to have done, that since the aristocrates of the Palais de Bourbon were fled, those who remained behind were probably good patriots, their conclusions took quite another turn. They could associate no ideas of patriotism with the Palais de Bourbon, and accused us of aristocracy as they approached. But they did not remain long in this error. They soon perceived that we were entirely disposed to sympathize in their festivity, and also that part of the company were Englishwomen: while the gentlemen from our windows repeatedly called out in as loud voices as they could, “Vive la nation!” the people answered by crying, “Vivent les Anglaises!”

I have just heard an interesting circumstance relating to a soldier of Chateau-Vieux, who is now come to Paris, in order to meet his old comrades. This young man was of the number of those whom the council of war at Nancy had condemned to die. He had gained the affections of a girl who was an inhabitant of Nancy. With that anguish of heart which those who have loved can perhaps conceive, and which to those

those who have not it were vain to describe, this unhappy girl saw her lover led to execution. The gloomy procession passed by the house in which she lived; and in the confusion, the tumult, and disorder occasioned by the number of soldiers who were led together to execution, and by the rage, the despair, the violent emotions which agitated the spectators, this girl contrived to snatch her lover from the fate that threatened him, and concealed him in a garret of the house she inhabited. How she effected this, it is difficult to imagine: but you are not ignorant that love is fertile in expedients; and however it happened, the fact is certain. In this garret the young man lived concealed from every eye but that of his mistress, and sustained by the food which she purchased with the labour of her hands, and which she brought to him in secret. You will imagine the pleasure with which she toiled to supply the wants of her lover, and the tears of tenderness and gratitude with which he bathed the hand that ministered to his necessities. At the end of two months his father, a rich farmer in one of the Swiss cantons, uncertain of the fate of his only child, and unable to endure any longer the agonies of suspense, arrived at Nancy in search of his son. In vain he sought him, in vain he questioned every person he met concerning him; no tidings, no traces of him were to be found. The wretched parent wandered up and down the streets of Nancy in despair. At length he was told that there was a young person in the town to whom his son had been much attached; and he was directed to the house where the young man lay concealed. The girl, when questioned

questioned about her lover, at first suspected some treachery, and denied having any knowledge of what had befallen him. But she soon perceived in the tears which streamed plentifully down the old man's cheeks, in the agony which seemed to be bending his grey hairs to the grave, the genuine feelings of nature. She wept with him, and at length told him, that if he would call the following day, she would perhaps have it in her power to give him some tidings of his son. The old man departed: the girl flew to her lover, to whom she described his figure, and the young man recognized the image of his father. The next day when the old man returned, the girl led him in silence to the chamber where his son was concealed. You will imagine better than I can paint the scene that followed—The young soldier, after weeping a long while on his father's neck, told him, in a voice interrupted by sobs, what he owed to the generous attachment of his mistress; and the father, with a thousand blessings, and the assurance of an ample provision, joined their hands together.

LETTER

LETTER XLVI.

THE aristocrates talk much of the Inconstancy and volatile disposition of their countrymen, and endeavour to persuade you that the French have taken up the cause of freedom with the same sort of fondness with which they have taken up many other fashions which are now cast off, and insinuate, that liberty and equality will not long remain * à l'ordre du jour.

I believe the persons who think in this manner will find themselves deceived. What the orator terms, in his beautiful language, "the Corinthian capital of polished society," is fallen for ever in this country, and the period is arrived which Shakespeare wished for when he exclaims—

" Let none presume
 " To wear an undeserv'd dignity.
 " Oh, that estates, degrees, and offices,
 " Were not deriv'd corruptly ; that clear honour
 " Were purchas'd by the merit of the wearer !"

You have heard, no doubt, of the appointment which has lately been made of patriotic ministers, all of whom belong to that society against which the house of Austria is going to open a campaign. It is to be hoped that, under the auspices of this Jacobin ministry, the affairs

* The order of the day.

of

of the state will be conducted with more energy, unanimity, and order, than they have hitherto been. For though the French have not yet engaged in foreign war, hostilities have long ago commenced between the executive and legislative powers, and a warm fire has been kept up on both sides. The union which these two powers formed together when the king signed the constitution, has gone on as many modern marriages do, in quarrels and contention, and might perhaps have ended in a divorce, but for the salutary intervention of this new ministry, which possesses the confidence of the people.

The courtiers, however, look with no favourable eye upon the new ministers. A gentleman of my acquaintance went to the Tuilleries yesterday morning, when an attendant called him aside, and told him that one of the ministers had that moment left the king; "and I have such a circumstance to relate," added he, shrugging up his shoulders, "as will no doubt astonish you." This gentleman, who is an enthusiastic patriot, immediately took alarm. He concluded that some fresh calamity had taken place; that some new combination of foreign powers was formed against the liberty of France; and enquired with the utmost earnestness what had happened. * "Imaginez-vous," resumed the attendant, "que le ministre n'avoit pas même de boucles!"

All, however, that can be expected from ministers without buckles, I have no doubt the pre-

* Would you believe that the minister was even without buckles!

sent

lent ministry will perform. One very important task which it has to execute is that of finding a remedy for the internal troubles excited by such of the priests as have refused to take the oath of fidelity to the new government. There is, indeed, little religion in France; but there is still a sufficient degree of superstition and ignorance in some of the provinces, to give the priests a very dangerous influence.

A gentleman who travelled last autumn as far as the foot of the Pyrennees, asked a peasant of that country, whom he met in his walk, how he liked the revolution? * "Je ne l'aime pas, monsieur," said the peasant; "je suis aristocrate, moi. On a détruit la religion, et le pouvoit de notre saint père le pape." The gentleman, after reasoning with him a little, ended by saying, † "Vous n'aimez pas la révolution, mon ami, et cependant elle a été faite pour vous autres: vous venez de faire la moisson sans payer la dixme à vos prêtres." "Ah, monsieur," answered the peasant with quickness, "nous aimons la révolution pour ça."

"There is one thing," said a shopkeeper's wife to me lately, "which hinders me from being a good patriot. I know you are free in England, but then you are heretics; and I am afraid the very same thing will happen in France: † "moi je raisonne."

* I do not love it, sir; I am an aristocrate. They have destroyed our religion, and the power of our holy father the pope.

† You do not love the revolution, my friend, and yet it has been made for you. You have just gathered in your harvest without paying the tithe to your priests.—Ah, sir, we like the revolution for that.

‡ I reason.

The

The majority of the French nation, however, reason too, and with such success, that I believe superstition will soon be banished from this country. Knowledge is diffusing itself over the land with an irresistible progress; the liberal opinions of philosophy, liberty, and truth, are every where bursting forth like the fresh leaves of spring; and the period is hastening near when, like the flowers of summer, these opinions will be full-blown.

LETTER XLVII.

A Friend of mine, who is lately gone to Toulouse, has sent me from thence an account of some circumstances which happened not long ago in that part of France, and which she says are still much the subject of conversation. I shall transcribe this narrative, which I believe will interest you. Perhaps a novel-writer, by the aid of a little additional misery, and by giving the circumstances which actually happened a heightened colour—by taking his pallet, and dashing with the full glow of red what nature had only tinged with pale violet, might almost spin a volume from these materials. Yet, after all, nothing is so affecting as simplicity, and nothing so forcible as truth. I shall therefore send you the story exactly as I received it; and
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in such parts of it as want interest, I beg you will recollect that you are not reading a tale of fiction; and that in real life incidents are not always placed as they are in novels, so as to produce stage effect. In some parts of the narrative you will meet with a little romance; but perhaps you will wonder that you meet with no more; since the scene is not in the cold philosophic climate of England, but in the warm regions of the south of France, where the imagination is elevated, where the passions acquire extraordinary energy, and where the fire of poetry flashed from the harps of the Troubadours amidst the sullen gloom of the Gothic ages.

A young Frenchman, whose usual residence was at Paris, having travelled as far as Toulouse the year before the revolution, was invited by a party of his friends to accompany them to Baresges, where some of them were going in pursuit of amusement, and others in search of health from the medicinal springs which rise so plentifully, both in hot and cold streams, among the Pyrenean mountains.

This young Parisian, who had some taste for the sublime scenery of nature, felt that it would be luxury to leave a little longer the regular walks which art has planted in the Thuilleries, and the trim gardens and jets-d'eau she has formed at Versailles; to wander amongst those piles of mountains which overhang each other, and listen to the torrents which fall down them with loud and irresistible impetuosity.

“ Rich

" Rich in her weeping country's spoils, Versailles
 " May boast a thousand fountains, that can cast
 " The tortur'd waters to the distant heav'ns:
 " Yet let me choose some pine-topp'd precipice
 " Abrupt and shaggy, whence a foamy stream,
 " Like Anio, tumbling roars."——

What powerful sensations does the first view of such a scene produce!—We seem to begin a new existence—every former impression is for a while erased from the memory, and the mind feels enwrapped and lost in the strong emotions of awe, astonishment, and admiration.

Bareges was crowded, as it usually is in the season, not only with French company, but also with strangers, who travel from other countries, in order to use its celebrated baths. The company amused themselves, as they generally do at water-drinking places, by sauntering, lounging, cards, lotteries, jeux-d'ésprit, and scandal.

Bareges is a very expensive place. Even moderate accommodations must be purchased at a high rate; and provisions, as well as lodgings, are sometimes obtained with difficulty. Bareges is therefore seldom resorted to by any but people of considerable fortune, who can afford to level the obstacles which mountains interpose to their conveniences and comforts, by the all-subduing force of gold.

Among a number of persons of rank and fortune, there was however one family at Bareges in a different situation. This family consisted of an elderly infirm French officer, who had long been afflicted with the palsy, and his daughter, a young woman about nineteen years of age.

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Their

Their appearance and mode of living seemed to indicate, that, though in search of relief this old officer had journeyed to Bareges, he had in so doing far exceeded the bounds of economy which his circumstances prescribed, and was forced to deny himself every accommodation his infirmities could spare. He lived in the most retired manner, in the worst lodging at Bareges; and, while the other ladies were dressed in a style of expensive variety and profusion, his daughter wore only a plain linen gown, which, though always perfectly clean, was coarse; and her dark hair was left unpowdered and without any ornament whatever. Fortunately for Madelaine however (for that was her name), her person was calculated to make her coarse gown appear to the best advantage; and though she was not very beautiful, her countenance had an expression of sweetness which answered the end of beauty by exciting love and admiration.

The company at Bareges soon became acquainted with each other, and the ladies always took notice of Madelaine when they met her in their walks, which however did not happen very often, for her father was frequently unable to go out. When he did, he was supported on one side by Madelaine, and on the other by his servant. It was impossible to see with insensibility the attention which this interesting young woman paid her father, whom she never quitted one moment. It was remarked with what careful tenderness she used to lead him along the street of Bareges, walking the slowest pace she could, and watching his steps as he moved feebly on. And when he was not able to venture out, she

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was seen at the window of their little parlour reading in order to entertain him. Her looks and manner announced that her disposition was naturally sprightly, and that she would have been gay, if her father had not been sick. But all the cheerfulness she could assume while he suffered, was exerted to amuse him, and shorten the tedious hours of langour and debility.

Though Madelaine was handsome, the obscurity and seclusion in which she lived preserved her from the envy of the women. They knew well enough that the gentlemen at Bareges were for the most part men of the world, who, though they may admire beauty, and approve of virtue, are never so far the dupes of any tender or moral sentiment as to let it interfere either with their vanity, their ambition, or their interest. Although the French revolution had not yet happened, these ladies were aware that, with respect to marriage, the age of *calculators* was already come, and therefore no rival was to be feared in Madelaine. The ladies joined with the men in admiring the graces of her person, and the amiable qualities which her conduct displayed. Madelaine in short became the object of general esteem.

Auguste, for so I shall call our young Parisian, who has lost his title since the laws of equality have been established in his country—Auguste spoke less of Madelaine than the other gentlemen at Bareges; but it was perhaps because he thought of her more. Sometimes in his solitary morning rambles he used to make comparisons between her and the Parisian ladies among whom

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whom he had passed the winter, and the comparison generally ended with a deep sigh. The scene of these meditations was certainly much in Madelaine's favour. Perhaps at Paris or Versailles, Auguste might have been dazzled by the polished graces of a fine lady rouged, powdered, perfumed, and equipped for conquest. These artificial attractions might perhaps have accorded well enough with clipped trees and angular walks. But Madelaine's simple manners, Madelaine's natural smiles and unstudied blushes were far more in unison with the Pyrenean mountains.

One evening, when Auguste was walking in the town of Bareges with some ladies, he saw Madelaine at a little distance assisting with great difficulty to support her father, who appeared to be seized with a fit. Auguste darted like an arrow towards the spot, and held up the officer till he found himself somewhat recovered; and then Auguste, with a sort of gentle violence, obliged Madelaine, who was pale and trembling, to let go her father's arm, and suffer him to assist the servant in leading him home, which was but a few steps farther. Auguste entered the house, where he remained till the old officer was a little revived; and, after prevailing upon Madelaine to take a few hartshorn drops, he retired.

The next morning he felt that common civility required he should pay the old officer a visit, and learn how he had passed the night. It happened that Madelaine had the very same idea. "Surely," thought she, "it will be very strange if this young man, who was so kind, so careful of my father, and who made me take some hartshorn drops, should neglect to call and enquire

after us." This idea had come across her mind several times; and she was meditating upon it at her father's bedside, when Auguste was announced.

The old officer, who had all the finished politeness of his country and his profession, received him in the most courteous manner; and, though he spoke with some difficulty, yet he was profuse in acknowledgments for the service Auguste had rendered him. Madelaine's thanks were few and simply expressed; but the tone in which they were uttered was such that Auguste felt he could have sacrificed his life to have deserved them.

The old officer still continued sick, and therefore Auguste still considered it as an indispensable mark of attention to go every day, and learn the state of his health. He also began to feel that these visits became every day more necessary to his own happiness. That happiness was indeed embittered by many painful reflections. He well knew that to obtain his father the Count de ——'s consent to marry Madelaine, was as impossible as it was for himself to conquer the passion she had inspired. He knew exactly the order in which his father's enquiries would run on this subject. He was aware that there were two interrogatories to be answered. The first was—"How many thousand livres has she a year?" And the second—"Is she noble?" And nothing could be more embarrassing than that the enquiry concerning fortune would, he was sure, come first; since that was the only article which could not be answered in a satisfactory manner; for to Madelaine's family no objection

tion could have been made. By the way, though the former nobility of France would not absolutely contaminate the pure streams of noble blood by an union with the daughter of a *roturier*, they had always sufficient generosity to abate some generations of nobility in favour of a proper equivalent in wealth.

Auguste, while he was convinced of the impossibility of obtaining his father's consent to his marriage, did not pay Madelaine one visit the less from that consideration; and when the usual hour of his visit arrived, he often suddenly broke a chain of admirable reasoning on the imprudence of his attachment, in order to hasten to the dwelling of her he loved. In a short time he ceased all kind of reasoning on the subject, and abandoned his heart without reserve to the most violent and unconquerable passion.

Auguste made a declaration to the old officer of the sentiments which his daughter had inspired. The old gentleman mentioned it to Madelaine, and she only answered by tears of which he perfectly understood the meaning. When Auguste explained his situation with respect to his father, the officer desired him to think of his daughter no more. Auguste felt that he might as well have desired him to cease to breathe. He continued his visits, and the officer was soon reduced to that state of languor and debility which left him neither the power nor the wish to forbid them. His complaints increased every day, and were attended with many alarming symptoms. The season for the waters of Baresges was now past, and all the company

left the place, except the old officer, who was too weak to be removed, and Auguste, who, while Madelaine remained, had no power to tear himself from the spot. In a few weeks the old officer felt that his dying hour was near. Auguste knelt with Madelaine at his bedside—her voice was suffocated by tears; and Auguste had scarcely power to articulate in broken accents that he would devote his life to the happiness of Madelaine. The old officer fixed his eyes with a look of tender anxiety upon his daughter, and soon after expired. Madelaine mourned for her father with uncontroled affliction, nor could the attentions of her lover dispel that anguish with which her affectionate heart lamented the loss of her parent.

The winter being far advanced, she proposed to defer her journey to the distant province where she and her father had lived, until spring, and to place herself in the mean time in a convent not far from Bareges. Auguste exerted all the eloquence of love to induce her to consent immediately to a private marriage. She hesitated at this proposal; and while they were conversing together on the subject, the door of the room in which they were sitting was suddenly thrown open, and Auguste saw his father the Count de ——— enter. He had heard of the attachment which detained his son at Bareges, and had hastened to tear him from the spot before it was too late. He upbraided his son with great bitterness, and began also to upbraid Madelaine: but there was something in her looks, her silence, and her tears, which stifled the terms of haughty reproach in which he was prepared to address her;

her; and ordering his son to leave the room, he desired to speak to her alone. After explaining to her the absolute impossibility of her being ever united to his son, and his determination to disinherit him, and leave his whole fortune to his second son, if Auguste should persist in his attachment to her—after endeavouring to awaken her pride and her generosity, he desired to know where she proposed going. She told him her intention of placing herself immediately in the convent of ——. He approved of this design, and left her to go to his son. No sooner was the door of the room shut, than Madelaine gave way to those tears which she had scarcely been able to restrain while the Count was speaking. She had never felt so sensibly her orphan condition as at this moment; and the dear remembrance of her fond father was mingled with the agony of disappointed love.

Meantime the Count de ——— declared to his son, that his only chance of ever obtaining his mistress depended on his absolute unconditional submission to his commands, and that he must instantly attend him to Paris. Auguste eagerly enquired what was to become of Madelaine; and his father told him that she had determined to take refuge in the convent of ——. Auguste absolutely refused to depart till he was allowed an interview with Madelaine. The Count was obliged to consent; but before he suffered them to meet, he obtained a promise from Madelaine not to mention to her lover any particulars of the conversation which had passed between her and the Count.

Auguste,

Auguste, in this last interview with Madelaine, atoned for the cruel disdain of his father, by the most solemn and passionate assurances of fidelity, not to be shaken by time or circumstance; and then, after attempting to leave the room several times, and returning as often, he at length tore himself away. Madelaine, when she saw him depart, felt that every earthly hope had vanished with him.

She set out early the next morning for the convent of —; but not till after she had sat for some time weeping in the chair which Auguste used to occupy.

Madelaine passed the remaining part of the winter in the convent of —, during which period she received frequent letters from Auguste; and when spring arrived he conjured her, instead of removing to her own province, to remain a little longer in her present situation; and flattered her with hopes of being able ere long to fulfil those engagements upon which all his happiness depended.

In the summer of this year an event took place which will render that summer for ever memorable. The French nation, too enlightened to bear any longer those monstrous oppressions which ignorance of its just rights alone had tolerated, shook off its fetters, and the revolution was accomplished.

Madelaine was a firm friend to the revolution, which she was told had made every Frenchman free. "And if every Frenchman is free," thought Madelaine, "surely every Frenchman may marry the woman he loves." It appeared to Madelaine, that, putting all political considerations,

rations, points upon which she had not much meditated, out of the question, obtaining liberty of choice in marriage was alone well worth the trouble of a revolution; and she was as warm a patriot from this single idea, as if she had studied the declaration of rights made by the Constituent Assembly, in all its extent and consequences.

The Count de ———, who was informed of the correspondence between the two lovers, and who saw little hopes of his son's subduing a passion which this intercourse of letters served to cherish, contrived means to have Auguste's letters intercepted at the convent. In vain Madelaine enquired with all the anxiety of tenderness for letters. In vain she counted the hours till the return of the post-days. Post after post arrived, and brought no tidings of Auguste. Three months passed in the cruel torments of anxiety and suspense, and were at length succeeded by despair. Madelaine believed she was forgotten — forgotten by Auguste! — She consulted her own heart, and it seemed to her impossible; yet, after a silence of three months, she could doubt no longer.

Poor Madelaine now recollected with anguish, instead of pleasure, that all Frenchmen were free. She would have found some sad consolation in believing that all Frenchmen were slaves. It would have been some alleviation of her sorrows if Auguste had been forced to abandon her; and she fancied she could have borne to lose him, if she had been sure that he still loved her — it was losing him by his own fault that filled her heart with pangs almost insupportable.

The little pittance which Madelaine, after paying her father's debts, had left for her own support, was insufficient to defray her expences as a pensioner in the convent. She had already, by her sweetness and gentleness, gained the affections of some of the nuns, to whom she was also attached, and who incessantly conjured her to take the veil. "And why," she sometimes exclaimed, "why should I hesitate any longer in so doing? Since Auguste is lost, what have I to regret in renouncing the world? What sacrifice do I make? what happiness do I resign?"

Madelaine had no ties to the world, of which she knew but little: but to separate herself irrecoverably, and for ever, from him to whom her soul was devoted—to see him, to hear his voice no more—to take vows which would make it even a crime to think of him—to banish him even from her thoughts—alas! Madelaine felt like Eloisa——

"All is not Heav'n's while Abelard has part,
"Still rebel nature holds out half my heart!"

Sometimes too the idea occurred that Auguste might love her still—"And am I then," thought Madelaine, "going to reduce myself to a state in which I shall be forced to wish he were unfaithful, in order to save me from the agonies of remorse!"—She put off all thoughts of entering on her novitiate for some weeks longer—when letters arrived, and again her resolution to take the veil returned. "Why," cried she, "why should I still continue to lament that inconstant

constant lover who thinks of me no more? Alas, alas, did he not see the anguish of my soul at parting with him?—Does he not know the deserted situation in which I am left?—Oh, yes! he knows I have no other refuge, no other resource than taking the veil—no doubt he wishes to hear I have done so—he will find in my renunciation of the world some excuse for his infidelity—Oh, heavens! will Auguste hear then that I am separated from him for ever without one sign?—Ah, why need I deliberate any longer?—My trials will soon be past—I feel that my heart will break—yes, death will come to my relief—and in heaven I shall find my father!”

Madelaine at length determined to join the holy sisterhood of the convent. The white veil for her novitiate was prepared. The day was fixed, when, prostrate with her face towards the earth, and with flowers scattered over her, and a part of her long tresses cut off, she was to enter upon that solemn trial preparatory to her eternal renunciation of the world—of Auguste.

A few days before that which was appointed for the ceremony, Madelaine was called to the parlour, where she found her lover, with some of the municipal officers of the town, wearing their national scarfs.

Madelaine, at the sight of Auguste, with difficulty reached a chair, in which she fell back senseless; while Auguste could not forbear uttering some imprecations against the iron grate by which they were separated, and which prevented him from flying to her assistance. He, however, procured help, and Madelaine recovered.

One

One of the municipal officers then informed her, that they had received the day before a decree of the National Assembly, forbidding any nuns to be professed. He added, that the municipality had already given information of this new law to the abbess, who had consented to allow Madelaine to leave the convent immediately. As he pronounced these last words, Madelaine looked at her lover. Auguste hastened to explain to her that his uncle, who loved him and pitied his sufferings, had at length made a will, leaving him his fortune upon condition that his father consented to his marriage with Madelaine.

When her lover and the municipal officers departed, Madelaine retired to her apartment, to give way to those delicious tears which were poured from a heart overflowing with wonder, thankfulness, and joy. When her first emotions had subsided, she began to pack up her little wardrobe in preparation for leaving the convent on the following day. "I always loved the revolution," thought Madelaine, as she laid aside the white gown in which she was to be married the next morning; "and this last decree is surely of all others the best and wisest—but if it had come too late!"—At this idea Madelaine took up the veil for her novitiate, which lay upon her table, and bathed it with a flood of tears.

The next morning Auguste and Madelaine were married in the parish-church of ———, and immediately after the ceremony set out for Paris, where they now live, and are, I am told, two of the happiest people and the best patriots in France.

LETTER

LETTER XLVIII.

A Curé of my acquaintance is just going to be married. He has had a literary dispute with the bishop of his diocese, on the right of the clergy to marry. The curé insists that it is the natural right of every man to take unto himself a wife, if he thinks proper to run that risk; and he confessed to me yesterday, that, though he felt not the smallest inclination to enter into the marriage state, but on the contrary preferred a single life, he had resolved upon matrimony merely to shew *Mons. l'Evêque*, that a priest might take that measure if he pleased. I know some married people both in France and England, who would perhaps think this is carrying the desire of triumph in argument rather too great a length; and who would, I believe, counsel the curé to yield this polemic victory, sooner than purchase it with a wife into the bargain. But my friend the curé is so amiable, that I am persuaded he will make an excellent husband, and will be happy in spite of the bishop.

I go frequently to a spacious church which the French protestants have lately purchased, called *St. Thomas de Louvre*, where divine worship is performed every Sunday, and where the sacrament was last week administered. The idea that in the bosom of that city, even on the very spot which a few ages past was stained by the most cruel persecution of the protestants, we were

were now publicly exercising the most solemn rite of our religion, in the presence of a considerable number of Roman Catholics, who witnessed that sacred ceremony with the most respectful silence and attention—this reflection joined to the tender recollection of my own country, to which I was led by hearing the service performed for the first time in a foreign country, and in a foreign language; and to that retrospect of past life which naturally arises in a mind of any sensibility, when it renews this sacred engagement with the great Author of its existence—all these different impressions crowded upon my heart, my eyes were filled with tears, and I never felt my mind more touched and elevated by devotion. Monsieur Maron, the French protestant minister, preaches with the most persuasive eloquence. I wish our English clergy would sometimes address their discourses to the feelings, as well as to the understanding. It is not the reasoning but the sentimental part of religion that softens every evil to which humanity is subject, that soothes the troubled spirit, that heals the broken heart.

LETTER XLIX.

I WRITE to you from Montreuil sur Mer, where I shall pass two or three weeks in my way to England. We left Paris the latter end of April,

April, and found the country covered with that first fresh tint of spring which is so lovely, but so transient. The trees were white with blossoms; and nature, full of youth, hope, and joy, wore the aspect of all others the most enchanting to the eye, and the most soothing to the imagination. Yet the contemplation of returning spring naturally leads the mind to recal the springs that are past, and to take a retrospect of life: and those in whom such a retrospect excites no melancholy reflections must surely be either peculiarly fortunate, or peculiarly insensible.

But, at the same time, we find in the lovely images which spring presents, a cure for those gloomy reflections which the return of that season has perhaps awakened. For while we see nothing around us but images of beauty and delight, "while nothing strikes the eye but sights of bliss," the darker shades of care and sorrow vanish, and leave only that gentle and tender melancholy which it is luxury to indulge—"that sadness of the countenance by which the heart is made better."

My mother found herself, one evening during our journey, so much fatigued, that, instead of being able to reach Amiens, where we intended to sleep that night, we were obliged to stop at a very small village some leagues distant. The landlord of the little inn where we alighted, received us with an air of conscious dignity and self importance which but ill accorded with the appearance of his dwelling. We enquired if he could furnish us with beds: he seemed offended at the question, as implying in it some doubt, and

and answered with impatience, * “ Mais, madame, comme à la ville.”—We found, however, that the walls of the rooms where people were lodged “ comme à la ville,” were of bare brick. “ What is the name of this place ?” said I to a ruddy-cheeked servant-girl who waited upon us. † “ Madame,” said she, “ c’est Ser-teaux, pour vous obéir.”

The master of the inn having got the better of the ill humour our first enquiries had occasioned, assured us we should have an excellent supper, and that he understood the art of cookery perfectly, having assisted some years in the kitchen of Madame la Princesse de Monaco. He by no means over-rated his talents; the supper was extremely well dressed. When we had supped, he told us that we might consider ourselves as in perfect safety under his roof: “ for I, ladies,” added he, in an elevated accent, “ am the mayor of the village, and have two national guards every night at my door. I saved the chateau of a person who was very odious to his peasants, from being burnt, by haranguing the people, and convincing them of the enormity of the action; and my fellow-citizens, in gratitude for my services on that occasion, unanimously chose me for their mayor.”

I congratulated *Mons. Le Maire* on the happy effects of his eloquence, and he immediately stepped out of the room, and returned with a national scarf in his hand, and a fierce grenadier’s cap, which had been presented to him as

* To be sure, madam, as well as in the town.

† This is Ser-teaux, madam, to obey you.

trophies

trophies of his patriotism. I enquired how many national guards there were in the village. "No less than eighty men," said he; "and I am their colonel." The honours, dignities, and high offices, civil and military, of our landlord, now crowded so thick upon us, that we could scarcely reconcile ourselves to the trouble we gave him of bringing little moveable frames, for matresses, into the room where we had supped, and which the chief magistrate arranged with admirable dexterity. Next morning we found he had thrown aside his white jacket, and was arrayed in the national uniform. When we recollected that our veal-cutlets had been dressed by a colonel, and our matresses arranged by a mayor, we felt ourselves somewhat in the situation of Don Quixote when queens saddled his horse, and duchesses held his bridle. We made very low curtsies to our host at parting, which he returned by clapping his hand on his military cap.—Apropos of travelling—A French gentleman of my acquaintance told me, that he was once going in his cabriolet from Paris to Calais, when he was accosted by a man who was walking along the road, and who begged the favour of him to let him put his great coat, which he found very heavy, into the carriage. "With all my heart," said the gentleman; "but if we should not be travelling to the same place, how will you get your coat?" "Monsieur," answered the man with great naïveté, * "je ferai dedans." The gentleman immediately took him into his carriage.

* I shall be in it.

Mon-

Montreuil is an old melancholy looking town, with no trade, and few inhabitants. Some families of the little noblesse who resided in this place, have thought proper to prove their nobility by a trip to Coblenz. Their houses are left deserted; grass grows in the streets; and I expect to see the fox which Ossian mentions, looking out of the window.

Here are a great number of very antient Gothic edifices; and one of them, near which we are lodged, affords me frequent subject of meditation. This is the Hotel-Dieu. In every town of France you find one of those hospitals called Hotels-Dieu, where the sick are attended by an order of nuns, who take vows to devote their lives to that purpose. The most perfect cleanliness and order reigns in these houses. But how great are the sacrifices made, from a principle of piety, by these nuns, many of whom are in the very bloom of youth! To devote life to the most disgusting occupations—to breathe only the air of contagion—to watch in sad succession every sixth or eighth night, through the long years of life, in the chambers of disease—to dress wounds—to perform for strangers those offices at which nature most recoils, and which we can scarcely fulfil without reluctance, even for those to whom our souls are bound by the strongest ties of duty and affection—to bear with unwearied patience the never-ceasing groans of those that suffer—to administer, with that unfailling tenderness which long habit has not blunted, the remedies prescribed—to live amongst the dying—these surely are sacrifices which nothing but a sentiment of religion could inspire—
Surely

Surely it may be said of such persons, "Ye are not of this world!"

When we turn our thoughts from such a scene as this, to that unfeeling indifference which prevails in the world—its selfish pursuit of its own interest—its eager search of its own gratifications—its coldness to the pains of others—its vanities—its littleness—its luxuries—we find it at a distance so remote from such virtue, that the nuns of the *Hotels-Dieu* appear like beings elevated above our pity, and only call forth admiration.

On Sunday last, after vespers, the tree of liberty was planted, with great rejoicings, in the middle of the square in which we live. A flag, from which streamed the national colours, was fastened to the highest branches, crowned with a bonnet rouge. When this cherished tree was firmly rooted in the earth amidst the acclamations of the multitude, an officer of the national guard mounted on a chair beneath the shade of the tree, and read a paper of instruction to the people, who formed a circle round him, and listened with the most respectful attention. After descanting upon the blessings of the constitution, the orator enforced the necessity of the most absolute submission to the laws.—The tree of liberty, with its green branches, and waving streamers; the orator placed under its shade; and the circle which surrounded him, formed altogether a most picturesque groupe. There was something in the scene which gave me an idea of the simplicity of ancient times. As soon as the harangue was ended, a gun was fired; and *ça ira*, the beloved signal of gaiety, and accompaniment of joy, was immediately played, while
the

the people danced with all their hearts and souls.

We have had, indeed, no less than two trees of liberty planted in the square: for the little boys of the town anticipated the ceremony by planting a young tree, of which they got possession the day before it took place. This young tree had also a bonnet rouge, made of paper, and colours composed of the same materials. It was not indeed very steadily seated in the earth, and might with propriety have been called * *une liberté chancelante*: but the winds did not visit it too roughly, and it kept its station. A national guard of citizens, from six to twelve years of age, was mounted near the tree, armed, in case of an attack, with wooden fuses. As we passed this formidable band, the captain demanded a few sous to buy a drum † *pour la nation*. We have too much friendship for the French nation to refuse so moderate a ‡ *don patriotique*, and we produced some national coins. The little groupe, by way of thanking us, cried over and over again, to the echoes of the hills, § “Vive, vive la nation!”

The French boys, with that spirit of imitation which belongs to children, have no amusements, no pastimes, that have not a reference to liberty. They imbibe these national lessons with great avidity; and I am apt to believe that, if the enemies of freedom could annihilate the present race of Frenchmen, the rising generation would, ten or twenty years hence, throw aside their wooden fuses for more terrible weapons, and act over again, in the sight of their oppressors, the martial exercises of their childhood.

L E T T E R

* A wavering liberty. † For the nation. ‡ Patriotic gift.
§ Long live the nation.

LETTER L.

I HAVE nothing to relate but what is melancholy and painful. The repulse which the French have met with at Tournay was trifling; and were it not, a defeat is the common chance of war, and would be an evil light indeed compared to the disgrace, the shocking criminality which has attended it. A few days before I left Paris, the war with Germany was declared. The French, long insulted by the court of Vienna, rejoiced that the moment to assert the injured honour of a great and gallant nation was at length arrived. They saw before them, in long and radiant perspective, city after city yielding to the arms of men who, renouncing all views of extending the French empire, only armed themselves in defence of their just rights, and who felt that

“Thrice is he arm’d that hath his quarrel just.”

Forced to engage in a war against the tyrants of the earth, the French had declared (to translate the words of *Monf. Condorcet*, in his sublime declaration made in the name of the National Assembly), “that the soldiers would conduct themselves in a foreign territory as they would have conducted themselves on the territory of France, had they been there forced to engage in combat; that even the accidental evils which the French troops might occasion to the people of those foreign territories, should be repaired; that to repulse violence, to resist oppression, to forget injuries that were past, to receive enemies reconciled,

ciled, or disarmed, as brothers—such were the sentiments which the nation would find in the souls of Frenchmen, and such was the war which they declared against their enemies.”

Thus had the French nation prepared every generous mind to espouse its cause. No sooner was it made known that the armies on the frontiers stood in need of recruits, than the young men in every province of France enlisted themselves with an ardour which only the sacred sentiment of liberty could have inspired.

No sooner was the war declared, than the bar of the National Assembly was every day crowded with citizens, who according to their ability contributed, with fond enthusiasm, their mite towards the support of the common cause.

Little, indeed, did the people dream of defeat, but far less of dishonour. * “On tue les hommes ; c’est le triste apanage du métier des rois : mais on ne tue pas l’honneur ;” that victim must be offered by ourselves. Let us not, however, include the whole French nation in the disgrace of a few. The general gloom, indignation, and horror, produced by the assassinations at Lisle, prove that the French feel with the keenest sensibility the dishonour incurred by such atrocious conduct.

I am persuaded they will wipe away, by the performance of the most noble and heroic actions, the stain which has been cast upon the French arms. If you had an opportunity of knowing as well as I do, the generous, the sublime sacrifices which are made by individuals in the common

* They murder men ; it is the melancholy privilege of kings ; but they cannot murder honour.

mon cause—if you knew the energy of that public spirit, the force of that public virtue which the events of this great revolution are calculated not merely to display, but create, and call forth—if you knew the inflexible purpose of the patriots of France * “de vivre libres ou mourir”—you would, I believe, be convinced, as I am, that they can never be subdued; and that, in defiance of the house of Austria, and all the other despotic houses of Europe, † *ça ira.*”

“Il faut,” said a French gentleman with whom I was talking on this subject, “† il faut quelques victoires roturières.”

Let us also remember that the great cause of liberty remains uncontaminated by the assassinations at Lisle. Though fanatical bigots, in the rage of superstitious cruelty, have dragged their victims to the stake, would it be rational to extend our abhorrence of such actions to Christianity itself?—to that benevolent religion which inculcates universal charity, love, and good will towards men, and choose the comfortless, the fallen indifference of atheism?

And shall we, because the fanatics of liberty have committed some detestable crimes, conclude that liberty is an evil, and prefer the gloomy tranquility of despotism? If the blessings of freedom have sometimes been abused, it is because they are not yet well understood. Those occasional evils which have happened in the infant state of liberty, are but the effects of despotism. Men have been long treated with inhumanity, therefore they are ferocious. They have often

* To live free, or die. † It will proceed.

‡ We must have some plebeian victories.”

been

been betrayed, therefore they are suspicious. They have once been slaves, and therefore they are tyrants. They have been used to a state of warfare, and are not yet accustomed to universal benevolence. They have long been ignorant, and have not yet attained sufficient knowledge. They have been condemned to darkness, and their eyes are dazzled by light. The French have thrown aside the ritual of despotism; but they have not all had time to learn the liturgy of that new constitution which is laid upon the altar of their country. But the genuine principles of enlightened freedom will soon be better comprehended, and may perhaps at no distant period be adopted by all the nations of Europe. Liberty may bring "her sons from afar, and her daughters from the ends of the earth."

The oppressions which mankind have suffered in every age, and almost in every country, will lead them to form more perfect systems of legislation than if they had suffered less; and they will only have to regret that their happiness has been purchased by the misery of past ages.

Then will the reign of humanity, of order, and of peace begin; the gates of Janus will be for ever closed; Liberty will extend her benign influence over the nations, and "ye shall know her by her fruits."

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Helen Maria Williams

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L E T T E R S

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TO THE

SECOND VOLUME.

IT is necessary to premise, that the Letters contained in this Second Volume are not all the production of the same pen. The Letters, Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, which contain a history of the campaign of 1792, are by another hand ; but the public will easily perceive that they are written by a person who has had the *best* information on the subject that France could afford.

The concluding letter is by a third person ; but as it contained a very interesting disquisition concerning the popular topics of the times, the publisher conceived he could not render a more acceptable service to the publisher of these volumes than to insert it.

LETTER



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L E T T E R S

FROM

F R A N C E.

L E T T E R I.

PARIS, *January 25, 1793.*

DEAR SIR,

THE event which has this week taken place in Paris, will no doubt furnish you with ample matter for speculation. Imagination contemplates with an over-whelming emotion, that extraordinary vicissitude of fortune which conducted Lewis the Sixteenth from the radiant Palace of Versailles, to the gloomy Tower of the Temple—from the first
VOL. II. B throne

throne of Europe, to the scaffold and the block—while the feelings of the heart, which run a faster pace than the reasonings of the head, reject for a while all calculation of general good or evil, and melt in mournful sympathy over “greatness fallen from its high estate.” But, when we consider the importance which this event may have in its consequences, not only to this country, but to all Europe, we lose sight of the individual sufferer, to meditate upon the destiny of mankind.

While you observe from a distance the great drama which is acting in France, I am a spectator of the representation—. I am placed near enough the scene to discern every look and every gesture of the actors, and every passion excited in the minds of the audience. I shall therefore endeavour to fill up the outline of that picture which France has presented to your contemplation since the memorable epocha of the tenth of August.

That conflict, which after the King’s acceptance of the new constitution existed in this country between the executive and legislative powers, between the court and the people, has since the tenth of August been succeeded by a conflict far more terrible: a conflict between freedom and anarchy, knowledge and ignorance, virtue and vice. While the real patriots of France, in their different conflicts with the ancient despotism, risked their lives, and shed their blood, and by their desperate valour confirmed the liberty of their country, a set of men, who exposed not their persons to the smallest danger in the enterprize, contrived, without peril or exertion, to seize upon a considerable portion of power; and never surely in the annals of tyranny have we heard of power more shamefully abused. Those demagogues, known by the appellation of
the

the "Commune provisoire de Paris," have, during the short period of their usurpation, committed more crimes than despotism itself would have achieved in ages. The crimes of tyrants, by exciting abhorrence, serve to promote the cause of freedom. It was reserved for the Commune of Paris to check the generous glow of sympathy with a great and magnanimous nation, which had nobly emancipated itself from slavery, and to lead all the feelings of humanity to take part with its oppressors. Surrounding nations, who might perhaps have been animated by the example of a country which has long served as a model to the rest of Europe, have heard of the second of September, and have shrunk back into the torpor of slavery. They have beheld, in the room of the pure and sublime worship of liberty, the grim idol of anarchy set up, and have seen her altar smeared with sanguinary rites. They have beheld the inhuman judges of that night wearing the municipal scarf which their polluting touch profaned, surrounded by men armed with pikes and sabres dropping with blood—while a number of blazing torches threw their glaring light on the ferocious visages of those execrable judges, who, mixing their voices with the shrieks of the dying, passed sentence with a savage mockery of justice, on victims devoted to their rage. They have beheld the infernal executioners of that night, with their arms bared for the purposes of murder, dragging forth those victims to modes of death at which nature shudders.—Ah! ye slaughtered heroes of the immortal 14th of July, was it for this ye overthrew the towers of the Bastille, and burst open the its gloomy dungeons?—was it for this, ye generous patriots, that with heroic contempt of life, ye shed your blood to give liberty

and happiness to your enslaved country?—Ah! had ye foreseen that the fanatics of liberty, fierce as the fanatics of superstition, would have their day of St. Bartholomew, would not your victorious arms have been unnerved? Would not the sacred glow of freedom have been frozen in your veins? Ah! what is become of the delightful visions, which elevated the enthusiastic heart?—What is become of the transport which beat high in every bosom, when an assembled million of the human race vowed on the altar of their country, in the name of the represented nation, inviolable fraternity and union—and eternal federation! This was indeed the golden age of the revolution.—But it is past!—the enchanting spell is broken, and the fair scenes of beauty and of order, through which imagination wandered, are transformed into the desolation of the wilderness, and clouded by the darkness, of the tempest. If the genius of Liberty—profaned Liberty! does not arise in his might, and crush those violators of freedom, whose crimes have almost broken the heart of humanity, the inhabitants of Paris may indeed “wish for the wings of the dove, that they may fly away and be at rest—for there is violence and strife in the city.”

At the head of this band of conspirators is Robertspierre—gloomy and saturnine in his disposition, with a countenance of such dark aspect as seems the index of no ordinary guilt—fanatical and exaggerated in his avowed principles of liberty, possessing that species of eloquence which gives him power over the passions, and that cool determined temper which regulates the most ferocious designs with the most calm and temperate prudence. His crimes do not appear to be the result of passion, but of some deep and extraordinary malignity, and he seems
formed

formed to subvert and to destroy. "One, next to him in power, and next in crime," is Danton, who, though not inferior to his associate in vice, and superior in ability, having less self-command, is consequently less dangerous.—This man, at the period of the massacres, was Minister of Justice, and, being conjured to exert his authority in putting a stop to those horrors, coolly answered, "Quand le peuple ont exerce *leur* droits, je reprendrai les *miennes*."*

Marat, though sometimes spoken of as one of the leaders of this faction, is in reality only one of its instruments——

A fellow, by the hand of nature mark'd,
Quoted, and sign'd to do a deed of shame;
And taking note of his abhorred aspect,
Finding him fit for bloody villany,

he is employed to execute the purposes of more able heads.

This triumvirate, resembling the celebrated triumvirate of Rome in every thing that bears the marks of baseness and of crimes, had associated in their guilt a number of lesser chiefs, who in their turn had enlisted others as instruments of the same horrid purpose. The organization of this executive assembly was formed with so much address, that the less confidential members of it were ignorant how they came together, whilst those who were the primary movers were careful to leave no positive traces of their guilt. Hence arises the extreme difficulty of punishing these murderers; for though the complicated chain of evidence may be pursued to

* When the people have exerted *their* rights, I will resume *mine*.

to a certain length, yet it always breaks off in the link that leads to conviction. These chiefs had contributed to the annihilation of the power of the legislative assembly by their audacity, as much as itself had done by its want of energy and courage; and taking advantage of its weakness and little consideration with the people, they had carried their views, as it is generally believed, to the immediate overthrow of what remained of the then existing system, and meant to establish a government of municipalities, Mr. Burke's forty-four thousand republics, of which Paris should be the center, and they the worthy protectors. The idea was great, but the achievement was difficult. Who believes, that knows any thing of the character of these men, or who has observed with any attention their conduct since, that any thing but such inordinate ambition was their aim? But was it likely, you will ask, that the extirpation of priests, of the imprisoned agents of the aristocracy, and proscribed conspirators, could lead to the furtherance of their views? How, by making themselves the executors of such summary justice, could they arrive at the accomplishment of their wishes? Those victims alone would certainly have proved insufficient to the accomplishment of their designs, and there is no doubt that the proscription extended to the most distinguished members of the Assembly, and to the most virtuous and respectable men of the executive council. But these statesmen of the Commune felt that to strike at once those men, whom the people had been accustomed to consider as their firmest friends, would be too daring and desperate an act. A general insurrection of the mob, therefore, seemed to them the best mode of eventually accomplishing their purpose. And as no
mob

mob sufficiently great was to be procured by their own means, they contrived to make the Assembly itself ignorantly acquiesce in their diabolical projects. On the day, therefore, when these massacres began, the Commune appeared at the bar, and informed the Assembly, that at two o'clock they should order the alarm guns to fire, and the tocsin to sound, that the people summoned into the Champ de Mars might from thence march directly to meet the approaching enemy, who were coming with hasty steps to Paris, after having cut off the four thousand men sent to the relief of Verdun.—This was a falsehood, contrived and calculated, as they hoped, to accomplish their purpose: but though the people were much agitated, they were not sufficiently wound up for such an enterprize. Instead therefore of meeting in immense crowds in the Champ de Mars, where these assassins would have more readily found the means of urging them to any crime, they met peaceably in their different sections to consult on the best measures for the public safety, totally ignorant at the moment what horrid deeds were about to be transacted. Finding, therefore, that the people were not to be made the instruments, they were forced to make use of the means which they had previously concerted. The priests confined in the Carmes, under pretence of waiting some opportunity for banishment, according to a decree of the Assembly, fell the first victims.—The prisoners in the Abbaye were the next, who had been sent thither since the 10th of August by warrants from their murderers: the other prisons were visited successively, where this work of death, for the executioners were very few, lasted two days, and at the prison of La Force extended to four. One is tempted to enquire with
Lear

Lear, "Is there any cause in nature that makes "these hard hearts?" Various conjectures have been formed respecting the number put to death in those four days—they have been lessened or exaggerated according to the political opinions of the relater. Lists of all the prisoners, at that time confined; are now printed by authority; and the amount is stated at one thousand and eighty-eight, including the felons, who formed nearly half the number. " * Mais, a-t-on dit," said Louvet, in his accusation of Roberespierre, " si le peuple n'a pas participé à ces meurtres, pourquoi ne les a-t-il pas empêchés? Pourquoi? parce que l'autorité tutélaire de Petion étoit enchaînée; parce que Roland parloit en vain; parce que le ministre de la justice ne parloit pas; parce que les présidents des quarante-huit sections, prêts à réprimer tant d'affreux désordres, attendoient des réquisitions que le commandant-général ne fit pas; parce que des officiers municipaux, couverts de leurs écharpes présidoient à ces atroces exécutions."

Twice Petion wrote to Santerre, the commander in chief of the national guard of Paris, conjuring him to send a sufficient guard to the prisons, to protect the prisoners from violence; but Santerre was called upon in vain. Twice Petion went himself to the prison de la Force, and after describing, in his speech upon Roberespierre's accusation, the

* But it has been said, if the people did not participate in these murders, why did they not prevent them? Why? Because the tutelar authority of Petion was fettered; because Roland spoke in vain; because the minister of justice remained silent; because the presidents of the forty-eight sections, who were ready to suppress these horrible outrages, waited for orders, which the commander in chief never issued; because municipal officers, wearing the national scarf, the ensign of their judicial authority, presided at these atrocious executions.

the spectacle which there presented itself, with all the sensibility of indignant virtue, he adds, “ * Et les hommes qui jugeaient, et les hommes qui exécutaient, avaient la même sécurité que si la loi les eût appelés à remplir ces fonctions. Ils me vantaient leur justice, leur attention à distinguer les innocents des coupables. les services qu’ils avaient rendus ; ils demandaient, pourrait-on le croire ? ils demandaient à être paryés du temps qu’ils avaient passé ; j’étais réellement confondu de les entendre.

“ Je leur parlai le langage austère de la loi : je leur parlai avec le sentiment de l’indignation profonde dont j’étais pénétré. Je les fis sortir tous devant moi ; j’étais à peine sorti moi-même ; qu’ils y rentrèrent : je fus de nouveau sur les lieux, pour les en chasser ; la nuit, ils achevèrent leur horrible boucherie.”

Such were the immediate evils of the second of September : their consequences will probably extend far beyond the limits of that country which was the theatre of this inhuman violence. The inhabitants of Paris must bear, through every succeeding age, the recorded disgrace of having remained in a state of stupified astonishment and terror, while no more than fifty hired assassins im-

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printed

* And the men who passed judgment, and the men who executed that judgment, performed their office with as much security as if the law had called upon them to fulfil those functions. They boasted to me of their justice, their attention to distinguish the innocent from the guilty, and their important services. They demanded, can it be believed ! they demanded payment for their time. I was filled with horror at the request. I spoke to them the austere language of the law—I spoke to them with that feeling of deep indignation with which I was penetrated. I obliged them to depart. Scarcely was I gone myself, when they returned. I went a second time, and again forced them to leave the place ; but that night they finished their horrible butchery.

printed an indelible stain upon the country. But the bitter punishment of having incurred that disgrace, is, perhaps, all which this country has to fear. Anarchy cannot be lasting. The evils it may produce will be but the evils of this day and of to-morrow.—Those disorders which may for awhile convulse the infant republic, will cease with the lives of their perpetrators, who can assassinate individuals, but cannot assassinate opinions, which appear to be widely diffused. Yet these are considerations which may lead us to fear, that, if the evils of anarchy will be temporary, they will be also terrible. It is well known that all the legislative assembly did, was to undo what the constituent assembly had done. Convinced, from the conduct of the court, that the liberty of France could only be preserved by the terrible means of another revolution, the second legislature, not deeming the national guard sufficient for this purpose, armed every man in Paris, and consequently placed a formidable power in the hands of that swarm of idle and profligate persons which infests great capitals, and who, having nothing to lose, feel that “havock, and spoil and ruin are their gain.” Such persons are, under an established government, checked in their outrages on society, by the terror of punishment; but in the crisis of a revolution they become the dangerous instruments of party rage and faction. They may still commit enormities, of which the bourgeois of Paris, who appear since the second of September to be sunk in a state of complete stupefaction, may remain pusillanimous witnesses; but which may provoke the indignation of the other departments of the kingdom, where, in general, the love of liberty is connected with the utmost horror of anarchy. Hence civil commo-
tions