ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN

WATERLOO: A SEQUEL TO THE CONSCRIPT OF 1813

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Содержание

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Often as the campaign of Waterloo has been described by historians and frequently as it has been celebrated in fiction it has rarely been narrated from the stand-point of a private soldier participating in it and telling only what he saw. That this limitation, however, does not exclude events of the greatest importance and incidents of the most intensely dramatic interest is abundantly proved by the narrative of the Conscript who makes another campaign in this volume and describes it with his customary painstaking fulness and fidelity. But what renders "Waterloo" still more interesting is the picture it presents of the state of affairs after the first Bourbon restoration, and its description of how gradually but surely the way was prepared by the stupidity of the new *régime* for that return to power of Napoleon which seems so dramatically sudden and unexpected to a superficial view of the events of the time. In this respect

"Waterloo" deserves to rank very high as a chapter of familiar history, or at least of historical commentary.

I

The joy of the people on the return of Louis XVIII., in 1814, was unbounded. It was in the spring, and the hedges, gardens, and orchards were in full bloom. The people had for years suffered so much misery, and had so many times feared being carried off by the conscription never to return, they were so weary of battles, of the captured cannon, of all the glory and the Te Deums, that they wished for nothing but to live in peace and quiet and to rear their families by honest labor.

Indeed, everybody was content except the old soldiers and the fencing-masters.

I well remember how, when on the 3d of May the order came to raise the white flag on the church, the whole town trembled for fear of the soldiers of the garrison, and Nicholas Passauf, the slater, demanded six louis for the bold feat. He was plainly to be seen from every street with the white silk flag with its "fleur-de-lis," and the soldiers were shooting at him from every window of the two barracks, but Passauf raised his flag in spite of them and came down and hid himself in the barn of the "Trois Maisons," while the marines were searching the town for him to kill him.

That was their feeling, but the laborers and the peasants and the tradespeople with one voice hailed the return of peace and cried, "Down with the conscription and the right of union." Everybody was tired of living like a bird on branch and of risking

their lives for matters which did not concern them.

In the midst of all this joy nobody was so happy as I; the others had not had the good luck to escape unharmed from the terrible battles of Weissenfels and Lutzen and Leipzig, and from the horrible typhus. I had made the acquaintance of glory and that gave me a still greater love for peace and horror of conscription.

I had come back to Father Goulden's, and I shall never in my life forget his hearty welcome, or his exclamation as he took me in his arms: "It is Joseph! Ah! my dear child, I thought you were lost!" and we mingled our tears and our embraces together. And then we lived together again like two friends. He would make me go over our battles again and again, and laughingly call me "the old soldier." Then he would tell me of the siege of Pfalzbourg, how the enemy arrived before the town, in January, and how the old republicans with a few hundred gunners were sent to mount our cannon on the ramparts, how they were obliged to eat horseflesh on account of the famine, and to break up the iron utensils of the citizens to make case-shot and canister.

Father Goulden, in spite of his threescore years, had aimed the pieces on the Magazine bastion on the Bichelberg side, and I often imagined I could see him with his black silk cap and spectacles on, in the act of aiming a twenty-four pounder. Then this would make us both laugh and helped to pass away the time.

We had resumed all our old habits. I laid the table and made the soup. I was occupying my little chamber again and dreamed of Catherine day and night. But now, instead of being afraid of

the conscription as I was in 1813, I had something else to trouble me. Man is never quite happy, some petty misery or other assails him. How often do we see this in life? My peace was disturbed by this.

You know I was to marry Catherine; we were agreed, and Aunt Grédel desired nothing better. Unhappily, however, the conscripts of 1815 were disbanded, while those of 1813 still remained soldiers. It was no longer so dangerous to be a soldier as it was under the Empire, and many of these had returned to their homes and were living quietly, but that did not prevent the necessity of my having a permit in order to be married. Mr. Jourdan, the new mayor, would never allow me to register without this permission, and this made me anxious.

Father Goulden, as soon as the city gates were opened, had written to the minister of war, Dupont, that I was at Pfalzbourg and still unwell, that I had limped from my birth, and that I had in spite of this been pressed into the service, that I was a poor soldier, but that I could make a good father of a family, that it would be a real crime to prevent me from marrying, that I was ill-formed and weak and should be obliged to go into the hospital, etc.

It was a beautiful letter, and it told the truth too. The very idea of going away again made me ill. So we waited from day to day – Aunt Grédel, Father Goulden, Catherine, and I, for the answer from the minister.

I cannot describe the impatience I felt when the postman

Brainstein, the son of the bell-ringer, came into the street. I could hear him half a mile away, and then I could not go on with my work, but must lean out of the window and watch him as he went from house to house. When he would stay a little too long, I would say to myself, "What can he have to talk about so long? why don't he leave his letters and come away? he is a regular tattler, that Brainstein!" I was ready to pounce upon him. Sometimes I ran down to meet him, and would ask, "Have you nothing for me?" "No, Mr. Joseph," he would reply as he looked over his letters. Then I would go sadly back, and Father Goulden, who had been looking on, would say:

"Have a little patience, child! have patience, it will come. It is not war time now."

"But he has had time to answer a dozen times, Mr. Goulden."

"Do you think he has nobody's affairs to attend to but yours? He receives hundreds of such letters every day – and each one receives his answer in his turn. And then everything is in confusion from top to bottom. Come, come! we are not alone in the world – many other brave fellows are waiting for their permits to be married."

I knew he was right, but I said to myself, "If that minister only knew how happy he would make us by just writing ten words, I am sure he would do it at once. How we would bless him, Catherine and I, Aunt Grédel and all of us." But wait we must.

Of course I had resumed my old habit of going to Quatre Vents on Sundays. On these mornings I was always awake early

– I do not know what roused me. At first I thought I was a soldier again; this made me shiver. Then I would open my eyes, look at the ceiling, and think, "Why you are at home with Father Goulden, at Pfalzbourg, in your own little room. To-day is Sunday, and you are going to see Catherine." By this time I was wide awake, and could see Catherine with her blooming cheeks and blue eyes. I wanted to get up at once and dress myself and set off. But the clocks had just struck four, and the city gates were still shut. I was obliged to wait, and this annoyed me very much. In order to keep patience I began to recall our courtship, remembering the first days, how we feared the conscription and the drawing of the unlucky number, with its "fit for service;" the old guard Werner, at the mayor's, the leave-taking, the journey to Mayence, and the broad Capougnerstrasse where the good woman gave me a foot-bath, Frankfort and Erfurth farther on, where I received my first letter, two days before the battle, the Russians, the Prussians – everything in fact – and then I would weep, but the thought of Catherine was always uppermost.

When the clock struck five I jumped from my bed, washed and shaved and dressed myself, then Father Goulden, still behind his big curtains, would put out his nose and say:

"I hear you! I hear you! You have been rolling and tumbling for the last half hour. Ha! ha! it is Sunday to-day."

He would laugh at his own wit, and I laughed with him, and would then bid him good-morning and be down the stairs at a bound.

Very few people were stirring, but Sepel the butcher would always call out: "Come here, Joseph, I have something to tell you." But I only just turned my head, and ten minutes after was on the high-road to Quatre Vents, outside the city walls. Oh! how fine the weather was that beautiful year! How green and flourishing everything looked, and how busy the people were, trying to make up for lost time, planting and watering their cabbages and turnips, and digging over the ground trodden down by the cavalry; how confident everybody was too of the goodness of God, who, they hoped, would send the sun and the rain which they so much needed. All along the road, in the little gardens, women and old men, everybody, were at work, digging, planting, and watering.

"Work away, Father Thiébeau, and you too, Mother Furst. Courage!" cried I.

"Yes, yes, Mr. Joseph, there is need enough for that; this blockade has put everything back, there is no time to lose."

The roads were filled with carts and wagons, laden with brick and lumber and materials for repairing the houses and roofs which had been destroyed by the howitzers. How the whips cracked and the hammers rang in all the country round! On every side carpenters and masons were seen busily at work on the summer houses. Father Ulrich and his three boys were already on the roof of the "Flower Basket," which had been broken to pieces by the balls, strengthening the new timbers, whistling and hammering in concert. What a busy time it was, indeed, when

peace returned! They wanted no more war then. They knew the worth of tranquillity, and only asked to repair their losses as far as possible. They knew that a stroke of a saw or a plane was of more value than a cannon-shot, and how many tears and how much fatigue it would cost to rebuild even in ten years, that which the bombs had destroyed in ten minutes. Oh! how happy I was as I went along. No more marches and counter-marches; I did not need the countersign from Sergeant Pinto where I was going! And how sweetly the lark sang as it soared tremblingly upward, and the quails whistled and linnets twittered. The sweet freshness of the morning, the fragrant eglantine in the hedges, urged me on till I caught sight of the gable of the old roof of Quatre Vents, and the little chimney with its wreath of smoke. "'Tis Catherine who made the fire," I thought, "and she is preparing our coffee." Then I would moderate my steps in order to get my breath a little, while I scanned the little windows and laughed with anticipated pleasure. The door opens, and Mother Grédel, with her woollen petticoat and a big broom in her hand, turns round and exclaims: "Here he is! here he is!" Then Catherine runs up, always more and more beautiful, with her little blue cap, and says: "Ah! that is good; I was expecting thee!" How happy she is, and how I embrace her! Ah! to be young! I see it all again!

I go into the old room with Catherine, and Aunt Grédel flourishes her broom and exclaims energetically: "No more conscription – that is done with!" We laugh heartily and sit down, and while Catherine looks at me, aunt commences again:

"That beggar of a minister, has he not written yet? Will he never write, I wonder? Does he take us for brutes? It is very disagreeable always to be ordered about. Thou art no longer a soldier, since they left thee for dead. We saved thy life, and thou art nothing to them now."

"Certainly, you are right, Aunt Grédel," I would say; "but for all that we cannot be married without going to the mayor – without a permit – and if we do not go to the mayor, the priest will not dare to marry us at the church."

Then aunt would be very grave, and always ended by saying: "You see, Joseph, that all those people from first to last have fixed everything to suit themselves. Who pays the guards, and the judges, and the priests, and who is it that pays everybody? It is we! and yet they dare not marry us. It is shameful; and if it goes on, we will go to Switzerland and be married." This would calm us, and we would spend the rest of the day in singing and laughing.

II

In spite of my great impatience every day brought something new, and it comes back to me now like the comedies that are played at the fairs. The mayors and their assistants, the municipal counsellors, the grain and wood merchants, the foresters and field-guards, and all those people who had been for ten years regarded as the best friends of the Emperor, and had been very severe if any one said a word against his majesty, turned round and denounced him as a tyrant and usurper, and called him "the ogre of Corsica." You would have thought that Napoleon had done them some great injury, when the fact was that they and their families had always had the best offices.

I have often thought since, that this is the way the good places are obtained under all governments, and still I should be ashamed to abuse those who could not defend themselves, and whom I had a thousand times flattered. I should prefer to remain poor and work for a living rather than to gain riches and consideration by such means. But such are men! And I ought to remember too, that our old mayor and three or four of the counsellors did not follow this example, and Mr. Goulden said that at least they respected themselves, and that the brawlers had no honor.

I remember how, one day, the Mayor of Hacmatt had come to have his watch put in order at our shop, when he commenced to talk against the Emperor in such a way that Father Goulden,

rising suddenly, said to him:

"Here, take your watch, Mr. Michael, I will not work for you. What! only last year you called him constantly 'the great man.' And you never could call him Emperor simply, but must add, Emperor and King, protector of the Helvetic Confederation, etc., while your mouth was full of beef; now you say he is an ogre, and you call Louis XVIII., 'Louis the well-beloved!' You ought to be ashamed of yourself! Do you take people for brutes? and do you think they have no memories?"

Then the mayor replied, "It is plain to be seen that you are an old Jacobin."

"What I am is nobody's business," replied Father Goulden, "but in any case I am not a slanderer." He was pale as death, and ended by saying, "Go, Mr. Michael, go! beggars are beggars under all governments."

He was so indignant that day he could hardly work, and would jump up every minute and exclaim:

"Joseph, I did like those Bourbons, but this crowd of beggars has disgusted me with them already. They are the kind of people who spoil everything, for they declare everything perfect, beautiful, and magnificent; they see no defect in anything, they raise their hands to heaven in admiration if the king but coughs. They want their part of the cake. And then, seeing their delight, kings and emperors end by believing themselves gods, and when revolutions come, these rascals abandon them, and begin to play the same rôle under some one else. In this way they are always

at the top, while honest people are always in trouble."

This was about the beginning of May, and it had been announced that the King had just made his solemn entry into Paris, attended by the marshals of the Empire, that nearly all the population had come out to meet him, and that old men and women and little children had climbed upon the balconies to catch a glimpse of him, and that he had at first entered the church of Notre Dame to give thanks to God, and immediately after retired to the Tuileries.

It was announced also that the Senate had pronounced a high-sounding address, assuring him there need be no alarm on account of all the disturbances, urging him to take courage and promising the support of the senators in case of any difficulties.

Everybody approved this address. But we were soon to have a new sight, we were to witness the return of the *émigrés* from the heart of Germany and from Russia. Some returned by the government vessels, and some in simple "salad baskets," a kind of wicker carriage, on two and four wheels. The ladies wore dresses with immense flower patterns, and the men wore the old French coats and short breeches, and waistcoats hanging down to the thighs, as they are represented in the fashions of the time of the Republic.

All these people were apparently proud and happy to see their country once more. In spite of the miserable beasts which dragged their wretched wagons filled with straw, and the peasants who served as postilions – in spite of all this, I was

moved with compassion as I recalled the joy I felt five months before on seeing France again, and I said to myself:

"Poor people! they will weep on beholding Paris again, they are going to be happy!"

They all stopped at the "Red Ox," the hotel of the old ambassadors and marshals and princes and dukes and rich people, who no longer patronized it, and we could see them in the rooms brushing their own hair, dressing and shaving themselves.

About noon they all came down, shouting and calling "John!" "Claude!" "Germain!" with great impatience, and ordering them about like important personages, and seating themselves around the great tables, with their old servants all patched up and standing behind them with their napkins under their arms. These people with their old-fashioned clothes, and their fine manners and happy air, made a very good appearance, and we said to ourselves: "There are the Frenchmen returning from exile; they did wrong to go, and to excite all Europe against us, but there is mercy for every sin; may they be well and happy! That is the worst we wish them."

Some of these *émigrés* returned by post, and then our new mayor, Mr. Jourdan, chevalier de St. Louis, the vicar, Mr. Loth, and the new commandant, Mr. Robert de la Faisanderie, in his embroidered uniform, would wait for them at the gate, and when they heard the postilion's whip crack they would go forward, smiling as if some great good fortune had arrived, and the moment the coach stopped, the commandant would run and open

it, shouting most enthusiastically.

At other times they would stand quite still to show their respect; I have seen these people salute each other three times in succession, slowly and gravely, each time approaching a little nearer to each other.

Father Goulden would laugh and say: "Do you see, Joseph, that is the grand style – the style of the nobles of the *ancien régime*; by just looking out of the window we can learn fine manners which may serve us when we get to be dukes and princes." Again it would be: "Those old fellows, there, Joseph, fired away at us from the lines at Wissembourg, they were good riders and they fought well, as all Frenchmen do, but we routed them after all."

Then he would wink and go back laughing to his work. But the rumor spread among the servants of the "Red Ox," that these people did not hesitate to say that they had conquered *us*, and that they were our masters; that King Louis XVIII. had always reigned since Louis XVII., son of Louis XVI.; that we were rebels, and that they had come to restore us to order.

Father Goulden did not relish this, and said to me in an ill-humored way: "Do you know, Joseph, what these people are going to do in Paris? they are going to demand the restoration of their ponds and their forests, their parks and their chateaux, and their pensions, not to speak of the fat offices and honors and favors of every kind. You think their coats and perukes very old-fashioned, but their notions are still older than their coats and

perukes. They are more dangerous for us than the Russians or the Austrians, because they are going away, but these people are going to remain. They would like to destroy all we have done for the last twenty-five years. You see how proud they are; though many of them lived in the greatest misery on the other side of the Rhine, yet they think they are of a different race from ours – a superior race; they believe the people are always ready to let themselves be fleeced as they were before '89. They say Louis XVIII. has good sense; so much the better for him, for if he is unfortunate enough to listen to these people, if they imagine even that he can act upon their advice, all is lost. There will be civil war. The people have *thought*, during the last twenty-five years. They know their rights, and they know that one man is as good as another, and that all their 'noble races' are nonsense. Each one will keep his property, each one will have equal rights and will defend himself to the death." That is what Father Goulden said to me, and as my permit never came, I thought the minister had no time to answer our demands with all these counts and viscounts, these dukes and marquises at his back, who were clamoring for their woods and their ponds and their fat offices. I was indignant.

"Great God," I cried, "what misery! as soon as one misfortune is over another begins! and it is always the innocent who suffer for the faults of the others! O God! deliver us from the *nobles*, old and new! Crown them with blessings, but let them leave us in peace!"

One morning Aunt Grédel came in to see us; it was on

Friday and market-day. She brought her basket on her arm and seemed very happy. I looked toward the door, thinking that Catherine was coming too, and I said: "Good-morning, Aunt Grédel; Catherine is in town, she is coming too?"

"No! Joseph, no; she is at Quatre Vents. We are over our ears in work on account of the planting."

I was disappointed and vexed too, for I had anticipated seeing her. But Aunt Grédel put her basket on the table, and said as she lifted up the cover:

"Look! here is something for you, Joseph, something from Catherine."

There was a great bouquet of May roses, violets, and three beautiful lilacs with their green leaves around the edge. The sight of this made me happy, and I laughed and said: "How sweetly it smells." And Father Goulden turned round and laughed too, saying:

"You see, Joseph, they are always thinking of you!"

And we all laughed together. My good-humor had returned, and I kissed Aunt Grédel and told her to take it to Catherine from me.

Then I put my bouquet in a vase on the window-sill by my bedside, and thought of Catherine going out in the early morning to gather the violets and the fresh roses and adding one after the other in the dew, putting in the lilacs last, and the odor seemed still more delightful. I could not look at them enough. I left them on the window-sill, thinking:

"I shall enjoy them through the night, and shall give them fresh water in the morning, and the next day after will be Sunday and I shall see Catherine and thank her with a kiss."

I went back into the room, where Aunt Grédel was talking to Father Goulden about the markets and the price of grain, etc., both in the best of humor. Aunt put her basket on the ground and said:

"Well, Joseph, your permit has not come yet?"

"No! not yet, and it is terrible!"

"Yes," she replied, "the ministers are all alike, one is no better than another; they take the worst and laziest to fill that place."

Then she went on: "Make yourself easy, I have a plan which will change all that." She laughed, and as Father Goulden and I listened to hear her plan, she continued:

"Just now while I was at the town-hall, Sergeant Harmantier announced that we were to have a grand mass for the repose of the souls of Louis XVI., Pichegru, Moreau, and – another one."

"Yes," interrupted Father Goulden, "for George Cadoudal, – I read it last evening in the gazette."

"That is it, of Cadoudal," said Aunt Grédel. "You see, Joseph, hearing that, I thought at once, 'now we will have the permit.' We are going to have processions and atonements, and we will all go together, Joseph, Catherine, and I. We shall be the first, and everybody will say, 'They are good royalists, they are well disposed.' The priest will hear of it. Now the priests have long arms, as in the time of the generals and colonels, – we will go

and see him, he will receive us favorably, and will even make a petition for us. And I tell you this will succeed, we shall not fail this time."

She spoke quite low as she explained all this, and seemed well satisfied with her ingenuity. I felt happy too, and thought, "That is what we must do, Aunt Grédel is right." But on looking at Father Goulden, I saw he was very grave, and that he had turned away and was looking at a watch through his glass, and knitting his big white eyebrows. So, knowing he was not pleased, I said:

"I think myself, that would succeed, but before we do anything I would like to have Father Goulden's opinion."

Then he turned round and said:

"Every one is free, Joseph, to follow his own conscience. To make an expiation for the death of Louis XVI. is all very well; honest people of all parties will have nothing to say, if they are royalists, of course; but if you kneel from self-interest, you had better stay at home. As for Louis XVI., I will let him pass, but for Pichegru, Moreau, and Cadoudal, – that is altogether another thing. Pichegru surrendered his troops to the enemy, Moreau fought against France, and George Cadoudal was an assassin, – three kinds of ambitious men, who asked for nothing but to oppress us, and all three deserved their fate. *That* is what I think."

"But what has all that to do with us, pray?" exclaimed Aunt Grédel. "We will not go for them, we will go to get our permit. I despise all the rest, and so does Joseph, do you not?"

I was greatly embarrassed, for what Father Goulden said

seemed to me to be right, and he, seeing this, said:

"I understand the love of young people, Mother Grédel, but we must not use such means to induce a young man to sacrifice what he thinks is right. If Joseph does not hold the same opinion as I do of Pichegru and Moreau and Cadoudal, very well, let him go to the procession. I shall not reproach him for it, but as for me, I shall not go."

"I shall not go either. Mr. Goulden is right," I replied.

I saw Aunt Grédel was displeased, she turned quite red, but was calm again in a moment, and added:

"Very well! Catherine and I will go, because we mock at all those old notions."

Father Goulden could not help smiling as he saw her anger.

"Yes, everybody is free," said he, "to do as he pleases, so do as you like."

Aunt Grédel took up her basket and went away, and he laughed and made a sign to me to go with her. I very quickly had my coat on and overtook her at the corner of the street.

"Listen, Joseph," said she, as she went toward the square, "Father Goulden is an excellent man, but he is an old fool! He has never since I knew him been satisfied with anything. He does not say so, but the Republic is always in his head. He thinks of nothing but his old Republic, when everybody was a sovereign – beggars, tinkers, soap-boilers, Jews, and Christians. There is no sense in it. But what are we to do? If he were not such an excellent man I would not care for him, but we must remember

he has taught you a good trade, and done us all many favors, and we owe him great respect, that is why I hurried away, for I was inclined to be angry."

"You did right," I said, "I love Father Goulden like my father, and you like my mother, and nothing could give me so much pain as to see you angry with one another."

"I quarrel with a man like him!" said Aunt Grédel. "I would rather jump out of the window. No, no, but we need not listen to all he says, for I insist that this procession is a good thing for us, that the priest will get the permit for us, and that is the principal thing. Catherine and I will go, and as Mr. Goulden will stay at home, you had best stay too. But I am certain that three-fourths of the town and country round will go, and whether it be for Moreau or Pichegru or Cadoudal it is of no consequence. It will be very fine. You will see!"

"I believe you," I answered.

We had reached the German gate; I kissed her again, and went back quite happy to my work.

III

I recollect this visit of Aunt Grédel because eight days after the processions and atonements and sermons commenced, and did not end till the return of the Emperor in 1815, and then they commenced again and continued till the fall of Charles X. in 1830. Everybody who was then alive knows there was no end to them. So when I think of Napoleon, I hear the cannon of the arsenal thunder and the panes of our windows rattle, and Father Goulden cries out from his bed: "Another victory, Joseph! Ha! ha! ha! Always victories." And when I think of Louis XVIII., I hear the bells ring and I imagine Father Brainstein and his two big boys hanging to the ropes, and I hear Father Goulden laugh and say: "That, Joseph, is for Saint Magloire or Saint Polycarp."

I cannot think of those days in any other way.

Under the Empire I see too at nightfall, Father Coiffé, Nicholas Rolfo, and five or six other veterans, loading their cannon for the evening salute of twenty-one guns, while half of Pfalzbourg stand on the opposite bastion looking at the red light, and smoke, and watching the wads as they fall into the moat; then the illuminations at night and the crackers and rockets, I hear the children cry *Vive l'Empereur*, and then some days after, the death notices and the conscription. Under Louis XVIII. I see the altars and the peasants with their carts full of moss and broom and young pines; the ladies coming out of their houses

with great vases of flowers; people carrying their chandeliers and crucifixes, and then the processions – the priest and his vicars, the choir boys and Jacob Cloutier, Purrhus, and Tribou, the singers; the beadle Koekli, with his red robe and his banner which swept the skies, the bells ringing their full peals; Mr. Jourdan, the new mayor, with his great red face, his beautiful uniform with his cross of St. Louis, and the commandant with his three-cornered hat under his arm, his great peruke frosted with powder, and his uniform glittering in the sunshine, and behind them the town council, and the innumerable torches, which they lighted for each other as the wind blew them out; the Swiss, Jean-Peter Siroti, with his blue beard closely shaven and his splendid hat pointing across his shoulders, his broad white silk shoulder-belt sprinkled with fleur-de-lis across his breast, his halberd erect, glistening like a plate of silver; the young girls, ladies, and thousands of country people in their Sunday clothes, praying in concert with the old people at their head, from each village, who kept repeating incessantly, "pray for us, pray for us." With the streets full of leaves and garlands and the white flags in the windows, the Jews and the Lutherans looking out from their closed blinds and the sun lighting up the grand sight below. This continued from 1814 to 1830, except during the hundred days, not to speak of the missions, the bishop's visits, and other extraordinary ceremonies. I like best to tell you all this at once, for if I should undertake to describe one procession after another the story would be too long.

Well! this commenced the 19th of May, and the same day that Harmentier announced the grand atonement, there arrived five preachers from Nancy, young men, who preached during the whole week, from morning until midnight. This was to prepare for the atonement; nothing else was talked about in the town, the people were converted, and all the women and girls went to confession. It was rumored also that the national property was to be restored, and that the poor men would be separated from the respectable people by the procession, because the beggars would not dare to show themselves. You may imagine my chagrin at being obliged, in spite of myself, to remain among the poor people; but, thank God! I had nothing to reproach myself with in regard to the death of Louis XVI., and I had none of the national property, and all I wanted was permission to marry Catherine. I thought with Aunt Grédel that Father Goulden was very obstinate, but I never dared to say a word to him about that. I was very unhappy, the more so, because the people who came to us to have their watches repaired, respectable citizens, mayors, foresters, etc., approved of all these sermons, and said that the like had never been heard. Mr. Goulden always kept on his work while listening to them, and when it was done he would turn to them and say, "Here is your watch, Mr. Christopher or Mr. Nicholas; it is so and so much." He did not seem to be interested in these matters, and it was only when one and another would speak of the national property, of the rebellion of twenty-five years, and of expiating past crimes, that he would take off his

spectacles and raise his head to listen, and would say with an air of surprise, "Pshaw! well! well! that is fine! that is, Mr. Claude! indeed you astonish me. These young men preach so well then? Well, if the work were not so pressing, I would go and hear them. I need instruction also."

I always kept thinking that he would change his mind, and the next evening as we were finishing our supper I was happy enough to hear him say good-humoredly:

"Joseph, are you not curious to hear these preachers? They tell so many fine things of them, that I want to hear how it is for myself."

"Oh! Mr. Goulden, I should like nothing better! but we must lose no time, for the church is always full by the second stroke of the bell."

"Very well! let us go," said he, rising and taking down his hat. "I am curious to see how it is. Those people astonish me. Come!"

We went out; the moon was shining so brightly that we could recognize people as easily as in broad daylight. At the corner of the rue Fouquet we saw that even the steps of the church were already covered with people. Two or three old women, Annette Petit, Mother Balaie, and Jeannette Baltzer, with their big shawls wrapped closely round them, and the long fringes of their bonnets over their eyes, hurried past us, when Father Goulden exclaimed, "Here are the old women! Ha! ha! ha! always the same!"

He laughed, and as he went on said, that since Father Colin's time there had never been so many people seen at the evening

service. I could not believe that he was speaking of the old landlord of the "Three Roses," opposite the infantry barracks, so I said:

"He was a priest, Mr. Goulden?"

"No, no," he answered smiling, "I mean old Colin. In 1792, when we had a club in the church, everybody could preach; but Colin spoke best of all. He had a magnificent voice, and said many forcible and true things, and the people came from far and near, from Saverne and Saarburg, and even still farther away to hear him; women and girls, 'citoyennes' as they called them then, filled the choir galleries and the pews. They wore little cockades in their bonnets, and sang the 'Marseillaise' to arouse the young men. You never saw anything like it! Annette Petit, Mother Baltzer, and all those whom you see running before us, with their prayer-books under their arms, were among the foremost. But they had white teeth and beautiful hair then, and loved 'Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.' Ha! ha! poor Bevel! poor Annette! Now they are going to repent, though they were good patriots then; I believe God will pardon them." He laughed as he recalled these old stories, but when we had reached the steps of the church he grew sober, and said:

"Yes – yes – everything changes, everything! I remember the day in '93, when old Colin spoke of the country being in danger, when three hundred young men left the country to join the army of Hoche; Colin followed them, and became their commander. He was a terrible fellow among his grenadiers. He would not sign

the proposition to make Napoleon emperor, – now he sells over the counter by the glass!"

Then looking at me as if he were astonished at his own thoughts, he said, "Let us go in, Joseph."

We entered under the great pillars of the organ; the crowd was very great, and he did not say a word more. There were lights burning in the choir over the heads of the people. The only sound which broke the silence was the opening and shutting of the doors of the pews. At last we heard Sirou's halberd on the floor, and Mr. Goulden said, "There he is!"

A light near the vessel for the holy water enabled us to see a little. A shadow mounted to the pulpit at the left, while Koekli lighted two or three candles with his stick. The preacher might have been twenty-five or thirty years old, he had a pleasant, rosy face and heavy blonde hair below his tonsure, that fell in curls over his neck. They commenced by singing a psalm, the young girls of the village sang in the choir "What joy to be a Christian." After that the preacher from the desk said, that he had come to defend the faith, the law, and the "right divine" of Louis XVIII., and demanded if any one had the audacity to take the other side. As nobody wished to be stoned, there was a dead silence. Then a brown, thin man, six feet high with a black cloak on, rose in one of the pews opposite, and exclaimed:

"I have! I maintain that faith, religion, and the right of kings, and all the rest, are nothing but superstitions. I maintain that the republic is just, and that the worship of reason is worth them

all!" and so on.

The people were indignant. There never was anything like it! When he had finished speaking, I looked at Mr. Goulden, who laughed softly, and said: "Listen! listen!"

Of course I listened; the young preacher prayed to God for this infidel, and then he spoke so beautifully that the crowd was entranced. The big thin man replied, saying, "They had done right to guillotine Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, and all the family." The indignation increased, and the men from Bois-de-Chênes, and especially their wives, wanted to get into the pew to knock him down, but just then Sirou came up, crying "Room! room!" and old Koekli in his red gown threw himself before the man, who escaped into the sacristy, raising his hands to heaven and declaring that he was converted, and that he renounced the devil and all his works. Then the preacher made a prayer for the soul of the sinner. It was a real triumph for religion.

Everybody left about eleven o'clock, and it was announced that there would be a procession the next day, which was Sunday.

In consequence of the great crowd, which had pushed us into the corner, Mr. Goulden and I were among the last to get out, and by the time we reached the street, the people from Quatre Vents and the other villages were already beyond the German gate, and nothing was heard in the streets but the closing of the shutters by the townspeople, and a few old women talking about the wonderful things they had heard, as they went home by the rue de l'Arsenal.

Father Goulden and I walked along in the silence, he with his head bent down and smiling, though without speaking a word. When we reached home I lighted the candle, and while he was undressing asked:

"Well! Father Goulden, did they preach well?"

"Yes," he replied smiling, "yes, for young men who have seen nothing, it was not bad." Then he laughed aloud and said, "But if old Colin had been in the Jacobin's place, he would have puzzled the young man terribly." I was greatly surprised at that, and as I still waited to hear what more he had to say, he slowly pulled his black silk cap over his ears and added thoughtfully, "but it's all the same; all the same. These people go too fast, much too fast. They will never make me believe that Louis XVIII. knows about all this. No, he has seen too much in his life not to know men better than that. But, good-night, Joseph, good-night. Let us hope that an order will soon arrive from Paris sending these young men back to their seminary."

I went to bed and dreamed of Catherine, the Jacobin, and of the procession we were going to see.

IV

Next morning the bells began to ring as soon as it was light. I rose and opened my shutters and saw the red sun rising from behind the Magazine, and over the forest of Bonne-Fontaine. It might have been five o'clock, and you could feel beforehand how hot it was going to be, and the air was laden with the odor of the oak and beech and holly leaves which were strewn in the streets. The peasants began to arrive in companies, talking in the still morning. You could recognize the villagers from Wechem, from Metting, from the Graufthal and Dasenheim, by their three-cornered hats turned down in front and their square coats, and the women with their long black dresses and big bonnets quilted like a mattress hanging on their necks; and those from Dagsberg, Hildehouse, Harberg, and Houpe with their large round felt hats, and the women without bonnets and with short skirts, small, brown, dry, and quick as powder, with the children behind with their shoes in their hands, but when they reached Luterspech they sat down in a row and put them on to be ready for the procession.

Some priests from the different villages, also came by twos and threes, laughing and talking among themselves in the best of humor.

And I thought, as I rested my elbows on the window-sill, that these people must have risen before midnight to reach here so early in the morning, and that they must have come over the

mountains walking for hours under the trees, crossing the little bridges in the moonlight; as I thought this I reflected that religion is a beautiful thing, that the people in towns do not know what it is, and that for thousands upon thousands of field laborers and wood-choppers, uncultivated and rude beings, who at the same time were good and loved their wives and children and honored their aged parents, supporting them and closing their eyes in the hope of a better world; this was the only consolation. And in looking at the crowd, I imagined that Aunt Grédel and Catherine had the same thoughts, and I was happy to know that they prayed for me. It grew lighter and lighter, and the bells rang while I continued to look on. I heard Father Goulden rise and dress himself, and a few minutes after he came into my chamber in his shirt-sleeves, and seeing me so thoughtful, he exclaimed:

"Joseph, the most beautiful thing in the world is the religion of the people."

I was quite astonished to hear him express precisely my own thoughts.

"Yes," he added, "the love of God, the love of country and of family, are one and the same thing; but it is sad to see the love of country perverted to satisfy the ambition of a man, and the love of God to exalt the pride and the desire to rule in a few."

These words impressed me deeply, and I have often thought since that they expressed the sad truth. Well! to return to those days, you know that after the siege we were obliged to work on Sundays, because Mr. Goulden while serving as a gunner on the

ramparts had neglected his work and we were behindhand. So that on that morning as on the others I lighted the fire in our little stove and prepared the breakfast; the windows were open and we could hear the noise from the streets.

Mr. Goulden leaned out of the window and said: "Look! all the shops except the inns and the beer-houses are closed!"

He laughed, and I asked, "Shall we open our shutters, Mr. Goulden?"

He turned round as if surprised: "Look here, Joseph, I never knew a better boy than you, but you lack sense. Why should we close our shutters? Because God created the world in six days and rested the seventh? But we did not create it ourselves, and we need to work to live. If we shut our shop from interest and pretend to be saints and so gain new customers, that will be hypocrisy. You speak sometimes without thinking."

I saw at once that I was wrong, and I replied: "Mr. Goulden, we will leave our windows open and it will be seen that we have watches to sell, and that will do no harm to any one."

We were no sooner at table than Aunt Grédel and Catherine came. Catherine was dressed entirely in black, on account of the service for Louis XVI. She had a pretty little bonnet of black tulle, and her dress was very nicely made, and this set off her delicate red and white complexion and made her look so beautiful that I could hardly believe that she was Joseph Bertha's beloved; her neck was white as snow, and had it not been for her lips and her rosy little chin, her blue eyes and golden hair, I

should have thought that it was some one who resembled her, but who was more beautiful. She laughed when she saw how much I admired her, and at last I said: "Catherine, you are *too* beautiful now; I dare not kiss you."

"Oh! you need not trouble yourself," said she.

As she leaned upon my shoulder I gave her a long kiss, so that Aunt Grédel and Mr. Goulden looked on and laughed, and I wished them far enough away, that I might tell Catherine that I loved her more and more, and that I would give my life a thousand times for her; but as I could not do that before them, I only thought of these things and was sad.

Aunt had a black dress on also, and her prayer-book was under her arm.

"Come, kiss me too, Joseph; you see I too have a black dress, like Catherine's."

I embraced her, and Mr. Goulden said, "You will come and dine with us – that is understood; but, meanwhile you will take something, will you not?"

"We have breakfasted," replied Aunt Grédel.

"That is nothing; God knows when this procession will end, you will be all the time on your feet, and will need something to sustain you."

Then they sat down, Aunt Grédel on my right, and Catherine on my left, and Father Goulden opposite. They drank a good glass of wine, and aunt said the procession would be very fine, and that there were at least twenty-five priests from the neighborhood

round; that Mr. Hubert, the pastor of Quatre Vents, had come, and that the grand altar in the cavalry quarter was higher than the houses; that the pine-trees and poplars around had crape on them, and that the altar was covered with a black cloth. She talked of everything under the sun, while I looked at Catherine, and we thought, without saying anything, "Oh! when will that beggarly minister write and say, 'Get married and leave me alone?'"

At last, toward nine o'clock, and when the second bell had rung, Aunt Grédel said, "That is the second ringing; we will come to dinner as soon as possible."

"Yes, yes, Mother Grédel," replied Mr. Goulden, "we will wait for you."

They rose, and I went down to the foot of the stairs with Catherine in order to embrace her once again, when Aunt Grédel cried, "Let us hurry, let us hurry!"

They went away, and I went back to my work; but from that moment till about eleven o'clock I could do nothing at all. The crowd was so very great that you could hear nothing outside but a ceaseless murmur; the leaves rustled under foot, and when the procession left the church the effect was so impressive that even Mr. Goulden himself stopped his work to listen to the prayers and hymns. I thought of Catherine in the crowd more beautiful than any of the others, with Aunt Grédel near her, repeating "Pray for us, pray for us," in their clear voices. I thought they must be very much fatigued, and all these voices and chants made me dream, and though I held a watch in my hand and tried to work, my mind

was not on it. The higher the sun rose the more uneasy I became, till at last Mr. Goulden said, laughing, "Ah! Joseph, it does not go to-day!" and as I blushed rosy red, he continued, "Yes, when I was dreaming of Louisa Bénédum I looked in vain for springs and wheels. I could see nothing but her blue eyes."

He sighed, and I too, thinking, "you are quite right, Mr. Goulden."

"That is enough," he added a moment after, taking the watch from my hands. "Go, child, and find Catherine. You cannot conquer your love, it Is stronger than you."

On hearing this, I wanted to exclaim "Oh, good, excellent man! you can never know how much I love you," but he rose to wipe his hands on a towel behind the door, and I said, "If you *really* wish it, Mr. Goulden."

"Yes, yes; certainly!"

I did not wait for another word. My heart bounded with joy, I put on my hat and went down the stairs at a leap, exclaiming, "I will be back in an hour, Mr. Goulden."

I was out of doors in a moment, but what a crowd, what a crowd! they swarmed! military hats, felt hats, bonnets, and over all the noise and confusion, the church bell tolled slowly.

For a minute I stood on our own steps, not knowing which way to turn, and seeing at last that it was impossible to take a step in that crowd I turned into the little lane called the Lanche, in order to reach the ramparts and run and wait for the procession at the slope by the German gate, as then it would turn up the

rue de Collége. It might have been eleven o'clock. I saw many things that day which have suggested many reflections since; they were the signs of great trouble but nobody noticed them, nobody had the good sense to comprehend their significance. It was only later, when everybody was up to their necks in trouble, when we were obliged to take our knapsacks and guns, again to be cut in pieces; then they said, "if we had only had good sense and justice and prudence we should have been so much better off, we should have been quiet at home instead of this breaking up, which is coming; we can do nothing but be quiet and submit; what a misfortune!"

I went along the Lanche, where they shot the deserters under the Empire. The noise grew fainter in the distance, and the chanting and prayers and the sound of the bells as well. All the doors and windows were closed, everybody had followed the procession. I stopped in the silent street to take breath, a slight breeze came from the fields beyond the ramparts, and I listened to the tumult in the distance and wiped the sweat from my face and thought, "how am I to find Catherine?"

I was climbing the steps at the postern gate when I heard some one say: "Mark the points, Margarot."

I then saw that Father Colin's windows on the first floor were open, and that some men in their shirt-sleeves were playing billiards. They were old soldiers with short hair, and mustaches like a brush. They went back and forth, without troubling themselves about the mayor, or the commandant, or Louis XVI.,

or the bourgeoisie. One of them, short, thick, with his whiskers cut as was the fashion of the hussars in those days, and his cravat untied, leaned out of the window, resting his cue on the sill, and, looking toward the square, said:

"We will put the game at fifty."

I thought at once that they were half-pay officers, who were spending their last sous, and who would soon be troubled to live. I continued on my way, and hurried along under the vault of the powder magazine behind the college, thinking of all these things, but when I reached the German gate I forgot everything. The procession was just turning the corner at Bockholtz, the chants broke forth opposite the altar like trumpets, and the young priests from Nancy were running among the crowd with their crucifixes raised to keep order, and the Swiss Sirou carried himself majestically under his banner; at the head of the procession were the priests and the choir singing, while the prayers rose to heaven, and behind, the crowd responded: and all this took form, in a low fearful murmur.

I stood on my tiptoes, half hidden by the shed, trying to discover Catherine in all that multitude and thinking only of her, but what a crowd of hats and bonnets and flags I saw defiling down the rue Ulrich. You would never have imagined that there were so many people in the country; there could not have been a soul left in the villages, except a few little children and old people who stayed to take care of them.

I waited about twenty minutes, and gave up hoping to find

Catherine, when suddenly I saw her with Aunt Grédel. Aunt was praying in such a loud clear voice, that you could hear her above all the others. Catherine said nothing, but walked slowly along with her eyes cast down. If I could only have called to her she might perhaps have heard me, but it was bad enough not to join the procession without causing further scandal. All I can say is, – and there is not an old man in Pfalzbourg who will assert the contrary, – that Catherine was not the least beautiful girl in the country, and that Joseph Bertha was not to be pitied.

She had passed, and the procession halted on the "Place d'armes," before the high altar at the right of the church. The priest officiated, and silence spread all over the city. In the little streets at the right and the left, it was as quiet as if they could have seen the priest at the altar, great numbers kneeled, and others sat down on the steps of the houses, for the heat was excessive, and many of them had come to town before daylight. This grand sight impressed me very much, and I prayed for my country and for peace, for I felt it all in my heart, and I remember that just then I heard under the shed at the German gate, voices which said very good-humoredly, "Come, come, give us a little room, my friends."

The procession blocked the way, everybody was stopped, and these voices disturbed the kneeling multitude. Several persons near the door made way. The Swiss and the beadle looked on from a distance, and my curiosity induced me to get a little nearer the steps, when I saw five or six old soldiers white with dust, bent

down and apparently exhausted with fatigue, making their way along the slope in order to gain the little rue d'Arsenal, through which they no doubt thought to find the way clear, it seems as if I could see them now, with their worn-out shoes and their white gaiters, and their old patched uniforms and shakos battered by the sun and rain and the hardships of the campaign. They advanced in file, a little on the grass of the slope in order to disturb the people who were below as little as possible. One old fellow with three chevrons, who marched ahead and resembled poor Sergeant Pinto who was killed near the Hinterthor at Leipzig, made me feel very sad. He had the same long, gray mustaches, the same wrinkled cheeks, and the same contented air in spite of all his misfortunes and sufferings. He had his little bundle on the end of his stick, and smiling and speaking quite low he said, "Excuse us, gentlemen and ladies, excuse us," while the others followed step by step.

They were the first prisoners released by the convention of the 23d of April, and we saw these men pass afterward every day until July. They had no doubt avoided the magazines, in order the sooner to reach France.

On reaching the little street they found the crowd extended beyond the arsenal; and then in order not to disturb the people, they went under the postern and sat down on the damp steps, with their little bundles on the ground beside them, and waited for the procession to pass. They had come from a great distance, and hardly knew what was going on with us.

Unhappily the wretches from Bois-de-Chênes, the big Horni, Zaphéri Roller, Nicholas Cochart, the carder, Pinacle, whom they had made mayor to pay him for having shown the way to Falberg and Graufthal to the allies during the siege, all these rascals and others who were with them, who wanted the fleur-de-lis – as if the fleur-de-lis could make them any better – unhappily, I say, all that bad set who lived by stealing fagots from the forest, had discovered the old tri-colored cockade in the tops of their shakos, and "now," they thought, "is the time to prove ourselves the real supporters of the throne and the altar."

They came on disturbing everybody, Pinacle had a big black cravat on his neck and a crape, an ell wide, on his hat, with his shirt collar above his ears, and as grave as a bandit who wants to make himself look like an honest man; he came up the first one. The old soldier with the three chevrons had discovered that these men were threatening them at a distance and had risen to see what it meant.

"Come, come! don't crowd so!" said he. "We are not much in the habit of running, what do you want?"

But Pinacle, who was afraid of losing so good an occasion to show his zeal for Louis XVIII., instead of replying to him, smashed his shako at a blow, shouting, "Down with the cockade!"

Naturally the old veteran was indignant and was about to defend himself, when these wretches, both men and women, fell upon the soldiers, knocking them down, pulling off their cockades and epaulets, and trampling them under foot without

shame or pity.

The poor old fellow got up several times, exclaiming, in a voice which went to one's heart, "Pack of cowards, are you Frenchmen, assassins, etc., etc."

Every time he rose they beat him down again, and at last left him with his clothes torn, and covered with blood in a corner, and the commandant, de la Faisanderie, having arrived, ordered them to be escorted to the "Violin." If I had been able to get down, I should have run to the rescue, without thinking of Catherine or Aunt Grédel or Mr. Goulden, and they might have killed me too. When I think of it now even, I tremble, but fortunately the wall of the postern was twenty feet thick, and when I saw them carried away covered with blood, and comprehended the whole horrible affair, I ran home by way of the arsenal, where I arrived so pale that Father Goulden exclaimed:

"Why, Joseph! have you been hurt?"

"No, no," I replied, "but I have seen a frightful thing." And I commenced to cry as I told him of the affair. He walked up and down with his hands behind his back, stopping from time to time to listen to me, while his lips contracted and his eyes sparkled.

"Joseph," said he, "these men provoked them?"

"No, Mr. Goulden."

"It is impossible, they must have invited it. The devil! we are not savages! The rascals must have had some other reason than the cockades for attacking them!"

He could not believe me, and it was only after telling him all

the details twice over that he said at last:

"Well! since you saw it with your own eyes I must believe you. But it is a greater misfortune than you think, Joseph. If this goes on, if they do not put a strong check on these good-for-nothings, if the Pinacles are to have the upper hand, honest people will open their eyes."

He said no more, for the procession was finished and Aunt Grédel and Catherine had come.

We dined together, aunt was happy and Catherine too, but even the pleasure it gave me to see them, could not make me forget what I had witnessed, and Mr. Goulden was very grave too.

At night, I went with them to the "Roulette," and then I embraced them and bade them good-night. It might have been eight o'clock, and I went home immediately. Mr. Goulden had gone to the "Homme Sauvage" brewery, as was his habit on Sunday, to read the gazette, and I went to bed. He came in about ten, and seeing my candle burning on the table, he pushed open the door and said:

"It seems that they are having processions everywhere. You see nothing else in the gazette." And he added that twenty thousand prisoners had returned, and that it was a happy thing for the country.

V

The next morning all the clocks in the village were to be wound up, and as Mr. Goulden was growing old he had intrusted that to me, and I went out very early. The wind had blown the leaves in heaps against the walls during the night, and the people were coming to take their torches and vases of flowers from the altars. All this made me sad, and I thought, "Now that they have performed their service for the dead, I hope they are satisfied. If the permit would come, it would be all very well, but if these people think they are going to amuse us with psalms they are mistaken. In the time of the Emperor we had to go to Russia and Spain it is true, but the ministers did not leave the young people to pine away. I would like to know what peace is for if it is not to get married!"

I denounced Louis XVIII., the Comte d'Artois, the *émigrés*, and everybody else, and declared that the nobles mocked the people.

On going home I found that Mr. Goulden had set the table, and while we were eating breakfast, I told him what I thought. He listened to my complaint and laughed, saying, "Take care, Joseph, take care; you seem to me as if you were becoming a Jacobin."

He got up and opened the closet, and I thought he was going to take out a bottle, but, instead, he handed me a thick square

envelope with a big red seal.

"Here, Joseph," said he, "is something that Brigadier Werner charged me to give you."

I felt my heart jump and I could not see clearly.

"Why don't you open it?" said Father Goulden.

I opened it and tried to read, but had to take a little time. At last I cried out, "It is the permit."

"Do you believe it?" said he.

"Yes, it is the permit," I said, holding it at arm's length.

"Ah! that rascal of a minister, he has sent no others," said Father Goulden.

"But," I said, "I know nothing of politics, since the permit has come, the rest does not concern me."

He laughed aloud, saying, "Good, Joseph, good!"

I saw that he was laughing at me, but I did not care.

"We must let Catherine and Aunt Grédel know immediately," I cried in the joy of my heart; "we must send Chaudron's boy right away."

"Ha! go yourself, that will be better," said the good man.

"But the work, Mr. Goulden?"

"Pshaw! pshaw! at a time like this one forgets work! Go! child, stir yourself, how could you work now? You cannot see clearly."

It was true I could do nothing. I was so happy that I cried, I embraced Mr. Goulden, and then without taking time to change my coat I set off, and was so absorbed by my happiness, that I had gone far beyond the German gate, the bridge and the outworks

and the post station, and it was only when I was within a hundred yards of the village and saw the chimney and the little windows that I recalled it all like a dream, and commenced to read the permit again, repeating, "It is true, yes, it is true; what happiness! what will they say!"

I reached the house and pushed open the door exclaiming, "The permit!"

Aunt Grédel in her sabots was just sweeping the kitchen, and Catherine was coming downstairs with her arms bare, and her blue kerchief crossed over her breast; she had been to the garret for chips, and both of them on seeing me and hearing me cry, "the permit!" stood stock still. But I repeated, "the permit!" and Aunt Grédel threw up her hands as I had done, exclaiming, "Long live the King!"

Catherine, quite pale, was leaning against the side of the staircase; I was at her side in an instant and embraced her so heartily that she leaned on my shoulder and cried, and I carried her down, so to speak, while aunt danced round us, exclaiming, "Long live the King! long live the Minister!"

There was never anything like it. The old blacksmith, Ruppert, with his leather apron on and his shirt open at the throat, came in to ask what had happened.

"What is it, neighbor?" said he, as he held his big tongs in his hands and opened his little eyes as wide as possible.

This calmed us a little, and I answered, "We have received our permit to marry."

"Ah, that is it? is it? now I understand, I understand."

He had left the door open and five or six other neighbors came in – Anna Schmoutz, the spinner, Christopher Wagner, the field-guard, Zaphéri Gross, and several others, till the room was full. I read the permit aloud; everybody listened, and when it was finished Catherine began to cry again, and Aunt Grédel said:

"Joseph, that minister is the best of men. If he were here, I would embrace him and invite him to the wedding; he should have the place of honor next Mr. Goulden."

Then the women went off to spread the news, and I commenced my declarations anew to Catherine, as if the old ones went for nothing; and I made her repeat a thousand times that she had never loved any one but me, till we cried and laughed, and laughed and cried, one after the other, till night. We heard Aunt Grédel, as she attended to the cooking, talking to herself and saying, "That is what I call a good king;" or, "If my good Franz could come back to the earth he would be happy to-day, but one cannot have everything." She said, also, that the procession had done us good; but Catherine and I were too happy to answer a word. We dined, and lunched, and took supper without seeing or hearing anything, and it was nine o'clock when I suddenly perceived it was time to go home. Catherine and Aunt Grédel and I went out together, the moon was shining brightly, and they went with me to the "Roulette," and while on the way we agreed that the marriage should take place in fifteen days. At the farm-house, under the poplars, aunt kissed me, and I kissed Catherine,

and then watched them as they went back to the village. When they reached home they turned and kissed their hands to me, and then I came back to town, crossed the great square, and got home about ten o'clock. Mr. Goulden was awake though in bed, and he heard me open the door softly. I had lighted my lamp and was going to my chamber, when he called, "Joseph!"

I went to him, and he took me in his arms and we kissed each other, and he said:

"It is well, my child; you are happy, and you deserve to be. Now go to bed, and to-morrow we will talk about it."

I went to bed, but it was long before I could sleep soundly. I wakened every moment, thinking, "Is it really true that the permit has come?" Then I would say to myself, "Yes; it is true." But toward morning I slept. When I wakened it was broad day, and I jumped out of bed to dress myself, when Father Goulden called out, as happy as possible, "Come, Joseph, come to breakfast."

"Forgive me, Mr. Goulden," I replied; "I was so happy I could hardly sleep."

"Yes, yes, I heard you," he answered and we went into the workshop, where the table was already laid.

VI

After the joy of marrying Catherine, my greatest delight was in thinking I should be a tradesman, for there was a great difference between fighting for the King of Prussia and doing business on one's own account. Mr. Goulden had told me he would take me into partnership with him, and I imagined myself taking my little wife to mass and then going for a walk to the Roche-plate or to Bonne-Fontaine. This gave me great pleasure. In the meantime I went every day to see Catherine; she would wait for me in the orchard, while Aunt Grédel prepared the little cakes and the bride's loaf for the wedding. We did nothing but look at each other for hours together; she was so fresh and joyous and grew prettier every day.

Mr. Goulden would say on seeing me come home happier every night, "Well! Joseph, matters seem to be better than when we were at Leipzig!"

Sometimes I wanted to go to work again, but he always stopped me by saying, "Oh! pshaw! happy days in life are so few. Go and see Catherine, go! If I should take a fancy to be married by and by, you can work for us both." And then he would laugh. Such men as he ought to live a hundred years, such a good heart! so true and honest! He was a real father to us. And even now, after so many years, when I think of him with his black silk cap drawn over his ears, and his gray beard eight days old, and the little

wrinkles about his eyes showing so much good-humor, it seems to me that I still hear his voice and the tears will come in spite of me. But I must tell you here of something which happened before the wedding and which I shall never forget. It was the 6th of July and we were to be married on the 8th. I had dreamed of it all night. I rose between six and seven. Father Goulden was already at work, with the windows open. I was washing my face and thinking I would run over to Quatre Vents, when all at once a bugle and two taps of a drum were heard at the gate of France, just as when a regiment arrives, they try their mouthpieces, and tap their drums just to get the sticks well in hand. When I heard that my hair stood on end, and I exclaimed, "Mr. Goulden, it is the Sixth!"

"Yes, indeed, for eight days everybody has been talking about it, but you hear nothing in these days. It is the wedding bouquet, Joseph, and I wanted to surprise you."

I listened no longer, but went downstairs at a jump. Our old drummer Padoue had already lifted his stick under the dark arch, and the drummers came up behind balancing their drums on their hips; in the distance was Gémeau, the commandant, on horseback, the red plumes of the grenadiers and the bayonets came up slowly; it was the Third battalion. The march commenced, and my blood bounded. I recognized at the first glance the long gray cloaks which we had received on the 22d of October, on the glacis at Erfurth; they had become quite green from the snow and wind and rain. It was worse than after the

battle of Leipzig. The old shakos were full of ball holes, only the flag was new, in its beautiful case of oil-cloth, with the fleur-de-lis at the end.

Ah! only those who have made a campaign can realize what it is to see your regiment and to hear the same roll of the drum as when it is in front of the enemy, and to say to yourself, "There are your comrades, who return beaten, humiliated, and crushed, bowing their heads under another cockade." No! I never felt anything like it. Later many of the men of the Sixth came and settled down at Pfalzbourg, they were my old officers, old sergeants, and were always welcome, there was Laflèche, Carabin, Lavergne, Monyot, Padoue, Chazi, and many others. Those who commanded me during the war sawed wood for me, put on tiles, were my carpenters and masons. After giving me orders they obeyed me, for I was independent, and had business, while they were simply laborers. But that was nothing, and I always treated my old chiefs with respect, I always thought, "at Weissenfels, at Lutzen, and at Leipzig, these men who now are forced to labor so hard to support themselves and their families, represented at the front the honor and the courage of France." These changes came after Waterloo! and our old Ensign Faizart, swept the bridge at the gate of France for fifteen years! That is not right, the country ought to be more grateful.

It was the Third battalion that returned, in so wretched a state that it made the hearts of good men bleed. Zébédé told me that they left Versailles on the 31st of March, after the capitulation of

Paris, and marched to Chartres, to Chateaudun, to Blois, Orleans and so on like real Bohemians, for six weeks without pay or equipments, until at last at Rouen, they received orders to cross France and return to Pfalzbourg, and everywhere the processions and funeral services for the King, Louis XVI., had excited the people against them. They were obliged to bear it all, and even were compelled to bivouac in the fields while the Russians, Austrians, and Prussians, and other beggars, lived quietly in our towns.

Zébédé wept with rage as he recounted their sufferings afterward.

"Is France no longer France?" he asked. "Have we not fought for her honor?"

But it gives me pleasure now in my old age, to remember how we received the Sixth at Pfalzbourg. You know that the First battalion had already arrived from Spain, and that the remnant of this regiment and of the 24th infantry of the line formed the 6th regiment of Berry, so that all the village was rejoicing that instead of the few old veterans, we were to have two thousand men in garrison. There was great rejoicing, and everybody shouted, "Long live the Sixth;" the children ran out to St. Jean to meet them, and the battalion had nowhere been better received than here. Several old fellows wept and shouted, "Long live France." But in spite of all that, the officers were dejected and only made signs with their hands as if to thank the people for their kind reception.

I stood on our door-steps while three or four hundred men filed past, so ragged that I could not distinguish our number, but suddenly I saw Zébédé, who was marching in the rear, so thin that his long crooked nose stood out from his face like a beak, his old cloak hanging like fringe down his back, but he had his sergeant's stripes, and his large bony shoulders gave him the appearance of strength. On seeing him, I cried out so loud that it could be heard above the drums, "Zébédé!"

He turned round and I sprang into his arms and he put down his gun at the corner of the rue Fouquet. I cried like a child and he said, "Ah! it is you, Joseph! there are two of us left then, at least."

"Yes, it is I," said I, "and I am going to marry Catherine, and you shall be my best man."

We marched along together to the corner of the rue Houte, where old Furst was waiting with tears in his eyes. The poor old man thought, "Perhaps my son will come too." Seeing Zébédé coming with me, he turned suddenly into the little dark entrance to his house. On the square, Father Klipfel and five or six others were looking at the battalion in line. It is true they had received the notices of the deaths, but still they thought there might be mistakes, and that their sons did not like to write. They looked amongst them, and then went away while the drums were beating.

They called the roll, and just at that moment the old grave-digger came up with his little yellow velvet vest and his gray cotton cap. He looked behind the ranks where I was talking with

Zébédé, who turned round and saw him and grew quite pale, they looked at each other for an instant, then I took his gun and the old man embraced his son. They did not say a word, but remained in each other's arms for a long while. Then when the battalion filed off to the right to go to the barracks, Zébédé asked permission of Captain Vidal to go home with his father, and gave his gun to his nearest comrade. We went together to the rue de Capucins. The old man said: "You know that grandmother is so old that she can no longer get out of bed, or she would have come to meet you too."

I went to the door, and then said to them, "You will come and dine with us, both of you."

"I will with pleasure," said the father. "Yes, Joseph, we will come."

I went home to tell Father Goulden of my invitation, and he was all the more pleased as Catherine and her aunt were to be there also.

I never had been more happy than when thinking of having my beloved, my best friend, and all those whom I loved the most, together at our house.

That day at eleven o'clock our large room on the first floor was a pretty sight to see. The floor had been well scrubbed, the round table in the middle of the room was covered with a beautiful cloth with red stripes and six large silver covers upon it, the napkins folded like a boat in the shining plates, the salt-cellar and the sealed bottles, and the large cut glasses sparkling in the sun which

came over the groups of lilac ranged along the windows.

Mr. Goulden wished to have everything in abundance, grand and magnificent, as he would for princes and embassadors, and he had taken his silver from the basket, a most unusual thing; I had made the soup myself. In it there were three pounds of good meat, a head of cabbage, carrots in abundance, indeed everything necessary; except that, – which you can never have so good at an hotel, – everything had been ordered by Mr. Goulden himself from the "Ville de Metz."

About noon we looked at each other, smiling and rubbing our hands, he in his beautiful nut-brown coat, well shaved, and with his great peruke a little rusty, in place of his old black silk cap, his maroon breeches neatly turned over his thick woollen stockings, and shoes with great buckles on his feet; while I had on my sky-blue coat of the latest fashion, my shirt finely plaited in front, and happiness in my heart.

All that was lacking now was our guests – Catherine, Aunt Grédel, the grave-digger, and Zébédé. We walked up and down laughing and saying, "Everything is in its place and we had best get out the soup-tureen." And I looked out now and then to see if they were coming.

At last Aunt Grédel and Catherine turned the corner of the rue Foquet; they came from mass and had their prayer-books under their arms, and farther on I saw the old grave-digger in his fine coat with wide sleeves, and his old three-cornered hat, and Zébédé, who had put on a clean shirt and shaved himself. They

came from the side next the ramparts arm in arm, gravely, like men who are sober because they are perfectly happy.

"Here they are," I said to Father Goulden.

We just had time to pour out the soup and put the big tureen, smoking hot in the middle of the table. This was happily accomplished just as Aunt Grédel and Catherine came in. You can judge of their surprise on seeing the beautiful table. We had hardly kissed each other when aunt exclaimed:

"It is the wedding-day then, Mr. Goulden."

"Yes, Madame Grédel," the good man answered smiling, – on days of ceremony he always called her Madame instead of Mother Grédel, "yes, the wedding of good friends. You know that Zébédé has just returned, and he will dine with us to-day with the old grave-digger."

"Ah!" said aunt, "that will give me great pleasure."

Catherine blushed deeply, and said to me in a low voice:

"Now everything is as it should be, that was what we wanted to make us perfectly happy."

She looked tenderly at me as she held my hand. Just then some one opened the door, and old Laurent from the "Ville de Metz," with two high baskets in which dishes were ranged in beautiful order one above the other, cried out, "Mr. Goulden, here is the dinner!"

"Very well!" said Mr. Goulden, "now arrange it on the table yourself."

And Laurent put on the radishes first, the fricasseed chicken

and beautiful fat goose at the right, and on the left the beef which we had ourselves arranged with parsley in the plate. He put on also a nice plate of sauerkraut with little sausages, near the soup. Such a dinner had never been seen in our house before.

Just at that moment we heard Zébédé and his father coming up the stairs, and Father Goulden and I ran to meet them. Mr. Goulden embraced Zébédé and said:

"How happy I am to see you, I know you showed yourself a good comrade for Joseph in the midst of the greatest danger."

Then he shook the old grave-digger's hand, saying, "I am proud of you for having such a son."

Then Catherine, who had come behind us, said to Zébédé:

"I could not please Joseph more than to embrace you, you would have carried him to Hanau only your strength failed. I look upon you as a brother."

Then Zébédé, who was very pale, kissed her without saying a word, and we all went into the room in silence, Catherine, Zébédé, and I first, Mr. Goulden and the old grave-digger came afterward. Aunt Grédel arranged the dishes a little and then said:

"You are welcome, you are welcome! you who met in sorrow, have rejoined each other in joy. May God send his grace on us all."

Zébédé kissed Aunt Grédel and said, "Always fresh and in good health, it is a pleasure to see you."

"Come, Father Zébédé, sit at the head of the table, and you there, Zébédé, that I may have you on my right and my left,

Joseph will sit farther down, opposite Catherine, and Madame Grédel at the other end to watch over all."

Each one was satisfied with his place, and Zébédé smiled and looked at me as if he would say: "If we had had the quarter of such a dinner as this at Hanau, we should never have fallen by the roadside." Joy and a good appetite shone on every face. Father Goulden dipped the great silver ladle into the soup as we all looked on, and served first the old grave-digger, who said nothing and seemed touched by this honor, then his son, and then Catherine, Aunt Grédel, himself, and me. And the dinner was begun quietly.

Zébédé winked and looked at me from time to time with great satisfaction. We uncorked the first bottle and filled the glasses. This was very good wine, but there was better coming, so we did not drink each other's health yet, we each ate a good slice of beef, and Father Goulden said:

"Here is something *good*, this beef is excellent." He found the fricassee very good also, and then I saw that Catherine was a woman of spirit, for she said:

"You know, Mr. Zébédé, that we should have invited your grandmother Margaret, whom I go to see from time to time, only she is too old to go out, but if you wish, she shall at least eat a morsel with us, and drink her grandson's health in a glass of wine. What do you say, Father Zébédé?"

"I was just thinking of that," said the old man.

Father Goulden looked at Catherine with tears in his eyes, and

as she rose to select a suitable piece for the old woman, he kissed her, and I heard him call her his daughter.

She went out with a bottle and a plate; and while she was gone Zébédé said to me:

"Joseph, she who is soon to be your wife deserves to be perfectly happy, for she is not only a good girl, not only a woman who ought to be loved, but she deserves respect also, for she has a good and feeling heart. She saw what my father and I thought of this excellent dinner, and she knew it would give us a thousand times more pleasure if grandmother could share it. I shall love her for it, as if she were my sister." Then he added in a low voice: "It is when we are happy that we feel the bitterness of poverty. It is not enough to give our blood to our country, but there is suffering at home in consequence, and when we return we must have misery before our eyes."

I saw that he was growing sad, so I filled his glass and we drank, and his melancholy vanished. Catherine came back and said, "the grandmother was very happy, and that she thanked Mr. Goulden, and said it had been a beautiful day for her." And this roused everybody. As the dinner continued, Aunt Grédel heard the bells for vespers, and she went out to church, but Catherine remained, and the animation which good wine inspires had come, and we began to speak of the last campaign; of the retreat from the Rhine to Paris, of the fighting of the battalion at Bibelskirchen and at Saarbruck, where Lieutenant Baubin swam the Saar when it was freezing as hard as stone, to destroy

some boats which were still in the hands of the enemy; of the passage at Narbefontaine, at Courcelles, at Metz, at Enzelvin, and at Champion and Verdun, and, still retreating, the battle of Brienne. The men were nearly all destroyed, but on the 4th of February the battalion was re-formed from the remnant of the 5th light infantry, and from that moment they were every day under fire; on the 5th, 6th, and 7th at Méry-sur-Seine; on the 8th at Sézanne, where the soldiers died in the mud, not having strength enough to get out; the 9th and 10th at Mürs, where Zébédé was buried at night in the dung-heap of a farmhouse in order to get warm, and the terrible battle of Marché on the 11th, in which the Commandant Philippe was wounded by a bayonet-thrust; the encounter on the 12th and 13th at Montmirail, the battle of Beauchamp on the 14th, the retreat on Montmirail on the 15th and 16th, when the Prussians returned: the combats at the Ferté-Gauché, at Jouarre, at Gué-à-Train, at Neufchettes, and so on. When the Prussians were beaten, then came the Russians, after them the Austrians, the Bavarians, the Wurtemburgers, the Hessians, the Saxons, and the Badois.

I have often heard that campaign described, but never as it was done by Zébédé. As he talked his great thin face quivered and his long nose turned down over the four hairs of his yellow mustache, and his eyes would flash and he would stretch out his hand from his old sleeve and you could see what he was describing. The great plains of Champagne with the smoking villages to the right and to the left, where the women, children, and old men were

wandering about in groups, half naked, one carrying a miserable old mattress, another with a few pieces of furniture on his cart, while the snow was falling from the sky, and the cannon roared in the distance, and the Cossacks were flying about like the wind with kitchen utensils and even old clocks hanging to their saddles, shouting hurrah!

Furious battles were raging, singly, or one against ten, in which the desperate peasants joined also with their scythes. At night the Emperor might be seen sitting astride his chair, with his chin resting in his folded hands on the back, before a little fire with his generals around him. This was the way he slept and dreamed. He must have had terrible reflections after the days of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Wagram.

To fight the enemy, to suffer hunger and cold and fatigue, to march and countermarch, Zébédé said, were nothing, but to hear the women and children weeping and groaning in French in the midst of their ruined homes, to know you could not help them, and that the more enemies you killed, the more would you have; that you must retreat, always retreat, in spite of victories, in spite of courage, in spite of everything! "that is what breaks your heart, Mr. Goulden."

In listening and looking at him we had lost all inclination to drink, and Father Goulden, with his great head bent down as if thinking, said in a low voice:

"Yes, that is what glory costs, it is not enough to lose our liberty, not enough to lose the rights gained at such a cost, we

must be pillaged, sacked, burned, cut to pieces by Cossacks, we must see what has not been seen for centuries, a horde of brigands making law for us – but go on, we are listening, tell us all."

Catherine, seeing how sad we were, filled the glasses.

"Come," said she, "to the health of Mr. Goulden and Father Zébédé. All these misfortunes are past and will never return."

We drank, and Zébédé related how it had been necessary to fill up the battalion again, on the route to Soissons, with the soldiers of the 16th light infantry, and how they arrived at Meaux where the plague was raging, although it was winter, in the hospital of Piété, in consequence of the great numbers of wounded who could not be cared for.

That was horrible, but the worst of all was when he described their arrival at Paris, at the Barrière de Charenton: the Empress, King Joseph, the King of Rome, the ministers, the new princes and dukes, and all the great world, were running away toward Blois, and abandoning the capital to the enemy, while the workingmen in blouses, who gained nothing from the Empire, but to be forced to give their children to defend it, were gathered around the town-house by thousands, begging for arms to defend the honor of France; and the Old Guard repulsed them with the bayonet!

At this Father Goulden exclaimed:

"That is enough, Zébédé, hold! stop there, and let us talk of something else."

He had suddenly grown very pale; at this moment Mother Grédel returned from vespers, and seeing us all so quiet, and Mr. Goulden so disturbed, asked:

"What has happened?"

"We were speaking of the Empress and of the ministers of the Emperor," replied Father Goulden, forcing a laugh.

Said she, "I am not astonished that the wine turns against you. Every time I think of them, if by accident I look in the glass, I see that it turns me quite livid. The beggars! fortunately, they are gone."

Zébédé did not like this. Mr. Goulden observed it and said, "Well! France is a great and glorious country all the same. If the new nobles are worth no more than the old ones, the people are firm. They work in vain against them. The bourgeois, the artisan, and the peasant are united, they have the same interests and will not give up what they have gained, nor let them again put their feet on their necks. Now, friends, let us go and take the air, it is late, and Madame Grédel and Catherine have a long way to go to Quatre Vents. Joseph will go with them."

"No," said Catherine, "Joseph must stay with his friend to-day, and we will go home alone."

"Very well! so be it! on a day like this friends should be together," said Mr. Goulden.

We went out arm in arm, it was dark, and after embracing Catherine again at the Place d'Armes she and her aunt took their way home, and after having taken a few turns under the great

lindens we went to the "Wild Man" and refreshed ourselves with some glasses of foaming beer. Mr. Goulden described the siege, the attack at Pernette, the sorties at Bigelberg, at the barracks above, and the bombardment. It was then that I learned for the first time that he had been captain of a gun, and that it was he who had first thought of breaking up the melting-pots in the foundry to make shot. These stories occupied us till after ten o'clock. At last Zébédé left us to go to the barracks, the old grave-digger went to the rue Capucin, and we to our beds, where we slept till eight o'clock the next morning.

VII

Two days afterward I was married to Catherine at Aunt Grédel's at Quatre Vents. Mr. Goulden represented my father. Zébédé was my best man, and some old comrades remaining from the battalion were also at the wedding. The next day we were installed in our two little rooms over the workshop at Father Goulden's, Catherine and I. Many years have rolled away since then! Mr. Goulden, Aunt Grédel, and the old comrades have all passed away, and Catherine's hair is as white as snow! Yet often, even now, when I look at her, those times come back again, and I see her as she was at twenty, fresh and rosy, I see her arrange the flower-pots in the chamber-window, I hear her singing to herself, I see the sun opposite, and then we descend the steep little staircase and say together, as we go into the workshop: "Good-morning, Mr. Goulden;" he turns, smiles, and answers, "Good-morning, my children, good-morning!" Then he kisses Catherine and she commences to sweep and rub the furniture and prepare the soup, while we examine the work we have to do during the day.

Ah, those beautiful days, that charming life. What joy in being young and in having a simple, good, and industrious wife! How our hearts rejoice, and the future spreads out so far – so far – before us! We shall never be old; we shall always love each other, and always keep those we love! We shall always be of good heart;

we shall always take our Sunday walk arm in arm to Bonne-Fontaine; we shall always sit on the moss in the woods, and hear the bees and May bugs buzzing in the great trees filled with light; we shall always smile! What a life! what a life!

And at night we shall go softly home to the nest, as we silently look at the golden trains which spread over the sky from Wecham to the forests of Mittelbronn, we shall press each other's hand when we hear the little clock at Pfalzbourg ring out the "Angelus," and those of all the villages will respond through the twilight. Oh, youth! oh, life!

All is before me just as it was fifty years ago; but other sparrows and larks sing and build in the spring, other blossoms whiten the great apple-trees. And have we changed too, and grown old like the old people of those days? That alone makes me believe that we shall become young again, that we shall renew our loves and rejoin Father Goulden and Aunt Grédel and all our dear friends. Otherwise we should be too unhappy in growing old. God would not send us pain without hope. And Catherine believes it too. Well! at that time we were perfectly happy, everything was beautiful to us, nothing troubled our joy.

It was when the allies were passing through our city by hundreds of thousands on their way home. Cavalry, artillery, infantry, foot and horse, with oak leaves in their shakos, on their caps, and on the ends of their muskets and lances. They shouted so that you could hear them a league away. Just as you hear the chaffinches, thrushes, and blackbirds, and thousands of other

birds in the autumn. At any other time this would have made me sad, because it was the sign of our defeat, but I consoled myself by thinking that they were going away, never to return. And when Zébédé came to tell me that every day the Russian, Austrian, Prussian, and Bavarian officers crossed the city to visit our new commandant, Mons. de la Faisanderie, who was an old émigré, and who covered them with honors – that such an officer of the battalion had provoked one of these strangers, and that such another half-pay officer had killed two or three in duels at the "Roulette," or the "Green Tree," or the "Flower Basket," for they were everywhere – our soldiers could not bear the sight of the foreigners, there were fights everywhere, and the litters of the hospital were constantly going and coming – when Zébédé told me all these things, and when he said that so many officers had been put upon half-pay in order to replace them by officers from Coblentz, and that the soldiers were to be compelled to go to mass in full uniform, that the priests were everything and epaulettes nothing any more; instead of being vexed, I only said, "Bah! all these things will get settled by and by. So long as we can have quiet, and can live and labor in peace, we will be satisfied."

I did not think that it is not enough that one is satisfied; to preserve peace and tranquillity, all must be so likewise. I was like Aunt Grédel, who found everything right now that we were married. She came very often to see us, with her basket full of fresh eggs, fruits, vegetables, and cakes for our housekeeping, and she would say:

"Oh! Mr. Goulden, there is no need to ask if the children are well, you have only to look at their faces."

And to me she would say: "There is some difference, Joseph, between being married, and trudging along under a knapsack and musket at Lutzen!"

"I believe you, Mamma Grédel," I would answer.

Then she would sit down, with her hands on her knees, and say: "All this comes from peace; peace makes everybody happy, and to think of that mob of barefoot beggars who shout against the King!"

At first Mr. Goulden, who was at work, would say nothing, but when she kept on he would say, "Come, Mother Grédel, a little moderation, you know that opinion is free now, we have two chambers and constitution, and each one has a voice."

"But it is also true," said aunt looking at me maliciously, "that one must hold his tongue from time to time, and that shows a difference too."

Mr. Goulden never went farther than this, for he looked upon aunt as a good woman, but who was not worth the trouble of converting. He would only laugh when she went too far, and matters went on without jarring until something new happened. At first there was an order from Nancy to compel the people to close all their shutters during service on Sunday – Jews, Lutherans, and all. There was no more noise in the inns and wine-shops, it was still as death in the city during mass and vespers. The people said nothing, but looked at each other as if they were

afraid.

The first Sunday that our shutters were closed, Mr. Goulden seemed very sad, and said, as we were dining in the dark, "I had hoped, my children, that all this was over, and that people would have common-sense, and that we should be tranquil for years, but unhappily I see that these Bourbons are of the same race as Dagobert. Affairs are growing serious."

He did not say anything else on this Sunday, and went out in the afternoon to read the papers. Everybody who could read went, while the peasants were at mass, to read the papers after shutting their shops. The citizens and master-workmen then got in the habit of reading the papers, and a little later they wanted a Casino. I remember that everybody talked of Benjamin Constant and placed great confidence in him. Mr. Goulden liked him very much, and as he was accustomed to go every evening to Father Colin's, to read of what had taken place, we also heard the news. He told us that the Duke d'Angoulême was at Bordeaux, the Count d'Artois at Marseilles, they had promised this, and they had said that.

Catherine was more curious than I, she liked to hear all the news there was in the country, and when Mr. Goulden said anything, I could see in her eyes that she thought he was right. One evening he said, "The Duke de Berry is coming here."

We were greatly astonished. "What is he going to do here, Mr. Goulden?" asked Catherine.

"He is coming to review the regiment," he answered, "I have

a great curiosity to see him. The papers say that he looks like Bonaparte, but that he has a great deal more mind. It is not astonishing for if a legitimate prince had no more sense than the son of a peasant it would be a great pity. But you have seen Bonaparte, Joseph, and you can judge of the matter."

You can imagine how this news excited the country. From that day nothing was thought of but erecting triumphal arches, and making white flags, and the people from all the villages kept coming with their carts covered with garlands. They raised a triumphal arch at Pfalzbourg and another near Saverne. Every evening after supper Catherine and I went out to see how the work progressed. It was between the hotel "de la Ville de Metz" and the shop of the confectioner Dürr, right across the street. The old carpenter Ulrich and his boys built it. It was like a great gate covered with garlands of oak leaves, and over the front were displayed magnificent white flags.

While they were doing this, Zébédé came to see us several times. The prince was to come from Metz, the regiment had received letters, which represented him as being as severe as if he had gained fifty battles. But what vexed Zébédé most was, that the prince called our old officers, "Soldiers of fortune."

He arrived the 1st of October, at six in the evening, we heard the cannon when he was at Gerberhoff. He alighted at the "Ville de Metz," without going under the arch. The square was crowded with officers in full uniform, and from all the windows the people shouted, "Long live the King, Long live the Duke de Berry," just

as they cried in the time of Napoleon, "Long live the Emperor."

Mr. Goulden and Catherine and I could not get near because of the crowd, and we only saw the carriages and the hussars file past. A picket near our house cut off all communication. That same evening he received the corps of officers and condescended to accept a dinner offered to him by the Sixth, but he only invited Colonel Zaepfel. After the dinner, from which they did not rise till ten o'clock, the principal citizens gave a ball at the college. All the officers and all the friends of the Bourbons were present in black coats, and breeches and stockings of white silk, to meet the prince, and the young girls of good families were there in crowds, dressed in white. I still seem to hear the horses of the escort as they passed in the middle of the night amid the thousands shouting "Vive le Roi! Vive le Duc de Berry!"

All the windows were illuminated, and before those of the commandant there was a great shield of sky blue, and the crown and the three fleur-de-lis in gold, sparkled in the centre. The great hall of the college echoed with the music of the regimental band.

Mademoiselle Bremer, who had a very fine voice, was to sing the air of "Vive Henri IV." before the prince. But all the village knew the next day, that she had been so confused by the sight of the prince, that she could not utter a word, and everybody said, "Poor Mademoiselle Félicité, poor Mademoiselle Félicité."

The ball lasted all night. We – Mr. Goulden, Catherine, and I – were asleep, when about three in the morning we were wakened

by the hussars going by and the shouts of "Vive le Duc de Berry." These princes must have excellent health to be able to go to all the balls and dinners which are offered to them on their journeys. And it must become very tiresome at last to be called "Your Majesty," "Your Excellence," "Your Goodness," and "Your Justice," and everything else that can be thought of, that is new and extraordinary, in order to make them believe that the people adore them and look upon them as gods. If they do despise the men at last it is not astonishing. If the same thing were done to us we might think ourselves eagles too.

What I have told you is exactly the truth. I have exaggerated nothing.

The next day they began again with new enthusiasm. The weather was very fine, but as the prince had slept badly, and the children who wished to imitate the court without succeeding, annoyed him, and he thought perhaps, that they had not done him sufficient honor and had not shouted "Vive le Roi, Vive le Duc de Berry" loud and long enough – for all the *soldiers* kept silent – he was in a very bad humor.

I saw him very well that day, while the review was taking place – the soldiers occupied the sides of the square, we were at Wittman's, the leather merchant, on the first floor – and also during the consecration of the flag and the Te Deum at the church, for we had the fourth pew in front of the choir. They said he looked like Napoleon, but it was not true; he was a good-looking fat fellow, short and thick, and pale with fatigue, and not

at all lively, quite the contrary. During the service he did nothing but yawn and rock back and forth like a pendulum. I am telling you what I saw myself, and that shows how blind people are, they want to find resemblances everywhere.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.